The Auxiliary Spirit

The American Legion Family

Volume 41 *December 2026* *Issue 5*



American Legion Auxiliary
2026-2027
Department President
Stephanie Handley

Department Theme

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work.



Presidents Stephanie's Special Project
The American Legion Baseball

Colors

Red, White, Blue

All-American Team:

Membership is the foundation of a strong American Legion Auxiliary. As we continue our mission of serving veterans, supporting military families, and strengthening our communities, we must work together to grow and retain our membership.

Our goal is to reach 50% of our membership goal by December 15th, and we are getting close! We have currently reached **48.10%**. With just a little more effort, we can achieve this important milestone. I encourage every Unit to reach out to prospective members, contact those who have not renewed, and welcome former members back to our organization.

Membership is a shared responsibility. Every phone call, personal invitation, and conversation can make a difference. Please continue the great work! Together, let's reach our December 15th goal and build a stronger All American Team. Every member counts, and every effort matters.

As we celebrate the holiday season, let us also remember our veterans and their families, especially those who may be separated from loved ones or facing challenges during this time of year. May we continue to show our appreciation through kindness, support, and acts of service.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season filled with joy, peace, and time spent with family and friends!
God Bless,
Stephanie



Department Officers 2026-2027

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

District Presidents
1st District-Rhonda Best
3rd District-Sandy Harper
4th District-Rebecca Farley
5th District-Lisa Harbour-Adkins
6th District-Peggy Swartz
10th District-Jill Davis

District Vice Presidents
1st District-Susan Brown
3rd District-Kim Mellie
4th District-Katie Simpsons
5th District –Patti Withrow
6th District-Mary Spence
10th District-Pam Gustines

"THE GREAT ALL-AMERICAN TEAM"

Department 1st Vice President

Hello Everyone

To my Districts 1-3 and 5, I am very proud, as of November 16th, we have 1,345 members and our percentage is 53.14%. Let's keep up the good work reaching out to our members and also getting new members. As of November 16th, I see in District 3, District 5 and District 10 we show they have not received any membership. If I can be of any help please contact me and I will try and help you.

Welch Unit 8, had a dinner on the 10th. and Unit 8 did the cooking along with the parade and another dinner on Wednesday. We were lucky too have our Department President here for dinner and the parade. She and Department Commander Brown got to ride in the same car together at the parade.

So until next time keep up the good work.

Thanks

Peggy Swartz

1st Vice President

peggyrswartz29@gmail.com

Department 2nd Vice President

As we celebrate this beautiful holiday season, I encourage each of you to pause and find JOY! Joy in serving our veterans, joy in the friendships we build, and joy in reaching the membership goals we've worked so hard to achieve.

Every renewal represents more than a number. It represents a member who believes in our mission and another opportunity to make a difference. Let's celebrate every milestone while encouraging one another to finish the year strong!

Now, nobody wants to be the Grinch who steals the holiday cheer, but here's a friendly membership reminder! Your 2026 membership only keeps you current through December 31. On January 1, members who haven't renewed for 2027 are no longer current. This may affect privileges and benefits at your local American Legion Post, including access to social quarters.

Let's spread a little holiday cheer by reminding our Auxiliary family to renew before the clock strikes midnight on December 31. A simple phone call, friendly reminder, or helping hand can make all the difference!

May your December be filled with peace, purpose, and the JOY of knowing that together, we're making a difference!

Rebecca Farley

2nd Vice President

ala.rebeccafarley@gmail.com

304-674-9908



Chaplain

Dear Auxiliary Sisters & Brothers

December is a special time of year when we reflect on the blessings in our lives, remember those who are no longer with us, and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, we know that the greatest gifts are not found under a Christmas tree. They are found in the kindness we share, the friendships we build, and the love and support we give to our veterans, their families, and our communities.

As we close another year of service, may we be thankful for the opportunities we have been given to serve and make a difference. May the spirit of Christmas remind us that we are stronger when we stand together in faith, friendship, and love.

Please share any thoughts or needs with your unit members so that I can reach out to comfort and let them know their sisters and brothers are praying.

Please also share prayers for Presidents' Stephanie's Prayer book.

Chaplain's Prayer

Heavenly Father,

During this beautiful season of Christmas, we thank You for the gift of Your love and the blessings You place in our lives.

We ask You to watch over our veterans, active-duty military, and all those who serve our country. Protect those who are far from home and bring comfort to families who are missing loved ones.

Bless our American Legion Auxiliary family. Guide us as we continue our mission of serving veterans, their families, and our communities.

May we carry the light of Christmas in our hearts throughout the coming year and share Your love through every act of kindness.

Wishing everyone and blessed Christmas

Holly Adams

Department Chaplain

Historian

This December, let's honor our veterans by bringing a spark of creativity to the American Legion Auxiliary mission. The holiday season is the perfect time to think outside the box and find meaningful, unexpected ways to serve our military families and communities.

Consider branching out with these fresh ideas:

**Host a "wrapping party" for local military families to lighten their holiday stress.

**Organize a festive carol drive outside a nearby veterans' home.

**Assemble winter warmth kits complete with personalized, handwritten notes.

**Partner with local schools to guide students in making handmade holiday cards for deployed service members. Every unique effort keeps our mission vibrant and impactful. As you spread joy this month, please help us preserve these special moments for the Department history book.

Email ***historian@wvaux.org*** one photograph alongside a one-paragraph explanation of your activity to ensure your Unit is represented in our Department history. Please make sure your paragraph includes all essential details: the date, location, number of participants, and the ultimate purpose of the event. Thank you for your continued dedication, creativity, and service to our veterans!

Andrea Snyder
Department Historian
historian@wvaux.org

Membership Chairman

West Virginia Membership Update
Closing In on 50%!

The Great All-American Team reached 48.10% of our membership goal as of November 16th. Due to National ALAMIS issues, the deadline to reach 50% has been extended to December 15.

Congratulations to District 3, which leads the department at 59.55%, and to the units leading their districts.

District 1 – Paden City Unit 86, 84.81%
District 3 – Pickens Unit 122, 94.44%
District 4 – Spencer Unit 21, 85.71%
District 5 – St. Albans Unit 73, 64.52%
District 6 – Beckley Unit 32, 63.64%
District 10 – Petersburg Unit 78, 82.81%

A big shout-out to Pickens Unit 122 for currently leading the department. Way to go, Pickens!

Remember, 2026 memberships expire December 31, 2026. Members who haven't renewed by then will no longer be in good standing and may lose membership rights and privileges.

Let's reach out to members who still need to renew and get those renewals processed. Teamwork makes the dream work!

Laura Clark
Membership Chairman

Americanism



Fun Facts and Refreshers helps Us to remember and learn something we may have forgotten or never even known:

Why do we Stand for the National Anthem?

We stand for the United States national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner", as a traditional sign of respect for our country, its flag, and the ideals it represents.

**RESPECT FOR OUR NATION: Standing symbolizes unity and respect for the United States, its history, Constitution, and freedoms.

**HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED: For many Americans, standing is a way to recognize military service members, Veterans, and those who sacrificed their lives in service to the country.

**NATIONAL UNITY: It provides a moment when Americans can come together under one flag, regardless of our differences.

**HISTORICAL TRADITION: The custom developed over time, particularly at public ceremonies and sporting events. Congress officially designated "The Star-Spangled Banner" as our national anthem in 1931.

**A SYMBOL OF FREEDOM: The anthem commemorates the American flag surviving the British bombardment of Fort McHenry during the War of 1812. Standing can express appreciation for the nation's resilience and ideals.

**ONE IMPORTANT DISTINCTION: Although many people associate standing with honoring veterans and fallen service members, the national anthem is not specifically a tribute to the military. It represents the nation as a whole.

Thank you!
Sandra Harper
Department Chair



Department Headquarters Scorekeeper

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.

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 included, 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, 2027 will be billed as a junior member for 2027 membership year. If she turns 18 after August 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026 she will changed to a Senior member for the 2027 membership year.

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

New Members—STARTING WITH THE 2026-2027 MEMBERSHIP YEAR: when sending in a new application please make sure they are COMPLETED. If you are unable to read the new application, I won't be able to read it. Please clarify illegible writing. Applications will be returned if **No Signature by either New Member or Post/Unit Officer.**

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. I will no longer accept phone calls on my personal phone, or personal email. (I do have a selection of members I take personal phone calls from) <u>This is not for everyone's use.</u>

REMINDER: You can now add new members to your transmittals. Don't send the DD214's to this office. Return them to the new member.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRS" To complete the new member application I need the veteran's ID # they are joining under. If the veteran is a new member, send me their ID # once you receive it, I can't complete it until I have it. Ask your Post Adj. for the ID number.

New Membership Applications have been emailed to units and on website www.wvaux.org

Spirit messages are to be no more than 200 words this year, with the exception of the Department President.
Since postage has gone up to mail Spirits, I have to make sure I don't have more than the price of mailing them.
Articles are due into Department on the <u>17th of each month. Please make sure you go by this date.</u>

DIRECTORY: Updates:
Page 9: Please cross out **2009-10 Patricia Moore and her address.**

Page 10: Paula Booth deceased date should be **2015**

Page 27: Wellsburg Unit #34 President Susan Powell phone number has changed to: **304-670-0097**

GIFT SHOP DATES

Beckley VA-December 2nd

Clarksburg VA-December 4th

Martinsburg VA-December 4th

Huntington VA-December 21st



Department Headquarters

Office Hours
Monday-Friday
8:30am-3:30pm
Phone **304-398-2070**
<u>department@wvaux.org</u>

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

Department Website:
<u>www.wvaux.org</u>

Rhododendron Girls State Website
<u>www.wvgirlsstate.org</u>

The American Legion
Department of WV
<u>wvlegion@suddenlinkmail.com</u>

American Legion Auxiliary
National Website
<u>ALAforveterans.org</u>

Remember Our Legion Family

Past Department President Patricia Moore passed away recently. Cards may be sent to her family:
Family of Patricia Moore, PDP
c/o Tammy Carder
187 Camp Mountaineer Hwy
Morgantown WV 26508

Lisa Harbour-Adkins fell recently and broke her ankle on both sides. She had surgery, and is home now recuperating. Cards may be sent to:
Lisa Harbour-Adkins
4240 Altizer Ave
Huntington WV 25705

Tommy Hayes, PDC, passed away recently.
Cards may be sent to his family:
Family of Tommy Hayes
586 County Road 775
Proctorville OH 45669-8814

Lets' keep our Legion Family in our thoughts and prayers.



1st District Vice President

Hello 1st District!

Congratulations to Wheeling #1, Moundsville #3, Cameron #18, New Martinsville #28, Wellsburg #34, and Paden City #86 for all reaching the 50% mark and over.

McMechen #5, Wellsburg #34, Follansbee #45, Pine Grove #81, Wheeling #89, and Newell #114 we need you!! Make those phone calls or send a personal notice. Members love to know that they are still needed.

Weirton #10 and Chester #121 keep up the great work. I'm sure you will reach the 50% before December 15th.

Me and Bill would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Susan Brown
First District VP

3rd District Vice President

District 3 is leading the game! Keep up the great work. Congratulations to Pickens Unit 122 for 94%! You are almost home. You got this! Buckhannon is on second waiting to make it home at 78%. Bridgeport is at bat with 66%. Awesome job District 3.

Invite others to join the game. What fun we can have this year with the sports theme.

I hope you all have a wonderful Holiday season. Remember why we do what we do! Help Veterans, Military, and their families this season. Join the Christmas Gift Shops at each of the VA's. Help wrap gifts or pick out gifts for their loved ones. If you haven't experienced this.....you need to. Always in the Spirit of Service NOT Self!
Happy Holidays, love and hugs to all!

PDP Kim Mellie
District 3 Vice President



4th District Vice President

Tis the Season to Grow Our Auxiliary Family!

As we move into the final month of the year, the holiday spirit reminds us of the power of community, gratitude, and giving back. There is no better way to celebrate these values than by securing the future of our **American Legion Auxiliary**.

Right now, our greatest gift is our membership. Every renewal and new member strengthens our mission to support veterans, military families, and youth. As you wrap gifts for loved ones, consider giving **a meaningful present that lasts all year**: pay the dues for a fellow member or gift a new membership to an eligible loved one.

Whether it's helping a senior member stay connected or introducing a daughter or granddaughter to our legacy of service, your generosity ensures our circle remains unbroken.
Let's make this December unforgettable.

Reach out to your unit, check in on neighbors, and inspire renewals today.

Together, we can wrap up the year with a stronger, more vibrant Auxiliary!

Thank you for your dedicated service and holiday heart.
Andrea Snyder
District 4 Vice President
ala.AndreaSnyder@gmail.com

5th District Vice President

Thank you to all that held Veteran events this month. As we move on to the Christmas season, remember all Veterans in nursing homes, Veteran facilities and those that are homeless. Pray for their comfort and for their families.

Please continue to work diligently to make our target on December 15th.

District 5 is currently in 5th place in the state. St Albans Unit 73 (64.52%) and Huntington Unit 16 (48.85%) lead District 5 in dues paid.

Volunteers are extremely important this time of year to organizations in your communities. Give a little of your time to assist others! It's a great way to meet potential new members.

Mid Winter will be held at Oglebay February 5-7, 2027. More information will be available soon.

May God bless each of you, our Veterans and our troops currently deployed!

Patti Withrow
Pjwithrow1958@gmail.com

6th District Vice President

Holiday Greetings to all our District 6 members. Hoping everyone will have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. I'm sure everyone has made plans in having family and friends over to celebrate the Holidays and busy making your special Holiday treats for family and friends. With the Holidays upon us, we will need to take extra effort in reaching out and making contact with our members and making a concerted effort to collect the dues.

I want to toot the horn for Beckley Unit #32 at 63.64% and Cowen Unit#62 at 61.90%.

Our gift shop event will be held at the Beckley VA hospital for veterans on December 2, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. We will only have access to a meeting room on the 1st floor.

For all of you that have to travel, our travels prayers are with you. Stay safe and be careful. Enjoy your holiday time with your family and friends.
Pray for Our Country.
Mary Spence
Vice President
District 6

10th District Vice President

Greetings District 10

First let me continue to encourage you all to keep getting those numbers up with membership. I know several units that have met or exceeded their goals, and some that are continuing to strive towards their target! Keep up the good work!

I hope that everyone is doing well and enjoying this blessed time of year. With the holidays fast approaching, I'm sure that everyone is busy with the hustle and bustle of the season. This is a time of year for family, friends, and festivities.

As we celebrate this joyous time of year, let us not forget those that aren't as fortunate. May we be mindful of those that face hardships or have no one during the holidays. Let us show our American Legion Auxiliary spirit and reach out to those in need. We can volunteer our time at the local veterans hospital or nursing home, provide needed supplies for food and coat drives, or give to a local community charity or salvation army. Keep it in your heart that giving to others can be the best gift of all!
Happy Holidays
Pamela Gustines
Vice President District 10

1st District President

Hello Fellow Teammates,

Now that we have entered the Holiday Season with Thanksgiving and Christmas almost upon us, please do the Buddy System. Make calls to your members and check to see if they need anything or would like some company. Forward any information to all Veterans and Active Military in your area regarding free or discounted meals. Share your unit's availability to assist the Post and/or SAL, support and volunteer any upcoming Children's Holiday Events, and have resource information on hand as well.

I am here if you need assistance of any kind or need an ear for venting.

Keep in mind December 31st, 2026 will be here in the blink of an eye. Check in with you members and ask if they need any assistance with their membership renewals, transfers, or just want to talk.

Until next month,
Be Safe and God Bless!!!
Rhonda Best
American Legion Auxiliary
Dept. of WV
First District President

3rd District President

It has been awesome seeing how Units have Honored our Veterans and Military this month. Now as we leave November (I hope everyone has an enjoyable Thanksgiving) and gear up for December, Our Auxiliary mission is never done!

Thank you to District 3 for all your hard work on Membership!

Every Month we serve has a moment of emotions and magic, December can be one of the months that our Veterans and Military need Us the most! Checking on the Nursing Homes that have Veterans, Veterans who can't get out, Veterans who are just simply alone. A smile and hello can go so much further than you ever expected! It can change a Person's Day that just needed to hear a friendly voice and give them a moment of your time.

Wreaths Across America can always use our Help, fundraising monies to help cover our National Cemeteries. December 19,2026 is the day Nation wide this will take place this year.

Packing boxes of goodies to send to our Military still serving, that are Deployed.

Remember to make your reservations for Mid-Winter Conference

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!!!
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO SERVING OUR VETERANS AND MILITARY

Sandra Harper
Sandy.harper265@gmail.com

4th District President

There is a season for everything, and as we enter this beautiful season of giving, I find myself reflecting on the incredible hearts of those who serve.

Throughout the year, you give so much of yourselves. Your time, your talents, your resources, and often the quiet sacrifices that no one ever sees. You give without expecting recognition, simply because caring for others is who you are. But here's what I hope you remember this season: You deserve the same love, kindness, and appreciation that you so freely give to others.

We often call December the season of giving and love, but wouldn't it be wonderful if that spirit lived in our hearts all 365 days of the year? If we extended the same grace, encouragement, and compassion to one another in July as we do in December?

As your District 4 President, I want you to know that I see your dedication, I value your service, and I am deeply grateful for each of you.

May this season remind us that love isn't something we celebrate once a year. It's something we choose to give every single day.

With heartfelt gratitude and warmest wishes,
Rebecca Farley
District 4 President
ala.rebeccafarley@gmail.com



10th District President

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!

Like always remember your veterans at this time as well as your members.

Everyone is doing a good job at membership, keep up your good work and striving for the100 percent. Stay positive in all you do!

Jill Davis
10th District President

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Prepare your Home for Winter Weather!
Winter storms can knock out power and keep you from traveling for days
** Keep enough non-perishable food, water and medications for at least 3 days
** Ensure you have warm clothing and blankets
** Make sure you have an updated first aid kit
** Charge your phone in advance and check for Wireless Emergency Alerts

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
aef@wvaux.org
304-261-1518

Constitution & Bylaws

Hello all!

We have received Constitution and By-Laws from 2 Units so far. The committee is reviewing them and will send suggested updates if needed before Christmas.

Let's make sure all Units have Constitution and By Laws on file to make life easier for the members to come!

Have a wonderful Holiday Season!
Kim Mellie, PDP
Constitution & Bylaws

Child 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 Department Head-quarters, or bring to Midwinter.



Thank You!
Beth Kilgore
Chairman

Community Service

It's the season of spending time with family along with doing more in our community .

Let's show the community how great our American Legion Auxiliary (family) is, by wearing our American Legion Auxiliary branding.

Remember our Veterans who may not have any families .

Merry Christmas
Blessings,
Kelli Immel
Community Service

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 with 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 your 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.

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.

Merry Christmas!
Beth Kilgore
Children & Youth

Education

Unit Education Chairs—

I hope you have been including your students and schools in your Auxiliary and holiday plans.

Thanks to those that answered my Face-book appeal so that I could report to the National Education and Central Division Chairs.

Secretary Paulette has updated the De-partment Scholarship and you can distribute to your schools now. Our site: www.wvaux.org under Media.

The National Scholarships information is still not available, but we will notify you as soon as possible. The student submits the National Scholarships electronically so I will have a flyer or letter that you can take to your school counselors. You should stay in touch with the counselors to encourage them to have their students apply.

FLASH: A new National Scholarship will be available for Military Spouses, two at $10,000 each.

Our Department Education committee is needing an email from your Unit. This is the best way to pass the information on to your Units. Paulette is sending us the list of names she has. So, watch for further information on Facebook and/or an email from one of us for further details.

Let's hit the baseball out of the park and encourage the counselors to work with their students.

Dianne McClung
lin4dee@aol.com
education@wvaux.org
304-481-8779



Junior Activities

December offers many opportunities for our Juniors to spread Christmas cheer. They can make holiday cards for veterans, collect items for those in need, visit nursing homes, participate in food drives, or brighten someone's day with a simple act of kindness. These activities teach our Juniors the true meaning of serving others and honoring our veterans.

As we celebrate this special season, let us encourage our Juniors to continue learning about patriotism, volunteering, and the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Every project they complete and every person they help makes our organization stronger.

May we remember that the greatest gift we can give is the gift of kindness, compassion, and love.

Wishing all our junior members, their families, and Auxiliary members a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year!

Remember: Great things happen when we work together, serve with pride, and lead with our hearts!

Merry Christmas!
Holly Adams
Junior Activities Chair

Music

A little Christmas Song to Enjoy:

Dashing through the snow
Help is on the way
Selecting, wrapping presents
For our veterans today.
Auxiliary hard at work
Making sure that all
Families of our Military
Aren't forgotten at all
Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells
Jingle All The Way
Oh what fun it is to help
Our veterans and military today

Tune to Jingle Bells

Paulette Anderson
Music Chairman



Leadership

As we enter this beautiful holiday season, the familiar words of Silent Night remind me of a powerful leadership lesson: Not all leadership is loud, and not all impact is visible.

Some of our greatest leaders serve quietly. They arrive early, stay late, offer encouragement, solve problems, and lend a helping hand without ever seeking recognition. They are the peaceful contributors who strengthen our mission through their actions, kindness, and unwavering dedication.

To those silent leaders, I want you to know: I see you. I hear you. I appreciate you. And I applaud you!

Leadership is also about respect. Honoring our chain of command, communicating with kindness, and recognizing the responsibilities of each leadership position help create unity throughout our organization. The chain of command should never become a chain of discouragement. Instead, it should provide a pathway for communication, guidance, and support.

A kind word can restore confidence. A listening ear can build trust. A simple thank-you can remind someone that their service matters.

This season, may we lead with humility, serve with grace, and remember that sometimes the quietest acts of leadership leave the loudest legacy.

Rebecca S Farley
Leadership Chair
leadership@wvaux.org

Legislative

December Action: Elevate Your Voice for Veterans

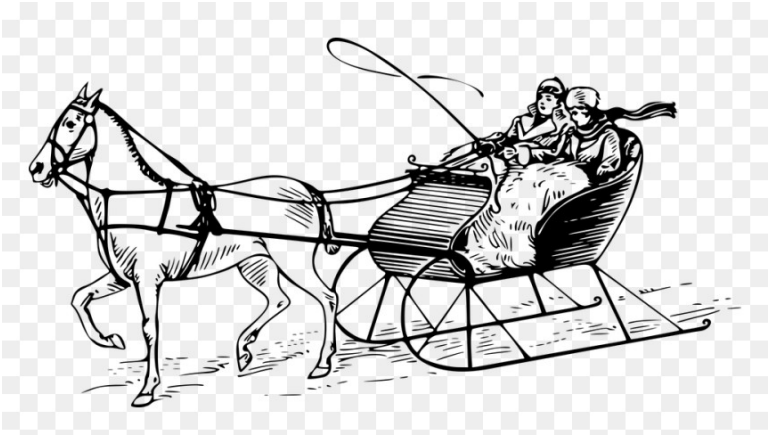
As Congress prepares for its winter recess, year-end funding and critical legislative decisions are top of mind in Washington. This makes December a vital window for American Legion Auxiliary members to advance The American Legion's legislative mission. Advocacy is entirely nonpartisan—it focuses purely on policies that support our veterans, military families, and communities.

You can make a meaningful impact in just five minutes. Visit the American Legion Grassroots Action Center online to sign up for Legislative Alerts and access pre-written message templates. Use these tools to contact your representatives regarding urgent priorities like VA healthcare improvements, mental health resources, and caregiver support.

Let's ensure our lawmakers head into the new year with the needs of our heroes fresh in their minds. Urge your fellow Unit members to join the effort, and track any responses you receive from your representatives. Your voice matters!

Andrea Snyder
Legislative Chairman
legislative@wvaux.org





Poppy

Greetings Poppy Pals!

Cold weather's set in and we're heading into the holidays.

Thank you to Berkeley/Martinsburg Unit 14 for the poppy report. If anyone else has sent a report to me, I am having problems with the wvaux.org email so please resend it to the following address: tjanestaley@yahoo.com. I look forward to hearing from all of you. I do have a report from Unit 23—since that is my unit and I am the poppy chair there, as well as department poppy chair.

On November 2 we presented the Poppy Story separately to all grade levels at Roosevelt Elementary School here in Mason County. It was a great day! The kids all loved it, with the presentation adjusted to suit the littles as well as the older children. We gave them poppies, coloring books (from the National ALA website), and bookmarks of a design that I created. (If you're interested, email me and I can send you a picture and/or the Word files I used to make them.) It was a long, tiring, yet rewarding day.

Don't forget about the Poppy Poster Contest; information on that was included in last month's newsletter but let me know if you missed it and I can forward it on to you.

Now on to holiday decorating. I'd like to challenge all units to make use of poppies for decorating at least one area in your posts for Christmas and send me a picture. Can't wait to see your creativity!

Again, for sending pictures and/or reports, please use the email address tjanestaley@yahoo.com and put ALA Poppy in the subject line to make sure I get them.

Everyone have a blessed Thanksgiving!
Jane Staley
Poppy Chair



Public Relations

December gives American Legion Auxiliary units across West Virginia an opportunity to share how members support veterans, military families, and their communities during the holiday season. Use your public relations efforts to connect seasonal activities with the Auxiliary's mission of service.

Before your holiday projects begin, share announcements with local media and on your unit's Facebook page. Include dates, locations, donation needs, and contact information. Give readers clear instructions for volunteering, contributing supplies, or attending an event.

As activities take place, collect photographs and details for a brief event recap. Explain whom your project served and recognize the members and community partners who helped. Share totals, such as gifts collected or meals delivered, when available. Obtain permission before posting photographs or personal stories.

December also provides time to review your unit's public relations efforts. Consider which announcements encouraged participation and which stories prompted community interest. Use those observations to plan your communications for the coming year.

Close the year by thanking volunteers, supporters, and local media for helping share your unit's work. Through timely updates, accurate information, and sincere appreciation, your unit helps neighbors understand our purpose and find ways to support veterans and military families throughout the year ahead.

Tiffany Orlando
Public Relations Chair
tiffanyannorlando@gmail.com

VA&R

As we more closer to the holiday's, I thought this would be a great time to mention the 11th Hour Angel. Does your VA or local nursing homes offer this for Veterans? Do you know what the 1th hour volunteer is? This takes a very unique individual. 11 hour angels are specialized end-of-life companions who provide a calm, non-judgmental, and reassuring bedside presence for patients in their final hours or days of life. They sit with Veterans who are actively dying to ensure they do not die alone. They assist family members so they can take a break, grab something to eat or rest a bit. They might read, play music or hold their hand. With Veteran, they might participate in flag presentation, the final walk, or final farewells.

If this is something you can do and your local VA or nursing homes don't currently offer it, talk with them about getting the program started.

Happy Thanksgiving
Lisa Cadwallader



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
WV RHODODENDRON
GIRLS STATE

Rhododendron Girls State

Rhododendron Girls State is planning a great year for the junior attendees in 2027.

Each unit has the opportunity to send girls to this fantastic experience but you must make contact with your local high schools.

The dates are June 6-12, 2027, at Davis and Elkins College. The cost is still $300 per girl. Please get the info out to your schools, counselors, principals, and anyone who help get the information to the girls and their parents. If you need additional information, please contact Dr. Rosemary Thomas, Director or Katy Garlick, Co-Director or Laura Clark, Registrar or me.

Talk to the girls who attended last year and have them share their thoughts and memories. This is a great learning experience about our government as well as a great week of fun and new friends. We're looking forward to working with you this year.

Ann Buchanan
Girls State Chairman





District Representatives

1st Dist. — Madi Adams
500 Jefferson St.
Newell WV 26050
681-209-6925

3rd Dist. — Mary Jo Thomas
279 Rock Lake Road
Fairmont WV 26554
202-365-7510

4th Dist. — Andrea Snyder
2755 Redmond Ridge Rd.
Gallipolis Ferry WV 25515
304-593-0249

5th Dist.— Laura Clark
4023 Piedmont Rd.
Huntington WV 25704
304-939-3607

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!

We did have a $200.00 winner this month.

Time is winding down to send in your 2027 Department Fundraiser tickets. Please make sure they are completely filled out. Remember they need to be in the office BY December 31st to be counted for the January 1, 2027 drawing.

I have received a few in the office and they have been posted on the spreadsheet. Money has been deposited.

We still have a few tickets to sell, so if you want more, please email me so I can get them to you.

They make great Christmas and Birthday Gifts!!

Merry Christmas!
Paulette Anderson
Christy Bland



October Ways and Means Winners

Name	#'s	City	State	Date	$$$
Nicole Connell	912	Romney	WV	10/1/26	25.00
Larry Jones	305	Wood Ridge	PA	10/2/26	25.00
Diane Robbins	986	Wheeling	WV	10/3/26	25.00
Alan Robinson	208	Winchester	VA	10/5/26	25.00
Pam Rinker	425	Petersburg	WV	10/6/26	25.00
Tara Hoffman	940	Cameron	WV	10/7/26	25.00
Austin Tiller	600	Hurricane	WV	10/8/26	25.00
	222			10/9/26	
Mark & Kim Hott	971	Romney	WV	10/10/26	25.00
Rachel Boyd	623	Martinsburg	WV	10/12/26	25.00
Aaron Chapman	808	Bluefield	WV	10/13/26	25.00
Judy Richman	854	Augusta	WV	10/14/26	25.00
Lisa Davis	307	Capon Bridge	WV	10/15/26	25.00
Chandler Koger	715	Roderfield	WV	10/16/26	25.00
Matt Chambers	441	Wheeling	WV	10/17/26	25.00
G A White	294	Bel	WV	10/19/26	25.00
Jo Ann Camp	576	Spencer	WV	10/20/26	25.00
Patsy Vaughn	166	Moorefield	WV	10/21/26	**200.00**
Harold Kidwiler	251	Harpers Ferry	WV	10/22/26	25.00
Rebecca Farley	457	Leon	WV	10/23/26	25.00
Lynn Hutchinson	529	Great Cacapon	WV	10/24/26	25.00
Jim & Pam McCartney	700	Morgantown	WV	10/26/26	25.00
G A White	447	Bel	WV	10/27/26	25.00
Alan Anderson	948	Highview	WV	10/28/26	25.00
Matt Renner	562	Charles Town	WV	10/29/26	25.00
Jennifer Hill	018	Moundsville	WV	10/30/26	25.00
Regina Farmer	272	Wheeling	WV	10/31/26	25.00

"THE GREAT ALL-AMERICAN TEAM"

Department Goal: 4,753 members Membership to Date: 2,286 48.10%
Unit #200 Goal 149 members To Date: 76
1st Target December 15th 50.00%
Updated November 16 2026

3rd Base Coach Rebecca ***1st Base Coach Peggy***

District 1			
Unit	2027 Goal	2027	% of Goal
Wheeling #1	32	24	75.00%
Moundsville #3	260	138	53.08%
McMechen #5	12		
Weirton #10	72	24	33.33%
Cameron #18	119	64	53.78%
New Martinsville #28	109	70	64.22%
Wellsburg #34	22	12	54.55%
Follansbee #45	57	4	07.02%
Pine Grove #81	60	8	13.33%
Paden City #86	79	67	84.81%
Wheeling #89	10	1	10.00%
Newell #114	20	2	10.00%
Chester #121	122	59	48.36%
TOTALS	974	473	48.56%

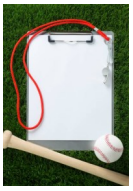
District 4			
Unit	2027 Goal	2027	% of Goal
Parkersburg #15	380	188	49.47%
Spencer #21	21	18	85.71%
Pt. Pleasant #23	238	49	20.59%
Tyler County #48	36	1	02.78%
Sistersville #67	41	10	24.39%
New Haven #140	109	4	03.67%
Williamstown #159	78	34	43.59%
TOTALS	903	304	33.67%

District 6			
Unit	2027 Goal	2027	% of Goal
Welch #8	43	23	53.49%
Bluefield #9	19		
Beckley #32	11	7	63.64%
Gary #38	87	38	43.68%
Cowen #62	21	13	61.90%
Richwood #97	25	6	24.00%
TOTALS	206	88	42.72%

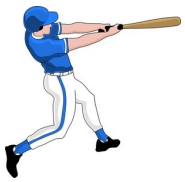


National League

Goal—2083
To Date—865
41.53%



Team Scout-Membership Chairman



American League

Goal—2521
To Date—1345
53.14%

District 3			
Unit	2027 Goal	2027	% of Goal
Buckhannon #7	46	36	78.26%
Clarksburg #13	40	20	50.00%
Elkins #29	99	56	56.57%
Shinnston #31	260	146	56.15%
Braxton County #33	28	15	53.82%
Bridgeport #68	102	68	66.67%
Belington #96	11		
Pickens #122	18	17	94.94%
Morgantown #174	150	91	60.67%
TOTALS	754	449	59.55%

District 5			
Unit	2027 Goal	202	% of Goal
Huntington #16	131	64	48.85%
Logan #19	15		
Charleston #20	26	2	07.69%
St. Albans #73	31	20	64.52%
Ceredo-Kenova #93	199	62	31.16%
Hamlin #111	39	16	41.03%
Milton #139	66	27	40.91%
Barboursville #177	154	69	44.91%
TOTALS	661	260	39.33%

District 10			
Unit	2027 Goal	2027	% of Goal
Martinsburg #14	68	48	70.59%
Piedmont #52	20		
Berkeley Springs #60	199	123	61.81%
Charles Town #63	33	19	57.58%
Moorefield #64	87	60	68.97%
Charles Town #71	132	74	56.06%
Petersburg #78	64	53	82.81%
Romney #91	135	61	45.19%
Paw Paw #128	33	14	42.42%
Kirby #134	28	20	71.43%
Ridgeley #136	65	19	29.23%
Capon Bridge #137	213	143	67.14%
Keyser #152	29	2	06.90%
TOTALS	1106	636	57.50%

December 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
R.E.D. FRIDAYS Until They All Come Home		1	2 *Beckley VA Gift Shop*	3	4 *Martinsburg VA Gift Shop* *Clarksburg VA Gift Shop*	5
6	7 	8	9 *Cheer Party Checks*	10	11	12
13 	14	15 *Bill of Rights Day* *Target Sheet*	16 *Battle of the Bulge (1944)*	17 *Articles Due*	18	19 
20 	21 *Huntington VA Gift Shop* *Spirit Out*	22	23	24 *Christmas Eve* *Office Closed*	25 	26
27	28 *Vacation*	29	30	31	*Programs of the Month* *Christmas Gift Shops* *V A & R* *Salute to Veterans*	

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.wvaux.org** Unit Presidents **with no email contact** will receive a free copy by mail.

Subscription will Cost $20.00

2027 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:_____

46th Annual Mid-Winter Conference

February 5-6, 2027

ADVERTISING FORM

The American Legion
Department of West Virginia, Inc.

I hereby authorize the following advertisement to be placed in the official program of the 46th Annual Mid-Winter Conference of The American Legion, Department of West Virginia, Inc., scheduled February 5-6, 2027, at Oglebay Resort and Conference Center, Wheeling, West Virginia.

Date:_____ _____

Name of Post/Unit/SAL

Please specify exactly how your ad should read. Onlv the information you supply will be published. An attached copy of your ad is very helpful. Be sure to state if Legion, Auxiliary, or SAL Emblem is requested.

Advertisement (s) should read as follows:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Authorized Signature:_____

Price List:	Full Page $100	Full Page (Color) $160
	Half Page $60	Half Page (Color) $100
	Quarter Page $35	Quarter Page (Color) $70
	Eighth Page $25	Eighth Page (Color) $50

Please send your ad along with a check made payable to: The American Legion
P.O. Box 3191
Charleston, WV 25332

Ad and Payment Deadline is January 12, 2027
No Deviation

Oglebay Reservations Mid- Winter Conference February 5-6, 2027

Web Reservations System

Link below for making reservation. Remember to adjust the start date to your ACTUAL arrival date,

Link for reservation:
https ://book.onagilysys.com/wbe/group/616/0gl ebay_resort/auth

Group Access:

Group ID: BKG470

Password: Oglebayl

If you prefer to make your reservation by phone, please call 304-243-4000.

Please give the Group Code Bl<G470 to access your group block.

CANCELLATION MUST BE
48 HOURS IN ADVANCE
TO RECEIVE REFUND

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE 46TH ANNUAL MID-WINTER CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 5-6, 2027
OGLEBAY RESORT
WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

ADVANCED REGISTRATION - $30.00
AT DOOR REGISTRATION - $35.00

RETURN BOTTOM PORTION WITH YOUR PAYMENT

I AM SENDING $_____ FOR ADVANCED REGISTRATION(S).

SPELL NAME AS IT IS TO APPEAR ON NAME BADGE DURING CONFERENCE

NAME (S)_____

TITLE:_____

ADDRESS_____

POST/UNIT/SAL NO._____

MAIL TO: THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF WEST VIRGINIA
PO BOX 3191
CHARLESTON WV 25332

DEADLINE DATE: Monday, February 1, 2027

NO WRITING! NO STAMPS!

SIGN UP FOR ACTION ALERTS!

Go to: https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home

Then select the method to receive!