



STARRING:  
VETERANS

# HOOSIER AUXILIARY NEWS

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## President's Message

*"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view, until you climb into his skin and walk around it." Atticus Finch, To Kill a Mockingbird*

This powerful quote from author Harper Lee can resonate with our interactions with our veterans, military, families, community, and each other.

Consider - Be the One. Be the One is a mission not a campaign of the American Legion Family. It is our mission to reduce veteran suicide. In January, I attended the Indiana Military Legislative Day at the State House. I witnessed the signing of Indiana House Concurrent Resolution 9 asking for support of every Hoosier to help reduce veteran suicide. We are here for our veterans. We embrace the mission. Ask, listen, reach out, and follow up. Learn more at [www.betheone.org](http://www.betheone.org). The crisis hotline is 988 and press option 1. Our veterans have gone through challenges and unexpected circumstances. Veterans are indeed the epitome of courage and heroism in challenging circumstances.

Let's be empathetic toward each other. There is a lot of good going on in our units. You promote "Service not Self" and show our veterans they are the stars. There are challenges while doing the work



**Cherril Threte**  
Department President

of the Auxiliary but if we keep our mission in mind, we should be able to overcome the challenges that occur. Think about why you became a member. You honor the service of the veteran that you gain your eligibility through. We also have dual members who are eligible in their own right; honor and gratitude for your military service.

We can continue to become the best member possible through Mission Training sessions. Indiana was well represented at Mission Training in Cincinnati and most recently in Nashville, Tennessee. Also remember the courses at ALA Academy [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org) such

as: How to Deal with Conflict Resolution and Establishing an ALA Culture of Goodwill.

Since I was installed to represent the great Department of Indiana, I have enjoyed great hospitality at Department visitations in Districts 2, 4, 7, 9 and 11. I look forward to visiting the other districts. I am impressed with your reports and creativity in working on our programs and keeping members engaged. I have also participated in Veteran gift wraps at Marion VA, Indianapolis, and Indiana Veterans' Home. I look forward to your submissions for my President's Award of Excellence nominations due 6/1/2024. Please visit [www.aladeptin.org](http://www.aladeptin.org) for the categories. Write a 300-to-500-word essay about what you accomplished by serving our veterans this 2023-2024 Auxiliary year. Be sure to include your name, program, district, and unit. You can email or mail your submission to me.

Have you checked out the newly enhanced website at [www.aladeptin.org](http://www.aladeptin.org)? It's full of important and updated information. Applause to our HAN editor Maria Gottlieb for this wonderful production. Applause to the staff at Department Anna Conwell, Kathy Knafel, and Jessie Manning. We greatly

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## Membership



**Diana VanHooks**  
Department Chair

### Membership: Episode 2. Scene 2. Take 1. Action!

As I accompany President Cherril on visitations, I'm so glad to see how this year's theme is being embraced, promoted, and celebrated as we put the spotlight on our veterans. The "Lights! Camera! Action! Starring: Veterans" is taking center stage and we love it!

Since last we "talked," several units have achieved the membership goals and as of this writing, sixty-five percent of the units in the state are at 75% or better and the Department of Indiana is at 80% of our goal and ahead of where we were at this time last year. This upward trend isn't just happening in Indiana; for the first time in a while, membership is

up with an increase of more than 1200 nationwide. You are "The Brightest Star!"

So, in this segment of membership activity, I want to share some of the inquiries and responses that have been posed; better yet, some of what I've learned from others regarding membership. We'll begin with questions asked to the membership team:

1) How to process a transfer and renew their membership online? You can't. The Member Profile & Update form must be submitted physically to the offices at Department, and the member's renewal must be submitted with the transfer form.

2) If a member wasn't paid last year but wants to pay for membership this year, (in other words they skipped a year or so) is this considered a rejoin? Yes. Anytime a former member returns and can use a previously assigned membership number, this is a rejoin.

3) What is the difference between rejoin and renewal? A renewal happens when the member RENEWS their membership from year to year continuously. A rejoin has a lapse in membership with inactive or non-paid year(s).

4) Does a rejoin count on the

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## Hoosier Girls State



**Brenda "Sue" Wehr**  
Director

Plans for the 82nd Session of the American Legion Auxiliary Hoosier Girls State Program are well on their way! By now, the 2024 ALA HGS applications should have been emailed or mailed to each of the high schools in the state of Indiana. Although every unit has an ALA HGS Chair, just like membership, it is every member's responsibility to help promote our outstanding program.

Units must stay in contact with both the high schools in their area and the delegates and alternates that submit their applications. Although the applications are due to the District Chair by March 1, 2024, I can assure you that we will still be accepting applications right up until May 1st of 2024! Once the applications are received at the unit level, they must be looked over carefully to be sure all signatures are in place and the information is complete. The completed applications and check or checks are then sent to the District Chair. (Remember to make a copy for your unit records.) Once the District Chair receives the application, she will again look it over to be sure all the information and signatures are correct, make copies of the application and checks before forwarding the application, copy of the checks, and a copy of the submission form to the appropriate person and the checks and a copy of the submission form to ALA Department of Indiana to the attention of Kathy Knafel, ALA De-

partment Treasurer.

Meanwhile, while the District ALA HGS Chairs are busy working with the Unit Chairs and our Indiana high schools to obtain applications for delegates and alternates to attend our program, the ALA HGS staff has been working tirelessly preparing for another successful ALA HGS session.

The 82nd session of ALA HGS will be held once again at Trine University in Angola, Indiana the week of June 23 through June 29, 2024. As in the past, we are planning to host a Variety Show on Friday evening, June 28, 2024, as a fun way to wrap up an otherwise exhausting week. As plans get underway, the county counselors and the city counselors are busy working together on their agendas for the action-packed week at ALA Hoosier

Girls State. Assistant Director, Nancy Magginnis and I have been working on guest speakers for the various evening programs held during the week. Lots of work goes on behind the scenes as we prepare for the delegates arrival on registration day, Sunday, June 23, 2024.

I would like to take this opportunity to say "Thank You" to everyone who purchased or sold one or more of the ALA Hoosier Girls State Calendar Raffle Tickets. This fundraiser is what makes it financially possible for our ALA Hoosier Girls State outstanding program to continue year after year.



American Legion Auxiliary  
5440 Herbert Lord Road  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46216

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**From the Desk of the Secretary**



**Anna Conwell**  
*Department Secretary*

Greetings everyone!

The ALA Department of Indiana has been keeping busy with all that is happening around the state.

We are having a fantastic year! Membership is strong and many units take the leading role each week.

The ALA programs are being worked and members are stepping up for more training and inspiration. We have an awesome group of leaders that are willing to help and guide if needed.

The suspense continues to build as the next few months promise to show great and exciting results from all your hard work.

On behalf of the HQ staff, thank you all for all you do!

**Past Presidents' Parley**



**Jennie Maune**  
*Department Chair*

I put out an article in last October mailing about our "unwritten rules." I was hoping to get some responses from past presidents on all levels of the organization.

We need more communication among our unit, district, and department officers to pass on our knowledge of how and why we function the way we do. Yes, we have different explanations among us, but everyone should be on the same page. Let's see if we can somehow explain some of these "rules" to those that are wanting to make a long-lasting American Legion Auxiliary for the future and not have to second guess some of their decisions.

We have the Spring Conference coming up in April. I would love to have some of your "unwritten rules" actually written out to share in some future mailings and leadership meetings.

On another subject, please have your Junior members take a look at the Past President's Scholarship opportunity open to those seeking an education in the medical field.

**Chaplain's Corner**



**Jenny Gump**  
*Department Chaplain*

With spring approaching, we start planning the spring cleaning of our homes. We see what needs deep cleaning and what needs to be thrown out or given away. We look at our post homes and our Auxiliary rooms and decide they too need scrubbed, organized, and purged. With all this external cleaning, do we take the time to look inside and clean ourselves? We make New Year resolutions and by February they are frequently forgotten. Let us take the opportunity to restart those in the spring. What do you want to accomplish by the end of the Auxiliary year? What change do you want to make that could change, not only you, but others? How can you improve the lives of others?

Lamentations 3:21-23 says: Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. We wake each morning with hope for a better day. We get to push the restart button. We have a new day to do things better, to be kinder, to fix what is broken and to help who we can. We can make new plans or adjust old ones. We wake with hope, and hope is a good thing.

Matthew 6:28-29 says: Why do you worry about clothes? See how

the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. We spend so much time worrying about what others think about us and what we do. We wonder are we doing enough? Are we contributing enough? What are people saying about me when I am not there? Flowers do not worry their way to awesomeness and beauty. When you plant a packet of wildflower seeds, you do not know what you will get but the bounty is beautiful. Flowers just grow and we appreciate them for what they are. We as people grow and need to know we are appreciated as we are and for what we do. The petunia does not try to grow as large as the sunflower. The petunia is no less beautiful because it is short. We all have gifts that we can share to help our veterans and our communities.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 says: There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. Simply, there is a time for everything. Spring invites us to consider moments for planting roots regarding personal development, professional aspirations, or creative endeavors. We come out of winter shells to greet the world. We can serve our veterans and help those who need us the most. We can put our winter plans in motion.

A sleeping world emerges with

new possibilities, weakening winter's icy grip, and birdsong and bleating lamb announce to all the promise that in due season creation bursts into life. And whilst leaves that fell in winter lie upon the ground, soon to feed the earth, in nature's wondrous cycle of death and rebirth, within the tree is a stirring of new growth. Spring is an amazing time as the gray of winter moves to the green of the grass, the yellow of daffodils, the pink, red and purple of tulips and the orange of lilies. The colorful songbirds return to entertain us with their songs. The bunnies, squirrels and chipmunks come out to foil our gardening plans, but we still smile when we see them. The warm sun energizes us. The winter blues are gone. We thank God for the warmth and the change of the season. We ask His help in continuing our mission. We ask His help to grow, forgive and love.

I am working on President Cherril's book of prayers and devotional thoughts. If anyone has a prayer or devotional thought to share, please send them to me. I want to make a book that President Cherril can enjoy for years to come. All contributions are appreciated. I would like all contributions by July 1st. I will need some time to get them added to the book. You can send them via mail or email. Thank you!

Heavenly Father, thank you for Spring and the hope of warmer, longer, brighter days. Thank you for the coming of growth and life and birth. Thank you that things are coming awake in the world. This is what our calendar says, and we do see some signs that it is real. Amen.



**Resolutions**



**Carolyn Cunningham**  
*Department Chair*

A resolution is a formal written motion. Resolutions are used because the motion must be presented in written form with some of the reasons included in the document. If written correctly, the document makes it easier for members to understand the proposed. The name of the organization is mentioned in the resolution. Sometimes a resolution includes a preamble. A preamble enables members to give background information and to state the reasons why the motion should be adopted. A preamble contains whereas clauses that communicate the important background information to the assembly. The main resolution then follows.

Courtesy Resolutions: In addition to duties regarding resolutions which are referred to committee and which usually relate to policy matters, the resolution committee is often charged with the responsibility of drafting and presenting to the assembly any courtesy resolutions that may seem appropriate. Ordinary courtesy resolutions express the appreciation of the convention to those who arranged accommodations for its physical needs or rendered to service.

Robert's Rules of Order is a must. American Legion Auxiliary also has a webpage. Take care all and good luck.

**Leadership**



**Peggy Eagen**  
*Department Chair*

The American Legion Auxiliary leadership program must continue to educate our membership on every level to ensure the leadership of our organization continues to be the very best, now and in the future.

Working knowledge of the ALA programs and materials builds confidence and encourages participation.

I am conducting workshops on, "Getting Back to the Basics." They can be in your individual units or combined. I have five scheduled as of this article. I will be concentrating on: How to run a meeting, duties and responsibilities of officers and chairs, reciting and understanding the Preamble to our constitution,

our vision and mission statements, and the importance of reports and deadlines are a few topics of importance. As strong and effective leaders, we must concentrate on the Auxiliary's "Culture of Goodwill."

Annual reports are due to the district chair by April 15th. Each district leadership chair reports are due to me by April 27th.

Awards: The most outstanding leadership report. Department award - Rosey Newman monetary award to the unit and district that submits the best report on thinking outside the box in teaching leadership skills to their members. Mail to Rosey by May 15th.

My personal award goes to the unit leadership chair who best demonstrated what her unit did to promote a Culture of Goodwill. An award will be presented to the district chair that conducted a leadership workshop in their district. Don't forget the "Unit Member of the Year" award. It is open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president. Entry is due to me by June 1st. You can contact me about a workshop at [peggy.eagen0815@gmail.com](mailto:peggy.eagen0815@gmail.com) or by phone 219-309-7130.

**Parliamentary Pointers**



**Thelma J. Butler**  
*Department Parliamentarian*

Rules You May Need in a Meeting


Members' Right to Vote: Any member whose right to vote has not been suspended as the result of a formal disciplinary process has the right to vote, even if her or his dues have not been paid. You should not vote, however, on a question in which you have a direct personal pecuniary (monetary) interest not common to other members. However, you cannot be compelled to abstain because of such a conflict of interest.

Chair's Participation in Voting: The presiding officer should make every effort to maintain an appearance of impartiality, so that members

on both sides of any issue can feel confident they will receive fair treatment.

The chair does not participate in debate on any issue unless she or he gives up the chair until the issue is disposed of (which should seldom be done). The chair votes ONLY WHEN EITHER: (a) The vote is by ballot, in which case the chair votes along with and at the same time as all other members, OR (b) the chair's vote will change the result of the vote. Note: At this time, make note of the number in attendance eligible to vote. IF the number is 18 and the vote could be a "tie," chair might not cast vote and then could make the deciding vote 'yeh' or 'no' vote.

RULES restricting the chair's participation in voting and debate DO NOT apply in meetings of committees or small boards.



If you would like to purchase Robert's Rules of Order, 12th edition, you can go to National Emblem Sales at the following link:  
[Robert's Rules of Order - 12th Edition - American Legion Flag & Emblem](#)



## Children and Youth



**Michelle L. Woodburn**  
Department Chair

Happy New Year! I hope your holiday season was restful, you were able to do things you enjoy, and spent time with family and friends. As we begin the new year, I am asking everyone to continue to work hard on behalf of the C&Y program. You are making a huge impact on the lives of children across our nation.

Don't forget to submit applications for Youth Hero and Good Deed awards. Last month, National Presi-

dent Lisa was watching a television program where a young child was recognized. It is up to us to recognize these achievements. Indiana has been doing great work submitting nominations, but there are more deserving youth. Please take a moment to submit a nomination at the following link:

[https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/youth\\_hero\\_good\\_deed\\_award\\_nomination](https://legion-aux.formstack.com/forms/youth_hero_good_deed_award_nomination).

Once you receive the award back, please invite them to a meeting and make a big deal about their award. Invite the local media and please take pictures! Templates to submit to your local media are available for download on both the National and Department websites under Children and Youth. Then, send me a small paragraph and the pictures so we can continue to brag about Indiana's efforts to recognition our youth to our national leadership.

A quick reminder that the Child Welfare Program is a part of C&Y. Don't forget this very important program. Grants from this foundation are given to non-profit organizations

that serve children. The grant is not to be used for salaries or organization. The Indiana American Legion Family has donated over \$2800 to date for this program. Let's keep it up!

Indiana has a lot to be proud of for their accomplishments so far this year. Let's make this year an even better year for our Children & Youth. Here are some ways you can make this happen:

1. Contact all your unit chairs and see if they need any help. Find out what they have been up to and encourage them to send a report and pictures of what they are doing. We just need a small paragraph about the event, where it was held, and how you promoted the program. Ask them to give you a monthly report and then consolidate your district into a report and send it to me. I want to brag to our national leaders about you and see you represented on the "big screen" at the national convention.

2. Go onto the Central Division Children & Youth Facebook page and see what all the divisions are

doing. This might give you some ideas to pass along to your chairs. It doesn't have to be the same, but a great way to get ideas.

3. Take advantage of the National website for resources on the Children and Youth program. You can find that at [www.ALAForVeterans.org](http://www.ALAForVeterans.org) -> Programs-> Children and Youth.

We have been asked to participate in the Star-Spangled Babies baby shower event made possible by funding from the Indiana American Legion Auxiliary. They are in the beginning stages of planning but are hoping to host the event in Indianapolis on April 20th. They are hoping to host 25-30 moms at the event and then distribute the extra baby bundles to other new military families around the state as we expect to create and distribute 50 baby bundles in total! The actual Star-Spangled Babies event typically spans a 3-hour period. If you are interested in learning more, please let me know.

Finally, don't forget we are fundraising as a department to send military dependents to summer camp.

You can make a cash donation at Spring Conference, or they can be sent directly to the Department office with "Camp Carson" in the memo line. You can purchase a t-shirt using the attached form, or online at <https://childrenandyouth-101661.square.site>. Here is a QR code your members can scan to take you directly to the site, which also allows online donations. Please display this at your meetings for those interested.



Children & Youth  
Fund Raiser Store

For more information about the two camps offered by YMCA Camp Carson, please visit <https://www.campcarson.org/military-camps>

## Merit



**Janice Mort**  
Department Chair

Our Auxiliary year is coming to a close. I know that you have all been working hard this year "To Make Stars of Our Veterans." It is now the time to begin to compile all your good work for your year-end reports.

Unit members, check with the unit merit chair. Be sure your merit sheet is up to date with all your activities and donations that your unit and members have done. Unit merit chair, inform your unit on what your "rating" is at this time. You still have time to raise your points by donating or participating in an activity such as: Enter a unit "Book of Prayers"

or have a "Unit History" entry. Also, encourage your members to have entries for the "President Award of Excellence" and there are still membership goals that can be reached. Keep working on this chairmanship. Units, please do not send your merit sheets to department headquarters. Your district chair will report to me your unit ratings. Unit Merit Reports are due to their District Chairs by June 16th. I am looking forward to 100% reporting.

**AWARDS:** Certificate to all units with a Superior, Excellent or Good Rating. Personal Award to the top three district chairs with the highest percentage of their units reporting.

**Due Dates:** Unit Merit Sheets to District Merit Chair - June 16, 2024; District Report to Department Merit Chair - June 29, 2024. Please adhere to these deadlines.

If I can be of help or you have any questions, please contact me anytime: [janmort72@gmail.com](mailto:janmort72@gmail.com) or 574-527-9851.



AMERICAN  
**LEGION**  
AUXILIARY

## Americanism



**Vicky Stainbrook**  
Department Chair

What does freedom mean to you? I would love to hear some answers in addition to reading all these great Americanism essays that will be coming in soon. Don't forget to use the cover sheet when submitting the essay. Also, the contest is open to anyone, member or not. Any adult can sign off on the essay as well. More details can be found at <https://www.legion-aux.org/americanismessay-contest>. Districts, please send them to me no later than April 1st.

It's the Oratorical contest time. Check with your local Legion to find out how you can help. They

may need judges, timekeepers, escorts or just someone to provide cookies and smiles to help make everyone feel welcome.

Sometimes, little things make a big difference. Do you know who the smallest American President was? He made a big difference! He was the only delegate to the Constitutional Convention who attended every meeting. He was Princeton University's first graduate student (then known as the College of New Jersey). Known as the "Father of the Constitution" and nicknamed "Jemmy" - James Madison made a big difference. Please share with me what little things you did that made a big difference. How many flags did you donate to schools or businesses? How many Americanism color books have you shared?

Don't forget to REPORT. Now is your time to brag about your unit and all the little things you do! **YOU MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE!** Make sure to share what you've done. Ask your unit members to take time to look at the Unit Annual Report and report all the hours and dollars spent. Why is reporting so important? These numbers all go uphill ... all the way to Capitol Hill. Your Unit reports to District, District to Department, Department to National

and then National shares the information with The American Legion. What does the Legion do with it? They combine it with what the Legion family has done and then they take it to Congress to show them the importance of what we do for our veterans. It's a way of showing them where our government needs to step up and help our veterans and their families more. It is VERY important to report so we can get all the assistance available for our veterans who are so deserving.

Finally, we just add in a little fun with awards. The Vickie Koutz Monetary Award will be presented to the unit reporting the most consistent Americanism program. I have three personal awards: To the Unit that sends the best report promoting patriotism in the community; to the Unit that best shows their support for the Americanism essay contest; and to the Unit with the best narrative report. Reporting is a little thing that makes a big difference! Please continue to work with your schools, community groups and the Legion family to promote patriotism and responsible citizenship. Fly your flags high and proud. Make a difference. In God We Trust.

## Hoosier Auxiliary News

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Cherril Threte, Department President  
2714 W. 60th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46228

The subscription of \$1.25 per year for each adult Auxiliary member is included in payment of the annual dues plus an annual assessment of 65 cents per member payable by each Unit. Annual subscriptions for persons who are not Auxiliary members are \$2.00 each. The name and address of the subscriber should be forwarded to:

Anna Conwell, Secretary  
5440 Herbert Lord Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216

## Education



**Heather Elson**  
Department Chair

The camera is rolling and the spotlight is on education! It is scholarship season as you are aware and by the time you are reading this, those entries are heading my way. My education committee and I are ready to see who those lucky winners are. Note that the deadline to be considered is **March 15**. Department winners for the ALA National

Scholarships will be sent to the Central Division Education Chair by **April 1**.

I know you are working hard to spread awareness on what the ALA Education program can do for your local schools. I hope that you found a special educator to spotlight this year. Please remember that the deadline for Educator of the Year is also **March 15**.

In addition, do not forget about giving to schools all year round. This winter has been so mild that it seems more sickness is hitting the schools. Consider donating hand sanitizer, tissues, or disinfectant wipes (just to name a few always needed items) to your local schools. These all count towards Give 10 to Education.

Looking to the upcoming months, I hope you are planning ways to show your appreciation to the military child as well as teachers.

The month of April is Military Child Awareness month and **April**

**15** is "Purple Up! Day" for the military child. This would be a great day to honor those in schools who have a parent in the military. Maybe you could get your local school to have a purple day where everyone wears purple in honor of the military children in your school district.

As for teachers, May **6-10** is teacher appreciation week. This is a time to show those who care for our future leaders that their work matters. I encourage all of you to think outside the box on how to show your appreciation. Though flowers, cookies, and a catered meal goes a long way, a lot of other groups will show their appreciation this way. Let's stand out this year and show our appreciation in a way that will leave a lasting impression. Those impressions may even lead to new members in our units.

Looking forward to seeing your entries and reading your end of the year reports.



**District 1**



**Denise Delaney-Wrolen**  
*President*

Greetings from the First District. Our Units and members continue to work the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary, "In Spirit of Service, Not Self," as we continue to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their

families, both at home and abroad. How true this is in today's world. In October, our monthly visitations were able to begin again at Edward J. Hines VA Medical Center. We visited with the veterans with a friendly greeting to thank them for their service and leaving them with comfort items as a token of our appreciation.

Our district is very proud to have several members serving on the department level. We have two Past Department Presidents: Rose Ann Dziegłowicz and myself. Rose Ann also serves as the Risk and Compliance Chair and I serve on the Finance Committee; Maureen Weber ALA Hoosier Girls State Board Member; Georgia Anderson Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chair; Sandy Saklak Hicks Education Committee; and Barbara Sales Hines Veterans Affairs Medical Center Associate Representative.

This year my President's Project is to care for the female veterans at Adam Benjamin Jr. VA Medical Outpatient Clinic in the First District. For Christmas, units and members generously donated over \$800 in new and gently used purses along with personal care items, and scarves and gloves inside. Currently we are collecting coloring books, crayons, puzzles, and snacks to place in drawstring backpacks to be given to the children of the female veterans. We will also be donating food and gas gift cards for them to use for the next few months. I am humbled by the amount of love and support for our female veterans and their children and can't wait to see the final amount of donations to this project.

The countless hours and efforts of our members continue to impress me as they continue to meet the needs of our veterans and troops

serving at home and in harm's way. Members and Units have participated in Veterans Day, Wreaths Across America, Four Chaplains Sunday, helped families in need at the holidays, held craft and bake sales, fish fries, steak fries, and breakfasts to raise money to support the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.

On May 1st, the First District will hold our Annual May Luncheon, better known as the First District Department Visitation where we look forward to hosting Department President Cherril, Department Officers and guests who wish to attend.

Before I close, I want to thank the members of the First District for supporting our veterans and our military and their families by paying your membership dues. It is with the help of your dues that we can continue to work the many

programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. If you haven't paid yours yet, please take the time to send them in now. It does make a difference.

We have accomplished so much, but our work is not over yet. We still have a lot to do before this year comes to a close. We will stay focused and continue our mission and be proud of what we have accomplished together. I want to personally thank the members of the First District for their love and support for our veterans, military, and their families. I look forward to seeing you all at the Department Joint Spring Conference in April. Have a blessed Easter!



**District 2**



**Peggy Eagen**  
*President*

Hello everyone. It is the "Scarecrow" from the Fall Conference here. In the movie, The Wizard of Oz, the scarecrow wanted a brain. Hopefully, I have developed one in my years as second district presi-

dent with the help of all Auxiliary officers and chairs from units, districts, and department.

The officers and chairs of 2nd district have been working hard this year. A special thanks goes to Donna Davis, membership chair, who has done a wonderful job of keeping us where we are in membership. The biggest thanks goes to our members who have paid their dues. You are all the best.

I would like to welcome all new members to the American Legion Auxiliary in all eleven districts. We hope to see you at your unit and district meetings.



**District 3**



**Rebecca Watson**  
*President*

Greetings from the Mighty Third!

We've had a busy year in our part of the state, from food drives to blood drives, we've pretty much covered it all. We've participated in Veterans' Day Services, marched in

parades, and served dinners to our vets.

September, we supported a golf outing and held family events on Labor Day. October was busy with community dinners as well as collecting snacks and fruit to be donated to nursing homes. One unit took a van loaded with supplies to the Indiana Veterans' Home. We also can't forget the young ones as we've held or supported Halloween parties and Trunk or Treats.

Food baskets have been put together and distributed. An AEF fundraiser was held, along with a veteran breakfast. Many of our units held Children's Christmas parties with Santa handing out gifts and the required amount of candy canes and hot chocolate. A few of our ladies attended the IVH Gift Wrapping Day and saw the beautiful wreaths from Wreaths Across

America laid against the headstones in the veterans' cemetery. What a sight that was.

We've collected Ten for Ten, donating much needed supplies to our local schools. In addition, the high schools have been given information about Hoosier Girls State.

There's been trips to our local nursing homes to visit with our veterans. Sadly, during the year, we've attended funerals, hosted funeral dinners, and cried with the bereaved. On a happier note, we watched as Roger LaGard received the LaPorte County Patriotic Service Award.

We are looking forward to this new year and all the possibilities it holds.



**District 4**



**Diann Scott**  
*President*

Greetings from the Fabulous Fourth. What a wonderful year we are having! I am so honored to lead the 4th District and be one of President Cherril's daughters. My focus has been **communication, team-building, leadership, training, and growth**. I have selected an amazing group of chairs to help pull together our many committees and projects. I have several very strong leaders. One of which is our candidate for Department Historian, JENNIFER PICKERING! We are so pleased to offer our endorsement for Jennifer, who is currently serving as Department VA&R Chair.

My President's Project is Honor Flight Northeast Indiana. In August, I participated in the first Purple Heart Honor Flight, what an event! The 4th District Family (Le-



gion, SAL, Riders, and Auxiliary) worked together to communicate and sponsor many parts of this special two-day event. From helping with registration, flag line, working on the send-off, and the Welcome Home event at the Memorial Coliseum (over 4,000 people welcomed these heroes home). I am proud of all the 4th District members who attended, sent supplies, mail call items, etc. To date we have raised nearly \$9,000. LaGrange Unit 215 did a purse raffle & trivia contest raising \$1225; Rome City Unit 381 donated \$2,000, and Hamilton Unit 467 raised \$4,265. Honor Flights were held in August, September, and October. Our Juniors have been very active - participating in the Purple Heart Honor Flight, Mission Training, Fall Conference, and many events at our units.

In September, we participated in a Patriot Grave Dedication for Col-

onel Alexander Ewing at Lindenwood Cemetery in Fort Wayne. Col. Ewing was a Patriot from the American Revolution. This dedication was sponsored by the SAR - Sons of the American Revolution. Fort Wayne Post 47 served as Honor Guard and the 4th District Auxiliary posted the flags and laid a wreath. Also in September, we were back in Indianapolis at the invitation of the Four Pillars Society to attend an inaugural luncheon for their founding members. The 4th District Auxiliary and the 4th District SAL were the only district groups recognized as founding members, along with Fort Wayne Post 47.

On October 21st, we held a workshop at Garrett Post 178 for our Unit Chairs to learn from the 4th District Chairs, all the details of our Program Engagement Plans. In the afternoon, we had our Depart-



ment Visitation and were thrilled to host Department Auxiliary President Cherril Threite, her officers, Department Chairs, and guests from several other districts.

On October 29th, I joined the American Legion at the Indianapolis Colts game and its "Salute to Service." What an awe-inspiring event to watch the huge American flag be unfurled in honor of our service members.

I also had the honor of presenting two "Quilts of Valor" from Rome City Unit 381's Auxiliary on Sunday, November 5th. Both quilts were made by Rome City Unit 381 Auxiliary Member, Karen Kinsey. Quilts are awarded, they are not just handed to the veteran. It is an award presentation, and we present the quilt and wrap our honored veteran in comfort and love. These quilts bring a three-part message: First, we honor them for their service, for

raising their right hand and taking that oath and leaving everything and doing all that they did; Second, the quilt is meant to say thank you for that service, sacrifice and valor in serving our nation, and finally, these quilts are meant to offer healing, peace, comfort and warmth to the individual who receives it and for them to know that they are forever in our thoughts and prayers. Our two recipients were JAN FRAZE, Viet Nam Army Veteran and TOM HULEN, Korean Conflict Navy Veteran.

Fourth District is committed to supporting our American Legion and our many veterans, community and youth and I couldn't be more proud of the work being done within our Fabulous 4th District.





## District 5



**Sue Fugitt**  
President

Greetings from the Auxiliary ladies of the Fifth District. We are so proud of all the hard work we do to help our veterans and their families. Our work in the community and helping children goes on daily.

Many units provided Christmas for families and children. Many parties and food boxes were provided. We made wonderful Christmas memories that may not have been possible for many families.

One unit put together many clothes baskets and trash cans full of items for veterans transitioning into a home of their own. Bedding, silverware, pans, and many other items to give them a new start.

A unit has joint meetings for all members of the SAL, Legion, and Auxiliary. This group meets quarterly to give ideas on things they can do to make their post and Legion family more successful in their programs and duties.

Boxes are being sent to our service members to let them know they are not forgotten and that they are very much appreciated. Thinking of you cards and other letters are sent often.

Being active in our school programs, promoting essay contests for Americanism, donating school supplies, and honoring our JROTC program are a few ways we impact young people. Hoosier Girls State is a very active program that our district supports.

Our ladies are very active in our poppy program. Letters are sent to local establishments with a poppy for a donation. Juniors and seniors work the public and explain the poppy story, the meaning of the poppy, and how poppy sales help support veterans.

Our members are shining the LIGHT on our veterans. Taking their CAMERA to document our history. The ACTION that we take now ensures the future for both our veterans and our organization. As we shine the spotlight on our STARS (our veterans), we bring them to the forefront thereby educating everyone about who they are, what they do and have done in the past, to earn respect everywhere. We work President Cherril's theme, "Lights! Camera! Action! Starring VETERANS" every day.

Thank you to all the ladies and Auxiliary members for your hard work in helping our veterans and their families every day. You show the pride we all have in the fifth district with your work.

## District 7



**Jenny Tracy**  
President

District 7 leadership works tirelessly to ensure our business is in order while guiding our 26 Units. Our focus is communication, leadership, and participation. We have worked hard to communicate with unit leaders and amongst our leaders. Whether that is an email to provide details about upcoming events, insight into deadlines or projects, or just a call to check-in, we are always looking for ways to connect better with District 7 members and units. Several of the district leaders have been able to visit with our units, allowing a mutual opportunity to learn. Units share what they are working on, and District leaders share information about program work and provide guidance on

handling challenges. As a District, we have set a goal to have 100% REPORTING across all programs. We asked each unit to concentrate on the programs with an appointed leader while President Jenny works with the president on the vacant areas. So far, we have visited 17 out of the 26 Units, which means we will visit the final nine units in the next few months. To expand our program work, we created committees at the district level. The hope was to spread the duties among more members and ensure no interruptions in our efforts; planning for those situations when a member needs to tend to other matters. This year, we have four additional units participating in District 7 leadership roles, equating to having 50% of units represented in leadership roles. These are seven programs that District 7 is focusing their participation:

1. Leadership – We are participating in the "I Said This, You Heard That" leadership sessions and are learning to better communicate with each other. We are mastering our strengths and practicing dealing with our weaknesses, all while listening more intently to others. Another project we are working on is raising funds to help our leaders know more about the ALA. We hope to be able to create a finan-

cial grant to provide opportunities for members to participate in ALA events and activities outside of District 7.

2. Public Relations – We have a powerful presence on social media. We have seven different medians we use: Buffer, Facebook, Instagram, Linked In, Snap Chat, Threads, and X. We are also very proud that 24 out of the 26 units have a presence on social media. The District works on covering the happenings of their units and is constantly sharing resources, events, and highlights about all members. We hope you will connect with District 7 and share your comments, likes, ideas, and opportunities. Scan this dedicated ALA District 7 QR code to connect to our Facebook page.



3. National Security – We are thrilled to host our first-ever service project to support those currently

serving and their families. Many of our units were involved in a Valentine's for Veterans project with the 181st Intelligence Wing Air National Guard unit.

4. Risk & Compliance – We are all hands-on deck for this program and are very determined to ensure all our units and the district have tax filing, exemptions, or reinstatement of the exemptions in order. We have three units working on chapter name changes, five units taking corrective action to get their taxes filed and reinstated tax exemption status, and three units looking to be included under the Department's classification (3). Several are working on adjusting their point of contact with the IRS. We are working very closely with Department leadership so they are aware of our activity. We share our experiences so Department leadership can learn alongside us. By June 2024, we hope to be 100% in compliance.

5. VA&R, including Service to Veterans and Creative Arts – We certainly have veterans and their needs on our minds. Our Units are working hard to raise \$5,000 for NVCAF (District 7 President Project). We are at the ½ way mark of our goal and are pushing units and

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## District 8



**Jocelyn Curtis**  
President

"Lights, Camera, Action Starring Our Veterans!"

The units in the 8th District have hit the ground running with working the programs. All units have been working hard on membership and as of February 1st, there are two units in the 8th District at 100%! Congratulations to both of those units! Membership is important and a high priority but not the only program the district is working on.

We have had a "Flocking Good Time" with our Flamingo Flocking for AEF. We have had units that hosted "Be The One" informational workshops which help to inform others on the resources that are available for mental health services. We have also shared information on the "988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline" that is available for those in need. The district has also been able to recognize the outstanding youth in the district that have not only received Youth Good Deed awards but also received the honor of being awarded a Youth Hero award. Units also pay tribute to our fallen veterans by participating in the "Wreaths Across America" program.

Serving our veterans is one area where all our units shine -- from donations to just lending a helping hand or a listening ear, Our "Lights,

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## District 9



**Stephanie Cutter**  
President

District 9 started out the year with the installation of a slate of new officers at the end of July, and then proceeded with many units attending Fall Conference. Units and officers are excited for this year's programs and goals. Many of our units are off to a great start.

Our year started out strong with Batesville Unit 271 being the first in the district to reach 100% member-

ship. Since then, they have added eight new members to their roster. Units continue to work on membership, and the district currently stands at 78%. At least 18 of our units have recruited new members; we are hoping to surpass 100% this year.

Our units have been active in their communities in many ways. Rising Sun 59 assisted the local high school in purchasing a new remote flag for their gymnasium. They also provided the local library and middle school with books on the white table and poppy history. Mitchell Unit 250 partnered with Bedford Federal Savings Bank to help support their community. Seymour Unit 89 collected food donations for Berkshire Mobile and local food pantries. Milan Unit 235 hosted a Christmas party and invited Santa to visit with the children. Versailles Unit 173 gathered a whopping 115 personal care items for veterans. Dillsboro Unit 292 delivered gifts and Christmas din-

ner, provided by Janet's Diner, to their local nursing home residents. Vevay Unit 185 hosted Halloween and Christmas parties for their community's children and helped throw a delicious rabbit-fry for their veterans for Veterans Day. St. Leon Unit 464 helped with a veterans display at a local hospital and raised \$3,000 for ALA HGS at the Oktoberfest. Also, many of our units are supporting our veterans at Madison State Hospital either through donations or attending the bi-monthly bingo parties. We are proud of everything our units are doing to improve their communities.

Juniors from the district have also been busy this year. We had four juniors attend the junior meeting at the fall conference where they helped put together boxes for the Junior Honorary Department President's project. We have had juniors present at nearly all the

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## District 11



**Glenda Jones**  
President

Greetings from Glenda Jones, President of American Legion District 11! It is with great pleasure that I share with you the remarkable accomplishments and events carried out by the various units within our district. Our dedicated members have been tirelessly working to make a positive impact in our com-

munity and support our veterans and their families.

**ALA Unit 34 –  
Melissa Clawson, President:**

- Throughout the year, Unit 34 has shown outstanding commitment by collecting food for their pantry, culminating in their annual Hot Rods & Heroes Car Show fundraiser, which supports HVAF Counseling Services. The event promises an array of attractions, including cars, motorcycles, ribs, whiskey tasting, and a dunk tank, all aimed at raising over \$5,000 for a noble cause.

- Additionally, they hosted the HVAF Holiday Dinner, serving 40-50 veterans with a heartfelt home-cooked meal and providing them with gift bags of goodies to spread joy during the holiday season. Unit 34 also adopted HVAF's housing unit, the Carson Apartments, and went above and beyond to support the families residing there by or-

ganizing a memorable Christmas celebration and providing essential financial assistance.

- Looking ahead, Unit 34 plans to promote Purple Up for Military Kids in April with a kids movie DVD drive and continues its dedicated support by volunteering at various HVAF events throughout the year.

**ALA Unit 64 –  
Emma Hawkins, President:**

- Unit 64 has been actively engaged in community outreach, delivering school supplies, organizing successful trunk-or-treat events, and distributing hats, gloves, and snacks to local schools. They have also shown their appreciation for veterans with a flag retirement ceremony and luncheon on Veterans Day, followed by assisting with Thanksgiving Dinner.

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## Indiana Veterans' Home



**Janet Barnaby**  
*Department Chair*

We have a lot of people to thank for getting us to this 2024 date. I am not going to list any of them here, because everybody's list is different, but you know who is on your list, and I hope you "THANK" them every day, whether it is in person or in our prayers, just as I do.

I want to remind you that we only have 125 residents at the Indiana Veterans' Home so please contact me before sending items for the goody-cart.

Most units are so generous with the items and amounts of money that are sent to sponsored residents; it is just overwhelming sometimes. Try to remember that every resident has at least three sponsoring units, so you do not need to send lots of money for their gifts (\$20-\$25 is plenty); If you have money to spend, consider donating to the President's Project at IVH. That way, all the residents will benefit from its use.

Have you met your residents? Now that the weather is getting nice, perhaps you would like to plan a day trip with a few members. Go out for lunch, visit your resident, and take the "10-cent tour" of the campus - please contact me in advance to schedule it because I am not there every day.

Finally, I do want to give a big "thank you" to the following people for the help they have given me during this Auxiliary year: Bonnie Westfall, Erin Bumm, Janice Mort, Patty Chapman, Mackenzie Weir, Tom Smith, Department President Cherril Threte, the Department office staff, and many others too numerous to mention. You have all helped make this chairmanship even more enjoyable than I remember from doing it years ago. This is where my heart is ... and I know yours is too.

*One tree can start a forest;  
 One smile can begin a friendship;  
 One hand can lift a soul;  
 One word can frame a goal;  
 One candle can wipe out darkness;  
 One laugh can conquer gloom;  
 One hope can raise your spirits;  
 One touch can show you care;  
 One life can make a difference,  
 Be that One today.*

-Author Unknown

## District 8

*continued from page 15*

Camera, Action Starring Our Veterans" is award-winning. I am honored to be a part of a very giving and rewarding organization such as the American Legion Auxiliary and the 8th District! This is just a trailer of the things that the 8th District has been working on. Stay tuned for more!

## Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation



**Jennifer Pickering**  
*Department Chair*

The Department of Indiana has shown their commitment thru Lights! Camera! Action! starring our veterans. A Veteran's Shower was held at Fall Conference. Monies were collected for our hospitalized veterans. The funds were divided to the inpatients at the VA hospitals and the veterans in the state hospitals. I want to thank everyone who donated so generously to the shower. I'm sure the veterans appreciate everything that we collect for them; it is always rewarding to see their smiling faces.

The hospital representatives and deputies do an awesome job and are dedicated to the veterans in the hospital facilities. They did a great job along with their volunteers at the Christmas Gift Shops held at the Richmond State Hospital, Roudebush VAMC, Marion VAMC, and Danville VAMC. There is a lot of preparation that goes into these events - their time, donations, shopping for gifts to be given to the veterans and their families. Volunteering is a very rewarding experience for the volunteer and for our veterans as well.

Several members from Indiana attended Mission Training including myself. We discussed the differences in VA&R and National Security; it has been a big topic this year. I have been on a couple of zoom calls with our national organization and these programs have been a focus. Mission Training is a great learning tool. There is a lot of information to learn about our organization.

When you see these words or phrases: Active-duty, National Guard, Reserves, deployed, overseas, full-occupation as part of military force, full-time military, currently serving, think National Security. When you see these words or phrases: Retired military, recently separated, fully disabled, veteran, think Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. National Security supports service members and their families. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation supports veterans and their families.

Every year during the week of February 14th is the national salute to veteran patients. Coordinate with the community development and civic engagement chief at your local VA facility or talk to your nursing director at the local nursing home to find ways to support the veteran patients.

Annual reports will be due soon. I hope that you are writing down and keeping track of everything that you are doing. Keep track of your activities and hours so in April, you will not be overwhelmed with filling out your reports. The Unit annual report is due to the District VA&R Chair by April 15, 2024. The District Annual Report is due to the Department VA&R Chair by April 27, 2024. Refer to the Program Engagement Plan where the National and Department awards are listed. Thank you for all that you do for our veterans and their families.

## Creative Arts



**Mary Edwards**  
*Department Chair*

Creative Arts is a wonderful program which was recognized in 1989. It has been shown that the Creative

Arts therapy program helps our veterans improve their mental and emotional state by encouraging artistic expressions in a non-threatening way.

We have so many incredibly talented veterans, whether it be in art-work, dance, woodwork, drama, singing or performing. To show all this talent, these veterans, by way of winning competitions, advance to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Veterans then exhibit their artwork and original writings or perform musical, dance or dramatic selections in a live performance.

As a co-sponsor of the National Creative Arts Festival since 2000, the Auxiliary helps these veterans and their spouses, partners, and assistants with the expenses of this

festival by fundraising. There are "Share the Wealth", raffles, 50-50's, challenges and events hosted by our units and districts! So, take a chance on winning while supporting a great cause. There is even a Paddle Auction scheduled to be held at Spring Conference. It will be so much fun so please join us!

I would like to thank everyone for their support with donations and all the hard work of fundraising. It takes working together to make it possible for these talented people to arrive in Denver, Colorado this May!

So proud of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members for what they accomplished with this program! God Bless you all. God Bless America!

## Roudebush VA Medical Center

**Dottie McIntyre, Department Representative**

I am still providing office support in the Audiology/Speech Pathology Department and at the Information Desk at Brownsburg VA Clinic. I also work in the ALS unit on Tuesday mornings and am so in awe of how caring the staff members are with these patients.

Last August Pam Baber and Melanie Sams of Auxiliary Unit 331 attended the Creative Arts Show at Lawrence, Indiana with me. I'm looking forward to next year when the National Creative Arts event will be here in Indianapolis.

Department President Cherril Threte and Past Department President Karen Lowe joined Paula Cody, Renee Hobbs, Jan Surber and me of Auxiliary Unit 331 to wrap holiday gifts for the hospitalized patients on November 29th at Post 331.

Legionnaires Rich Culp and John McIntyre even pitched in to help. The VA staff distributed the gifts to the patients around the middle of December. Holiday cards were also passed out to the patients.

The Salute to Hospitalized Veterans event at Roudebush

and the Brownsburg Clinic was held February 12th through 16th. Valentines, small gifts, and ALA information were passed out to all the patients. I take clothing, toiletries, and games for the patients once or twice a month using monies donated from all of you. We can always use sweatshirts and pants, body wash, and denture items. If you donate, be sure to send along a note showing the items, cost, your unit number, and address; also drop me an email or text so I can put that information on my annual report.

We always need drivers at the Indianapolis facility as well as greeters and office assistants. For questions or to sign up as a volunteer, please call Voluntary Specialist Kiyana Anderson (317-988-2734) or Voluntary Service Chief Tabitha Ingram (317-988-4055); please leave a message if they are busy. You can also apply online at [cdceportal.va.gov](http://cdceportal.va.gov). Thank you to all the members who have donated to Roudebush or any VA facility this year. Keep on Lighting up the lives of veterans by your helpful actions.

## Madison State Hospital

**Stephanie Cutter, Hospital Representative**

District 9 has the pleasure of overseeing the needs of veterans who reside at the Madison State Hospital (MSH). Every other month, two (2) units from our district are assigned to participate in the activities planned for our veterans at the Madison State Hospital. Units are asked to either attend a bingo and dessert party or to provide a donation in their unit's absence.

Due to lack of staff, the small number of veterans, and other activities at Madison State Hospital, it was requested this year that we limit our visits to every other month instead of once a month. Currently, we have four (4) veterans attending our bingo parties. The veterans play bingo to win quarters for the snack machines, are often provided monetary gifts for their daytime outings, and then are treated to cheesecake. The veterans look forward to these parties, and they are a

pleasure for our units to host.

This year, as a district, we purchased Christmas gifts for the veterans. The men were allowed to request specific items for gifts. Along with three of our district Juniors, a couple of our district officers shopped and purchased everything on the veterans' lists. Thankfully the veterans are well-cared for at Madison State Hospital; unfortunately for us, this meant their Christmas lists were extremely short this year. Instead of buying them items they do not need, we opted for adding cash to each of their accounts from which they'll be able to buy goodies from the vending machines and hospital store.

Although the program at MSH is small in comparison to other facilities, the impact we have on these handful of veterans is huge. We are honored, as a district, to be allowed the opportunity to serve these men in this capacity.

## Logansport State Hospital

**Janice Mort, Hospital Representative**

Lights! Camera! Action!

Hospital representatives take "Action" to make "Stars of our Veterans" by caring for our veterans in VA Medical Centers & State Hospitals located throughout Indiana as well as in Illinois and Kentucky. I personally take care of the veterans that reside at Logansport State Hospital, which is a state-operated mental health and addiction facility. There are currently four veterans that have been court-ordered to be housed there for treatment. As a hospital representative, my responsibility to these hospitalized veterans is to not know why they are there, but to bring them support and show them that we care. Sometimes we are the only outside contact they have.

I visit the hospital regularly and stay in contact with their Community Engagement Department for updates on their policy changes, the veterans' needs, and to schedule my visits. LSH is a secure campus, SO PLEASE DO NOT TRY TO VISIT OR TAKE ITEMS THERE WITHOUT CONTACTING ME FIRST. Safety is their top priority for patients, staff members, and visitors. Thank you for your understanding.

Before I visit, I am always aware of what is needed or wanted for these patients at the time. My usual items are: T-shirts, ball caps, sweats and socks. Also, personal care items, decks of cards, and card games are desired. Reminders: All clothing needs to be new and size XL. NO PICTURES OF

CHILDREN OR ANIMALS, ALSO NO CIGARETTE OR ALCOHOL LOGOS ON ANY ITEM. Currently, no food items are allowed unless the hospital requests them. If you ever want to know how you can be of help, just have questions, or would like to donate any items, please contact me anytime. [Janmort72@gmail.com](mailto:Janmort72@gmail.com), or 574-527-9851. I will also be attending the Spring Conference. Contact any of our Department hospital representatives and ask them, "How can I help?" Your support will be appreciated.

I would like to thank everyone for their generous donations to the Veterans Shower at Fall Conference, which directly benefited our hospitalized veterans. Thank you also to PDP Janet Barnaby, Camden 413, Bonnie Westfall and Erin Bumm, Lafayette 11, Syracuse 233, and ALA 2nd District for all their extra donations. Another thank you to my husband Tristan, Commander of SAL Squadron 223, for helping with shopping and delivering items each visit.

Please keep track of all your items and money donated, your hours and miles driven assisting our veterans in hospitals, nursing homes, and in your communities. Report this information to your unit chair for your year-end reports.

You keep "Making Stars of our Veterans" by remembering these women and men and by bringing them comfort and kindness.

## National Security



**Pam Shook**  
Department Chair

The ALA National Security program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families:

- Support active-duty military families by working with an installation Family Readiness Group;
- Support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve and transitioning military service members and their families;
- Assist military spouses in getting and maintaining employment;
- Support the National Security programs of The American Legion.

National Security collaborates with other like-minded organizations that also support service members and their families:

- Donate to or volunteer at local Armed Services YMCA food pantries which support service members and their families;
- Support Blue Star Families;
- Volunteer with your local USO;
- Award a Quilt of Valor.

The program raises awareness of POW/MIA and the work being performed by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency in the search for missing personnel:

- Host events in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day on the third Friday in September;
- Post a POW/MIA flag at every meeting or event.

Remember to support those families whose service members made the ultimate sacrifice:

- American Gold Star Mothers;
- American Gold Star Families;
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors;
- Military OneSource resources.

Looking for National Security program ideas?

ALA Committee Facebook Groups are spaces on the social media network for ALA members to discuss or share about broad or narrow topics related to each committee. Groups provide an arena for organic discussion about your local programs or services and present the opportunity to cultivate brand awareness.

This group serves as a place to share service activities and events, ask questions, obtain information, and network for those interested in the American Legion Auxiliary and how the ALA National Security programs works. The American Legion Auxiliary National Security Program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military servicemembers and their families.

NationalSecurity@ALAforVeterans.org

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March – Community Service

- March 9: ALA Honorary Junior Department Meeting, Lafayette, Unit 492 (IVH)
- March 16: District 5 Visitation – Tipton 46
- March 17: District 6 Visitation – Brownsburg 331
- March 29: Good Friday (Office Closed)
- March 31: Easter

### April – Children & Youth

- April 4-7: Joint Spring Conference, Marriott East Hotel, Indianapolis
- April 9: District 10 Visitation – Shelbyville 70
- April 13: District 3 Visitation, Walkerton 189
- April 15: End of Year Reports due from Units to District Chairs
- April 27: End of Year Reports due from District to Department Chairs

### May - Poppy

- May 1: District 1 Visitation – TBD
- May 12: Mother's Day
- May 15: End of Year Reports due from Department Chairs to National Chairs
- May 15: Impact Reports due from Department Chairs to Department President
- May 24: National Poppy Day
- May 27: Memorial Day (Office Closed)

### June – ALA Hoosier Girls State & Junior Activities

- June 1: Impact Report due to National from Department President
- June 2: Legion Close of Books @ IVH
- June 8: ALA Honorary Jr. Department Meeting, TBA
- June 14: Flag Day
- June 16: Father's Day
- June 23 – 29: ALA Hoosier Girls State, Trine University, Angola
- June 30: ALA Department Close of Books

### July – Department Convention

- July 4: Independence Day (Office Closed)
- July 10 – 14: Legion & Auxiliary Department Convention, Marriott East, Indianapolis
- July 20 – 27: ALA Girls Nation – Washington, DC

### August – National Convention

**August 23 - 29: National Convention, New Orleans, LA**

### District Meetings

- March 3: District 8, Evansville 8
- March 6: District 1, Lowell 101
- March 6: District 11, Atkins Saw 355
- March 9: District 3, North Liberty 365
- March 13: District 2, Knox 131
- March 16: District 7, Lyons 479
- March 16: District 5, Tipton 43\*
- March 17: District 6, Brownsburg 331\*

- April 3: District 1, Whiting 80
- April 3: District 11, Tilman 249
- April 9: District 10, Shelbyville 70\*
- April 10: District 4, Avilla 240
- April 13: District 3, Walkerton 189\*
- April 13: District 7, Bloomington 18
- April 13: District 9, St. Leon 464
- April 20: District 5, Roanoke 160
- April 21: District 2, Portage 260
- April 21: District 6, Cloverdale 281
- April 28: District 8, Santa Claus 242

- May 1: District 11, Speedway 500
- May 1: District 1, TBA\*
- May 4: District 9, Sunman 337
- May 5: District 6, Zionsville 79
- May 8: District 2, Monticello 81
- May 8: District 4, Ft. Wayne 148
- May 11: District 3, Kingsford Heights 434
- May 18: District 5, Fairmount 313
- May 18: District 7, Sullivan 139
- May 19: District 6, Crawfordville
- May 19: District 8, Floyd Knobs 42\*

- June 1: District 9, Seymour
- June 2: District 6, Close of Books @ IVH
- June 5: District 1, Lake Station 100 (Elections)
- June 5: District 11, Atkins Saw 353
- June 8: District 3, South Bend 284
- June 8: District 7, Jasonville 72
- June 9: District 8, Mt. Vernon 5
- June 11: District 10, Cambridge City 169
- June 12: District 2, North Judson 92
- June 12: District 4, TBD

\*Department Visitation

## American Legion Department of Indiana

Website: <http://www.aladeptin.org>

Facebook page: American Legion Department of Indiana

### Membershp

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National Recruit 10 or Department Recruit 5? No. This award is for new senior and junior members only.

Now for what I've learned from others in membership:

1) How to eliminate the excuse that getting membership is hard? By making membership a team effort. We always say membership is everyone's responsibility, and it is. Everyone should be a recruiter. So, help the membership chair by sending letters to members and asking them to renew or

rejoin. Call members and let them know you miss them or invite them to attend a function your unit is hosting. Help the chair to host a membership event and serve up some "finger food" or snacks to attendees. Or better yet, invite a guest speaker to address a topic that might get a response from the community and have applications on hand to hand out to those who come. Whatever you do is better than doing nothing at all. Right?

2) How to encourage members to get involved? Well, some have a luncheon just for members to inform them of the many programs and opportunities available in the ALA. Others have an annual dinner of appreciation for member-

ship. Some plan a membership outing for those who volunteer throughout the year, which encourages others to do so because they want to be included the next time. Know your people, find their passion, and plan accordingly.

3) What is a good "elevator speech" to get membership? Simply put: know your why and what. Know why you're a member, know why you stay a member, know why we exist. Have a prepared answer for what the Legion family is, what we do, and one or two examples of what we do for veterans and their families. Finally, express to a potential member their value to the Legion family, because every member is valuable.

Most of all, be believable when you say it.

Looking ahead, the membership team is preparing to judge the "Lights! Camera! Action! Starring: Veterans" movie poster contest in which the district winners will be judged at the Joint Spring Conference. Finally, congratulations to all the units (and I think there are more than 20) who achieved 100% by the end of January! National will be sending you a ribbon for this special accomplishment.

Well, that's a wrap for this segment. Stay tuned for the next episode. Cut!



## Candidate for Department Historian 2024-25



Vicky Stainbrook

The 9th District Officers and members proudly present Vicky Stainbrook as our Candidate for Department of Indiana American Legion Auxiliary Historian 2024-25. Vicky was endorsed at a regularly scheduled meeting of District 9 held February 10, 2024 in French Lick, Indiana.

Vicky is a member of Seymour Unit 89. Vicky is eligible for the American Legion Auxiliary through the service of her late grandfather, J. W. Huffman, who served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Vicky has been a member of The American Legion Auxiliary since 2014 and was active with the unit for two years before becoming a member. She has served in many offices and chairmanships on the Unit and District level. She is currently serving and has been the Unit President and Membership Chair for most of her years as a member. She served the District as Vice President from 2016-18 and

President from 2019-2022. Vicky is currently serving the District as Treasurer and has held chairmanships for National Security, Creative Arts, Risk & Compliance, and Membership.

On the Department level, Vicky has served on the Membership team multiple years and is currently serving as Americanism Chair.

On the National level, Vicky served as American Legion National President Vickie Koutz's Scrapbook Chair.

Vicky has continued her service at all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary in honor of her son, 1LT Josh Jones. When Vicky isn't busy with the Auxiliary, she can be found with one or more of her eight grandkids. She assisted her youngest granddaughter to be the first to receive the Purple Level (ages 3 years - K) patches. Vicky feels the importance of mentoring at all levels and ages.

Vicky promises to continue her service for the men and women who have fought for our country with a deep passion and energy. She is an asset to the American Legion Auxiliary, throughout her unit, our district and the department. It is our recommendation that her record more than qualifies her to serve as the Department of Indiana Historian for the year 2024-25 and we proudly endorse her.



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## Candidate for Department Historian 2024-25



Jennifer Pickering

The American Legion Auxiliary members of Jack Briner Post 409 along with the Fourth District have endorsed Jennifer Pickering for the office of Department Historian for the year 2024-25. The District endorsed Jennifer at their meeting held on Wednesday, August 9, 2023.

Jennifer is eligible for membership in the ALA through the Vietnam era service of her father, Rex, a U.S. Army veteran and an American Legion member. Jennifer's mother is also a member of the American Legion Auxiliary. Jennifer began her active ALA service at the Unit level when her mother-in-law invited her to attend a Unit meeting and she began to volunteer to help with various activities. She started taking part in the Legion Family and learning about the organization. She also started attending conferences and conventions to gain knowledge and to share ideas with other units.

She has served in numerous Unit offices and chairmanships including nine years as the Leo Unit 409 President. Jennifer was elected the Fourth District ALA President for the 2015-2016 administrative year. Prior to District President, she had held other offices and chairmanships. She is currently serving as the District Chair for the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation and the Creative Arts programs. She is also a member of the Advisory, Education, and Constitution and Bylaws committees.

On the Department level, Jennifer has held the following chairmanships: Americanism, Community Service, Northern Membership, and Membership. She served one year on the Department Constitution and Bylaws committee. This year, she is the Department Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chair.

Jennifer is always excited to learn new things about the Auxiliary. She has attended mission training, workshops and has completed online training to gain further knowledge about the Auxiliary. She has met some great mentors and friends along the way who will continue to contribute to Jennifer's development as she advances in service. She will continue to act with respect in honor of her father and those who have served before her.

The Fourth District American Legion Auxiliary supports Jennifer in her quest to serve as the Department Historian for 2024-25.

## District 7

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members to be creative in getting donations to support this cause. We also hugely support the 4th Annual Creative Arts Festival in Morgan County. Martinsville Unit 230 is the coordinator and host of this event, and this year, they have expanded the event to include all the counties within the 7th District. As a District, we are looking to raise funds and awareness for this event. District 7 is busy with efforts regarding Service to Veterans. We hosted a Buddy Basket drive for HVAF and contributed over ten buddy baskets. CEO Emmy Hildebrand was present at our Department visit and shared statistics and stories that motivated our teams even more to contribute to this great cause. We will continue to give to President Cherril's project, HVAF of Indiana. We are also proud to be highlighted in ALA National's marketing material for Wreaths Across America (WAA). This year, many District 7 Units are working to create their own WAA experience. ALA Unit 18 in Bloomington is working on its 4th year of participation in the WAA event. They have tripled the number of veterans honored to 1,584 and expanded their reach from one cemetery to four cemeteries. We look forward to seeing many more WAA events supported and coordinated by District 7 units in 2024.

## President's Message

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appreciate all that you do.

Thank you so much for your generous donations to my President's Projects: HVAF {Helping Veterans and Families}, USO of Indiana, and Indiana Veterans' Home. You are truly making a difference.

My future travels as this goes to press will include: The Lincoln Pilgrimage laying the wreath at Lincoln's Tomb with American Legion Commander Bob Oeth and SAL Detachment Commander Paul Rush in Springfield, Illinois. I am excited to attend The American Legion Birthday celebrations in March, Junior meetings, and ALA Hoosier Girls State in June.

The Joint Spring Conference is April 5-7th. We expect a special guest from the National ALA. Come out and support the Quarter Paddle Auction Friday night led by our Past National President Vickie Koutz. The auction is a fundraiser for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival hospitality room in 2025. Great news is that Indiana will host the 2025 National Veterans Creative Arts Festi-

val. If you would like to donate goodies for the Quarter Paddle Auction, please contact Vickie Koutz at vkoutz@aol.com. Saturday will be fun and informative while we get to spend time with our Legion Family.

Help Wanted! If you are a team player and are interested in a part-time position with Department Headquarters, send your application or resume to aconwell@aladepin.org by March 15, 2024.

Some very important dates to remember involving reporting. Unit Year End Reports are due to the District Chair by April 15th and the District Annual Report is due to the Department Chair April 27th. You can find forms on [www.aladepin.org](http://www.aladepin.org).

Let's work together to reach 100% membership for the Department of Indiana. We did it back in 2008-2009 under Past Department President Shirley Firkins and I am confident we can do it again. Congratulations to our units achieving early goals and reaching 100% and over. Thank you and congratulations to all our members who support our mission and our veterans as we continue with Lights, Camera, Action: Starring Veterans.

## District 9

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district meetings, and one who was able to attend a National Junior meeting. As in past years, our juniors help district leadership shop for the veterans at Madison State Hospital for Christmas, as well as deliver snacks and other goodies to the USO at Camp Attebury. Juniors also plan to attend the National Commander's visit to Seymour Post 89 this month. District 9 is also extremely proud to have the first Junior in the nation to earn all the patches for the new "three years - K" Purple Level recently added to the Junior Patch Program!

As District President Stephanie Cutter wraps up her final year as president, she would like to thank her district for all that they have accomplished the past two years. A special thanks to the new president, Melissa Gregory, at Columbus Unit 24 who stepped up under the guidance of Vicky Stainbrook to ensure the unit did not close. Stephanie hopes this unit as well as all the other units in the district and department find renewed success for the upcoming years. Stephanie is also proud to announce that the district's very own Vicky Stainbrook will be running for Department Historian for 2024-25. She is a huge asset to the district and district members are confident about the great things she will accomplish as a Department officer.

## District 11

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- Their efforts extended to spreading holiday cheer by addressing Christmas cards for veterans and providing gifts and necessities for children in need, along with aiding families with food boxes. Moreover, they participated in the Four Chaplains Memorial Service, honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

**ALA Unit 249 – Veda Johnson, President:**

- Unit 249 has been instrumental in raising funds for both the American Legion Post and children in the community, organizing events such as trunk-or-treat parties and a successful homeless veterans fundraiser. Their generosity knows no bounds, as demonstrated by their contributions to HVAF and their commitment to organizing fundraisers throughout the year.

- During the holiday season, Unit 249 brightened the lives of over 30 children with food, toy giveaways, and a special visit from Santa Claus, showcasing their dedication to spreading joy and making a difference in the lives of others.

**ALA Unit 497 – Becky O'Connor, President:**

- Unit 497 is actively involved in supporting HVAF through initiatives like the food hygiene drive, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to assist-

ing veterans in need. President Becky O'Connor and executive board member Angie Hamer and others regularly volunteer their time and efforts to raise funds and obtain donations for this worthy cause.

**ALA Unit 355 – Barbara "Basia" Schwartz, President:**

- Unit 355, with the support of its membership, continues to make a significant impact by donating winter coats, school supplies, and snacks to local elementary schools, as well as collecting essential items for HVAF's clothing and food pantry. They have also organized collections for Valentine's Day treats to be distributed to veterans during pantry outreach, showcasing their dedication to supporting those in need within our community.

In conclusion, the collective efforts of our units exemplify the spirit of service and dedication to our veterans and communities. I am immensely proud of the work being done by each unit within District 11, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact continue to grow.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission of service, not self for our veterans, their families, and our communities.

**Quarter Paddle Auction**

**April 5th - Joint Spring Conference  
Liberty Hall**

**Doors open at 5:30 pm; Auction begins at 7 pm**



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**ON TOUR:** 7th District Department Visitation Starring President Cherrill!



**INDIANA'S OWN LITTLE LEADING LADY:** The first Junior in the nation to earn ALL patches in the new Purple Level (ages 3-K) for the Junior Patch Program.



**MEMBERS OF THE 6TH DISTRICT SUPPORTING CAST:** Anna Conwell, Judy Morris and Kristy Byers rehearse for their upcoming events at the 6th District meeting.



**AND THE WINNER IS:** President Cherrill presents recognition to the Indiana Veterans' Home staff.



**BEST COSTUME CATEGORY:** HQ staff members Jessie Manning, Kathy Knafel and Anna Conwell use festive costumes to spread holiday cheer.



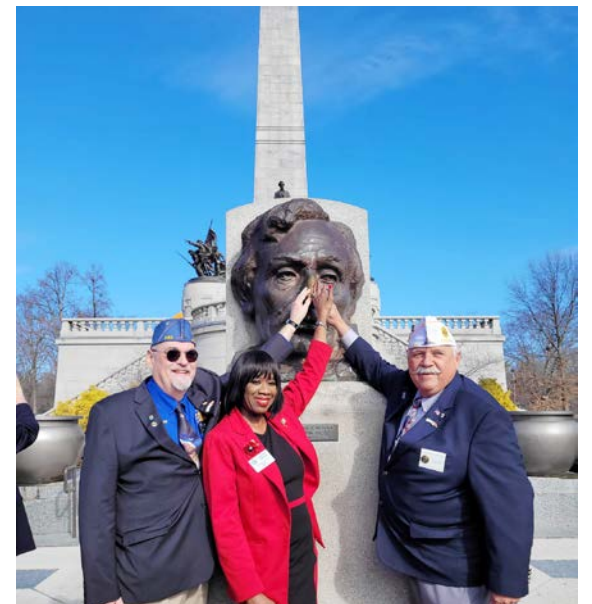
**ALA MEMBERS' AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTIONS:** Units across the state are putting on a show! Featured here is ALA Unit 141 and their community gift-basket donation.



**INDIANA MEMBERS GO ON THE ROAD:** The Mission Training held in Nashville, Tennessee received great reviews!



**SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCES:** Brenda Gramelspacher of Ferdinand Unit and Anita Hartman of Camden Unit made winning guest appearances at this year's Lincoln Pilgrimage. They are joined by President Cherrill, Past National President Sharon and Diana Vanhooks.



**A BELOVED CLASSIC:** The 90th Lincoln Pilgrimage was attended by the Legion family leadership, Commander Rush, President Threite, and Commander Oeth.



**FOUR CHAPLAINS:** The story of the four chaplains had the 11th district audience spellbound.



**LEGION'S LEADING MAN:** AL National Commander Seehafer went on tour in Indiana including a stop at Fairmount 313.



**BEST COMEDY:** The ladies of the 7th District share award-winning fun!



**CHRISTMAS ON THE HILL:** The Indiana Veterans' Home Christmas party was a heart-warming feature.