

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPT NY

# EMPIRE STATE NEWS

November 2024

## Department President's Message- Kimberly A. Quick

I am thankful to have met so many wonderful people on our visitations. We have completed the 5th, 6th, and 9th Districts; along with National Commander visitations for the 6th, 7th, and 8th Districts. Detachment Commander Gaither Espey keeps count for us, with 39 counties visited. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your hospitality and gifts. I humbly thank you for all the donations to Homeward Bound Adirondacks.

Some of you have asked for my advice on certain subjects pertaining to the Auxiliary.

1. The Department cannot fix personal problems between members. Some people just don't get along and nothing the "Department" might say can help.
2. The Auxiliary does not own the Post property. How the Post operates, who they let in, is not up to us.
3. We do not do things exactly like the Legion or the Sons. Our Membership processing is different in some ways. Please follow the processing instructions as set by Department of NY. For questions, please contact Caitlin at [nyalamembershipdata@gmail.com](mailto:nyalamembershipdata@gmail.com)
4. The chain of command for complaints/questions, etc.... is Unit, County, District, Department. Start at the Unit level, then proceed as necessary through the levels until you get the correct answer. Going straight to National office first does nothing because they kick it back to the Department who will send it back through the chain of command.

I am looking forward to hearing the reports of all your hard work at our Department Executive Committee meeting in December. I am always inspired by the ideas you have come up with to help our veterans, families, and communities.

In January 2025, we will have a great time at Mid-Winter. Friday night will be a fun night with activities. Our National President, Trish Ward, will be joining us. It will be a great time of learning and fun. I can't wait to see you there. The Mid-Winter Call will be coming out soon.

I wish you all the happiest of holidays this season. God Bless the American Legion Family. God Bless our veterans. God Bless our troops. God Bless their families who serve the nation as well. God Bless America.

## Membership- Maureen Morgan

It is November and Thanksgiving is almost here and before you know Christmas, Hanukkah and the Holiday Season will be upon us. With everything that is going on around us we also need to remember our members that may not have any family close to them. Reach out to them and see if they need anything. When we think about membership let's also think about those members who may not be able to get out and about or be able to get to meetings or to the store. Open your doors to the Community by hosting Thanksgiving Dinners, giving out baskets to families in the community. Adopt a family that has a service member that is on deployment.

The National First "Award" Goal Date for Department membership is December 7th – 75%. We are at 51.34% there's still time to get membership in to reach that 75% let's get membership in. The Eastern Division Chair sent out the newsletter after the weekly membership went out. So here is the message from the National Membership Chairman April: Let's not forget about our "North Star" "Your North Star" is a metaphor that refers to your inner compass, or the part of you that knows your purpose, passion, and life direction. It's the driving force behind your thoughts, behaviors, and interactions, and helps you take more chances in life. Let's reignite the compass in Finding our North Star, the passion, and the purpose into 'Why' we do what we do....it's the 'Mission.' Be sure to Have Fun while doing it.

National President Trish has a new game out it's called ALA Challenge Deck. With a donation of \$35.00 to the Veteran Project Fund, you support projects serving veterans in local communities and have also found a meaningful way to engage with the mission of the ALA. The donation page for the ALA Challenge Deck is live: [donate.legion-aux.org/CARD](https://donate.legion-aux.org/CARD). You can also text CARD to 1-844-940-3450 or mail a check to ALA National Headquarters. Please indicate that the gift is for the cards in the memo line of the check. The cards are being printed now and distribution will begin the week of 11/18/2024.

## President's Project- Lora Rowe

President Kim's project is Homeward Bound Adirondacks, which is a New York based program located in Saranac Lake. I would like to make you aware that there has been a change to the project. The construction of the sleeping cabins is now two years out, which originally President Kim thought would be sooner, therefore, monies raised will now go to the programs and retreats Homeward Bound Adirondacks provide to our veterans. There is no cost to veterans for these services. These programs and retreats are so desperately needed! Your support for this project is extremely important. These programs/retreats help veterans in so many ways with respect to their continuing improvement of their lives. As I stated before, this organization also coincides with Be the One as it works with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to prevent Veteran suicide. Let's all think of fund-raising events to raise money to contribute to President Kim's Project.....Homeward Bound Adirondacks

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## VA & R-Lora Rowe

The mission of the American Legion Auxiliary and the purpose of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee goes hand in hand to support military, veterans, and their families.

Through programs and services, we can enhance the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring restoration and/or transition to normal functioning lives.

And, from all the wonderful reports I have received, you are all wholeheartedly embracing the mission! It is so wonderful seeing how creative you are in reaching out to veterans. Remember to send in lots of pictures! With the holiday season approaching, contact the Representatives and Deputies and ask how your unit or county can help. You can give a little of your time volunteering at one of the VA facilities and assist in the activities.

The Board of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation supports Unit and Department involvement in the Creative Arts Festival through grants in the amount of \$2,500. If three units work together on a project, that means you can apply for a grant in the amount of \$7,500. With these funds you can purchase art supplies, jewelry supplies, music, and other items to support your local VA Facility and the veterans who are interested in participating. Please go onto the national American Legion Auxiliary website at [www.legion-aux.org](http://www.legion-aux.org) and under ALA Foundation you will find information and the grant application.

With all the activities you are doing, please remember to keep in mind to apply for the Department and National awards. President Kim's theme this year is "Action for Our Veterans." And, what a perfect theme for VA&R! Let us all take "Action" and make a difference in veterans' lives.

Please note that the Hudson Valley (Montrose) VAMC Deputy Patrice Cortelli home phone and email were omitted on page 199 in the POA. Home# is Home # 914-736-2717 and email is [mortcort@juno.com](mailto:mortcort@juno.com). Also, on page 201 Patrice Cortelli is the New York State Veterans' Home Representative.

## SAVE THE DATES

### **ALA Dept. of New York MidWinter Conference**

January 17-18, 2025 Albany Marriott

### **American Legion Family College**

June 6 - 8, 2025 SUNY at Morrisville

### **American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention**

July 15 - 19, 2025 Syracuse, NY

## Children and Youth- Yvonne Brunner

A warm greeting to everyone! First and foremost, I want to extend my gratitude to all the counties that participated in the November reporting. It was truly wonderful to hear from so many of you, and I loved seeing the photographs from your events. Please remember that photos featuring children can only be published if accompanied by a permission letter from their parents or guardians.

Counties did a great job highlighting all the fantastic work accomplished since the last report in April. Reports included children lining the parade route to distribute beverages and helping to serve hot dogs at picnics. One county mentioned that many enjoyed ice cream from Stewarts, while another reported involvement in assisting with the Senior Prom. It was nice to see so many Units applied for the Youth Hero/Good Deed Awards.

Many of you shared your success with Trunk or Treat events, where plenty of candy was enjoyed. The cards created for birthdays, our veterans, and other special occasions were simply beautiful.

If you haven't already done so, subscribe to the Department Facebook page, "American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York."

If you have Unit or County activities to share, please send me details about the work you're doing. Additionally, I'm on the lookout for kid-friendly recipes for our E-book, which is set to be released in April 2025. So come join the fun! You can reach me at [nychildrenandyouth@gmail.com](mailto:nychildrenandyouth@gmail.com)

Special note: The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation will now be referred to as the Child Well-Being Foundation. The CWF will continue to provide grants to nonprofits for projects that contribute to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of children.

Wishing all of you a blessed holiday season. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the Mid-Winter Conference in January.

## American Legion Family College- Debby Herrmann

The 2025 session is beginning to take shape. The team of instructors for this year has been completed and their class will be. I am happy to say Janice Gravely and I will be once again teamed up to present the ALA programs. We will be having Instructor training this year dates yet to be determined to fill a couple voids and to increase our pool of instructors for this upcoming session. So, if you are interested in applying, please do so and follow the instructions on the Legion Website.

With that said I check the website and as of today the applications for both have yet to be updated for 2025. I have reached out to both the Dean and the Curriculum Coordinator to see if they have an ETA to have them updated. You can just use the link on our own website@deptny.org. Get your application in as soon as possible. It is a first come, first serve policy.

The Family College will be at SUNY Morrisville during the first weekend in June which is June 6, 2025 through June 8, 2025. The fee will remain @ \$300.00. It is imperative that we have 100 students to keep this Family College in the black. For those of you that have attend the first couple of sessions I encourage to come again, you won't be disappointed. It has evolved into a true family experience.

Please consider joining us in 2025. You won't regret it!

## Americanism-Gina Southcott

November is flying by and pretty soon it's going to be the holidays . Remember to get to your schools, Encourage your junior members and family members to participate in the essay contest. work with your school administrators to identify guidance counselors and English and history teachers whose students would be interested in participating. contact youth organizations to identify potential youth for participation in this contest the American essay contest theme is what does America the Beautiful mean to me when it comes to our veterans and our military. Support your American Legion baseball, oratorical contest, support Junior Shooting Sports , volunteer to help with scoring, supervision, or transportation. help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations. We know that Christmas is coming fast so don't forget your local food pantries, your legion Rider food boxes and the angel trees, those families that need help in your own backyard. And please don't forget reads across America.

Thank you. Fly your flags high!!

## Tech Tips- Carrie Davenport

Phishing is not a new phenomenon – it has been the most common attack vector for cybercriminals for a number of years – but, due to the increasing complexity of phishing scams, knowing how to spot email phishing is becoming more important than ever before.!

### 7 Tips to Spot Phishing Emails

#### **1. Emails Demanding Urgent Action**

Emails threatening a negative consequence, or a loss of opportunity unless urgent action is taken, are often phishing emails.

#### **2. Emails with Bad Grammar and Spelling Mistakes**

Another way to spot email phishing is bad grammar and spelling mistakes.

#### **3. Emails with an Unfamiliar Greeting or Salutation**

Emails exchanged between friends/colleagues usually have an informal salutation.

#### **4. Inconsistencies in Email Addresses, Links & Domain Names**

Another way how to spot phishing is by finding inconsistencies in email addresses, links and domain names.

#### **5. Suspicious Attachments**

Emails with attachments should always be treated suspiciously – especially if they have an unfamiliar extension or one commonly associated with malware (.zip, .exe, .scr, etc.).

#### **6. Emails Requesting Login Credentials, Payment Information or Sensitive Data**

Emails originating from an unexpected or unfamiliar sender that requests login credentials, payment information or other sensitive data should always be treated with caution. .

#### **7. Too Good to Be True Emails**

Too good to be true emails are those which incentivize the recipient to click on a link or open an attachment by claiming there will be a reward of some nature.

When in doubt, call the person who “sent” you the email to make sure it is legit and not part of a phishing attempt to get information or money!,

## Chaplain- Sally Johnston

County Chaplains please be aware that the County Report Form in the Department Plan of Action is missing important information. The name of the county and district were erroneously omitted from the form. Therefore, please include it on the form for the next reporting period.

Some of the reports have little to no specific identifying information making it almost nearly impossible for me to report. However, I will do the best I can with whatever information I have. I will reach out to District Presidents / District Chaplains prior to department convention to compare information needed for the memorial service.

I hope that everyone has had the opportunity to read the November issue of the National American Legion Auxiliary magazine regarding the "Reflections" articles written by our National Chaplain, Monique Batiste. This issue of our Department newsletter usually is published after Thanksgiving. However, her article reminds us, it's not only Thanksgiving that we have so much to be thankful for. We are blessed to be able to belong to such a great organization where we can and do make a difference in so many lives.

We are reminded that while we enjoy our families and the family traditions, those special foods, and those special treats during the Holiday season we sometimes take for granted. Let us remember to "share" with a friend, neighbor, homeless and /or the family left behind while the husband / wife has been deployed serving our country in the armed forces. Does your Unit assemble care packages for our servicemembers? What a great way to get our Junior members involved by including a pocket prayer, making cards, and helping to assemble care packages. It's important that they know someone is praying for them daily. Remember to include some of those "Holiday Treats" to give our servicemembers a taste of home.

For myself, I am reminded daily of Psalm 91, "The Soldiers Prayer". May each of you draw close to your "Higher Power" for strength and guidance as we continue our work as an American Legion Auxiliary member, knowing that we do make a difference. I pray that each of you and your families have a blessed holiday season as we continue our work for the remainder of this administrative year **"LEADING THE WAY TO THE NORTH STAR."**

## ALA Foundation- Cathe MacInnes, Terri Wallace, Carrie Davenport

Discover ways to make a real difference in the lives of local veterans using the ALA Challenge Deck. When you donate \$35 or more to the Veteran Projects Fund, you will receive the 46-card deck. Learn more about the ALA Challenge Deck here. Donate online [here](#), text CARD to 1-844-940-3450, or mail a check to ALA National Headquarters, 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268. Please indicate in the memo line of the check that the gift is for the cards. If you have any questions, please contact Development Director Carley Schutz at [cschutz@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:cschutz@ALAforVeterans.org).

Grab a deck of cards today!

<https://www.legion-aux.org/Blog/Take-the-challenge-with-these-limited-edition-card>

## Constitution & Bylaws/Resolution Deborah Morris

Thank you to the new Units and Counties Chairs for working diligently to update their governing documents. It's great to see everyone using the step-by-step instructions for updating their docs. Please do not hesitate to contact me for assistance and or questions. C&B are for all members to view and if you need a copy of your latest C&B, please refer to your president or C&B chair or you can email me. I do really appreciate your patience as your C&B and other docs are being reviewed, signed, and emailed back to you. Remember you are never alone, I'm only an email, call or text away. Kudos to all the former C&B Chairs for doing awesome job of mentoring on your new C&B committee chairs, THANK YOU. I do want to address the following Articles and Sections that were read and approved at the 2024 Dept. Of NY Convention held in Niagara Falls. The Department C&B changes will be entered on the Dept website, and you will be able to print the updated docs, for your information. You do not have to update your Unit or county C&B, these are for the Department C&B.

There were (4) four amendments that were presented in the 2024 Dept. Convention Call, recommended at the C&B/Resolution pre-convention meeting on July 16, and presented on the convention floor all were voted upon and adopted on July 18, 2024.


Adopted- Department Bylaws- Article Iv - Committees, Section 1

Adopted- Department Constitution- Article V - Department Officers, Section 3

Adopted- Department Bylaws- Article Vi -Representation At The National Organization Level, Sections 1 And 2

Adopted- Department Bylaws- Article X -Discipline Of Units, Section 6

If you need an explanation or rationale for these changes, please email me your concerns. I want to remind C & B Chairs, when time allows, please take the time to share this article at your regular meeting, have a mentoring session with your future leaders. God Bless you and your families throughout the Holiday Season, be safe and stay healthy.

Don't forget your flu shots  I got mine!

## Community Service- Lori McFarland

I would like to thank all the counties that have reported by the November due date. There have been a lot of great things that have been reported on. With the Holidays upon us let us remember that there are people that could use our help. Donate to your local food pantries, adopt a family or 2 in need; purchase and supply them with food and gifts for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Help your neighbors by checking in on them, assist with taking them to the market, shopping, doctor's appointments. Assist with solving sidewalks and driveway in the winter months. Continue to collect clothing for the homeless shelter. Make calls, send cards to people you may know that are in hospital.

Continue to keep up the good work you are doing to serve your community, remember to report everything you do. would like to wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving, and a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

## Education- MaryAnn Calbo

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn. Benjamin Franklin Truer words were never spoken. When we teach and involve our children, they will become upstanding citizens who will honor and cherish our country. They are the future leaders who will define our country as a nation, upholding family values, protecting our citizens and honoring our glorious flag.

We, as a country, spend more per student than any other country in the entire world, In 2022, proficiency in math for eighth graders was 26.5%, Proficiency in reading in 8th grade was 30.8%. Spending per student varies across states and school districts. New York spends the most per student (\$29,597) and Idaho spends the least (\$9,690). Let's offer a love of reading by volunteering to read in your local schools and libraries. The internet has replaced interactive time with physical contact. It has created a society that has become socially inept and underserved.

Many families are struggling financially, contact your local schools to find out their needs. In many cases, our beloved educators are buying supplies with their own funds. "Give 10 to Education" is an initiative to give our students the tools they need, removing that burden and enabling them to excel. Let us not forget our educators, they deserve recognition for the great work they do. This is an incredible service project for your units.

Funds used to purchase school supplies for military children can come from Poppy or general funds. Many of your members children and grandchildren live on bases all over the world. Let's make sure their needs are met.

Invite Veterans to tell their stories. Work with your school's educators to coordinate a question-and-answer session. Who are better role models than our true heroes, our Veterans, in teaching civic responsibility?

There have been so many innovative ways that our units have raised funds for scholarships. One unit in Albany County raffled a beautifully made wooden waving flag to raise funds for a medical scholarship. Keep promoting our offered scholarships throughout your local schools. Due to your dedicated efforts, you are assisting our youth to a clearer path in reaching their goals. Thank you all for the incredible selfless work you do. It is an honor serving as Education chairman.

## Historian- Patricia Galley

The reporting is coming in slow, but I am pleased with the outcome of the counties. Remember as you do your reports, you are creating your own history for your units, counties, and districts. Don't forget to put a book together with your articles, pictures and documents. Yes, mistakes and failures are part of History too! Like the song goes 2 steps forward and 3 steps back. But you will get back up to climb and succeed. It's a journey that maybe you can laugh and talk about for years. So don't be afraid to think out of the box either. Please leave your footprints behind so the next generation or new member can explore and continue where you left off.

As the holidays draw near, remember to keep our veterans in our thoughts and prayers



## Poppies - Laura Booth

Happy November!!! The holiday season is upon us.

Thank you to all the Counties that submitted reports. Some Counties are still missing, please send them in even if there is nothing to report. Let's make the next reporting period 100%.

Remember, all your hard work helps our Veterans.

The National Poppy chair is looking for pictures of units in action, poppy drives, poppy tables, etc. It is never too early to start; many units are preparing for the Poppy Poster Contest. They are reaching out to the schools and their communities.

Any poster that is sent to me to be judged at the Department level, MUST attach the National Poppy coversheet to the back of the poster otherwise, the winners CANNOT be sent on to the Eastern Division for judging.

The coversheet can be found on the National website(alaforveterans.org). You need to log in to My Aux. member portal and look under poppy committee.

If anyone has any questions regarding the Poppy program, please reach out to me at [nyalapoppy@gmail.com](mailto:nyalapoppy@gmail.com)

Wishing you and your families a Happy & Healthy Holiday Season.

## Parliamentarian- Joan Caccamo

Being a parliamentarian is a really tough job, for some, as I know it is for me! A parliamentarian who is a member forgoes the right to make motions, debate, and vote. The office of the parliamentarian is to strive for consistency in parliamentary analysis by attempting to apply pertinent precedent to each procedural question. Their duty is to maintain a position of impartiality.

The basic rules of parliamentary procedures are:

- Only one subject may be before a group at one time
- "Negative" motions are generally not permitted
- Only one person may speak at any given time
- All members have equal rights
- Each item presented for consideration is entitled to a full and free debate

Robert's Rules Of Order is a great tool for a parliamentarian as well as any member of our organization. Along with Robert's Rules Of Order goes common sense. We must remember that we are all working in our organization for a common goal. We should always listen to our fellow members as they may say something that we did not realize will actually help our organization.

## Auxiliary Emergency Fund- Carol Hassett

To date, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia have been helped as a result of the terrible damage caused by hurricanes Helene and Milton. We have done an awesome job in donating to help out our veterans and their families.

Currently they still have many difficulties with the families living there. Some people have lost jobs, they may have high bills, no homes and some have turned to alcohol and/or drugs and now even fires do the dry land and lack of rain.

We should all say a prayer for the families that are affected by this terrible series of problems. All units are asked to make a donation to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF). More information can be found on the National website [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org).

Units aren't the only ones that can donate, individuals are also encouraged to make a donation to help. Remember no donation will ever be too small. We are proud of members in the Department of New York to help the needs in all emergency situations.

## Warrior Family Assistance- Marie Santa Croce

The WFA Program was designed and continues to be committed to assisting our Veterans in times of need.

To date eight (8) Veterans have received WFA Grant this Auxiliary year. So many have worked with Lora, Yvonne, and myself to support our Veterans through this outstanding program and I thank each of you.

So that we can continue to help and expedite requests, please note the following: Before filling out the application, please read the directives preceding the application carefully.

1. If the person filling out the application is not the Veteran applying for the grant, please be sure to identify the relationship the Applicant has with the Veteran.
2. Review, then check that all required documentation is sent in with the application.
3. Please include the names and contact information for your Chairman and Committee Members.

The Committee must review and approve the application before sending it to the Department WFA Chairman (Marie SantaCroce).

We are so grateful to everyone involved in reaching out to and guiding a Veteran in this process.

Any questions or concerns, please call:

Marie SantaCroce,  
WFA Chairman  
718-938-5952

## **ALA Empire Girls State Claire Moran Herrman, Steph Fallon, Megan Hockaday**

The 2024-2025 ALA EGS leadership and staff are hard at work on the plans for ALA Empire Girls State 2025 being held June 30th - July 6th, 2025 at SUNY Brockport! Steph has been compiling the county quota responses, so if you have not submitted your county's quota form, please do so ASAP. ALA EGS County and Unit Chairman Fall Mailing materials were mailed in October. County Chairman, please distribute to your Unit Chairman ASAP!

Reminder that all materials and step by step directions are also available on <https://empiregirlsstate.org/alaresources/>. (See the ALA Resources tab, password GirlsState). We are sending correspondence to the Unit and County Chairman via email, so if you are not receiving those updates, please let Claire know ([empiregirlsstate@gmail.com](mailto:empiregirlsstate@gmail.com)), and she will add you to the email list! We hope this provides an additional layer of support and communication with our program. Did you catch our EGS Unit/County Chair Overview and Informational Zoom meeting? If you missed it, you will be able to view the recording from our website under the ALA Resources tab. Please contact us with any questions!

Megan is eagerly awaiting the online applications from our Citizens and Alternates and receiving the Transmittal forms from each ALA EGS County Chairman. The 2025 online Candidate Registration form is ready and will be open January 10 - March 31, 2025. There is ONE online registration form (not a separate one for citizens and alternates) and all of the documents requiring Parent and Candidate signature and other required forms will be uploaded in the online application. Note: All Units must complete their interviews and select their Citizen(s) and Alternate(s) by March 1st! This will allow Units to collect the \$50.00 registration from all Citizen candidates and have their paperwork to the County ALA EGS Chairman by March 15th. This will give the candidates the month of March to complete all of their online tasks. If you haven't already started your interviews, now is the time!

The following documents must be sent to the registrar as soon as you have the names of your citizens and alternates: 1) Citizen Transmittal Form, 2) Alternate Transmittal Form, 3) Check from each County made payable to ALA Dept of New York for \$450.00 per Citizen. You can email the information to [egsregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:egsregistrar@gmail.com) or send it to Megan at the address below. The online registration form for Candidates will also close on March 31st. No other paperwork should be sent! We are committed to building and diversifying our 2025 staff and would love your assistance with this endeavor. If you, or someone you know, is interested in joining the 2025 ALA EGS Team, please visit <https://empiregirlsstate.org/join-the-team/> to complete the online staff application. The needed availability dates for our staff are Saturday, June 28th - Sunday, July 6th, 2025. Thank you for your continued support and for all that you do at a Unit, County, and District Level! Every one of you is why this program can be a success each and every year!

## Leadership- Sheila Holman

I can't believe it's November already. The time is fast approaching for our midwinter conference. I know everyone is busy at this time of the year getting ready for Thanksgiving and of course Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa. I am sending out an early happy holiday to everybody and hopefully it's not too stressful. Just enjoy your family and friends.

Now let's get onto the midwinter. The midwinter after speaking was so many members about what they would like to see at midwinter things will be a little different again. The midwinter is slated for January 17 and 18th 2025 of course it will still be held at the Marriott in Albany New . Let's get down to the nitty-gritty, which is what I'm sure you're all looking for. The fee again this year will be \$50 to attend. This conference and rooms will again be at the Marriott located on Wolf Rd. In Albany. Everyone will see on our website and our midwinter call the reference number you can contact to book a room through the auxiliary.

The schedule as of now is bringing us back to the olden days when things weren't as stressful. Registration will be Friday starting at 2:30, ending at five, restarting at six and ending at seven. Registration will also be on Saturday morning from 7:30 to 8:30 if we need that. On Friday we are bringing back a social Fun night. Starting at 6:30 we will be having a social hour where you can dress as your favorite movie star or your favorite TV star and come in and socialize with all your old friends and new ones that you'll be making there will be a photo booth. There will be a karaoke machine for you to sing and they'll be some snacks. We are asking for a dollar from each person that comes in that will buy you a star and, on that star, you can put a message to our Department President Kim. The money collected for these stars will be donated to President Kim's project. Our Friday evening fun night will start at will end between 8:30 and 9 PM.

On Saturday, our day will start at 8 AM with the breakfast and we will be honored to have our national president Trish in attendance. After the breakfast people will be given a 15-minute break so that the Hotel can clean up the tables and we will all be coming back to the main room to listen to the national president who would like to hold the class on the grassroots efforts of the from there talking with people and speaking with our president Kim we have decided to leave everything back to where it used to be years ago and I'll be one main room. There are so many members that are asking on how to do reports and how to apply for awards, what is new in parliamentary procedures or all the programs for Children and Youth and how to help increase Membership or how to get innovative programs started for VA&R. We will include a lunch break and then finish with any questions you have for a girls stay leadership or our Family College. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the midwinter that can make it. Have beautiful holidays and will see you soon. God bless the USA.

## National Security – Sandie Baker

A huge thank you to all the counties that reported! One concern stands out, however. There were many counties that reported there is no Committee Chair or No Activity for this program. That brings about the question of Why? We are all continually serving our active military and their families throughout the year and all of these actions are reportable.

Understanding the difference between reporting on National Security and Veterans Administration & Rehabilitation can, and does, often pose confusion among members. For clarity: National Security is assisting service members that are still in uniform, that are currently serving, are in full occupation of part of a military source, Reservists or National Guard, or are still in active duty and in recovery to be redeployed but are in a VA Medical or Rehabilitation center, and their families. Whereas Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation is focused on those that are out of uniform, transitioning from active duty to discharge, retired, or disabled, and their family members.

When we are reporting we can employ the 5 W's and H. It can help us understand where your impact numbers fall when reporting. Who did we help? What did we help them with? When did we help them? Who were involved? How much funding was needed? How many miles were traveled while we were helping? And, most importantly, Where do we need to follow up? On [www.deptny.org](http://www.deptny.org) there are members tracking sheets available to the members as a tool to keep track of where your efforts are and then at the end of the reporting period it will make it much easier to compile your good deeds. For help locating active-duty military and their families visit a local recruiting station, contact your local National Guard Armory, or even contact your neighborhood schools. There are always ways of which we can assist our active-duty service people and their families.

The first quarter zoom meeting with the Eastern Division Chair and National Chair for National Security is complete. Our focus is still advocating for the BE THE ONE initiative. 'Quality of Life' should be in the forefront of everyone's mind and our active-duty service should be included in this initiative as well as our veterans. Currently, the American Legion Family has partnered with Columbia University to share training for those who want to learn more about interacting and responding to an individual who may be in crisis. At [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) there is a free 90-minute session available to American Legion Family members and the community to learn useful skills to recognize and determine at-risk individuals. There are three sessions left available and those are filling up fast.

There was a fun suggestion brought forth from National Chair, Barbara Washburn, that in support of our active-duty service members is to Wear RED on Fridays; and, then let us know with pictures, Where in the World is your RED shirt? Take a picture(s) of you in your red on Friday and email it to [nyalanationalsec@gmail.com](mailto:nyalanationalsec@gmail.com) and I'll pass those on...perhaps your picture will be shown on the Megatron at National Convention!

Until next time ... keep up all of your hard works!

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## Finance- Patricia Hennessy, Marie Mock, Mary Lou Platt

It's hard to believe how fast we are coming to the end of 2024. Budgets were prepared and approved. Now it's time for audits of accounts and preparing to complete 990's due in December. Remember if you fail to file, and your exemption is revoked, reinstatement is expensive. We cannot stress enough of how important audits are. These audits ensure that your funds are being used as put forth in guidelines of both the National and State policies.

Balances agree with bank statements, ledgers, and receipts. We have all heard of funds disappearing or being withdrawn for personal use. While these funds may be paid back, this practice is not acceptable. These funds belong to the Auxiliary that our Members raised for the designated program. An audit committee should consist of two to three members and the Treasurer/VAVS Representative available to answer questions. The Finance Committee wishes everyone safe and happy holidays.

## Legislative- Lynn Visconti

There are still veteran issues that we need to continue to urge our senators and legislators to support and pass. They include:

Guard VA Benefits Act would grant the VA authority to clamp down on scamming agencies that make money by promising a better disability rating and charging inflated prices. The Legion offers free filing for vets using accredited service officers.

S. 2327 and H.R. 4637 would allow for our allies' permanent residency in America. Over 70,000 Afghan allies have been relocated to our country with no way to become residents after fighting alongside our soldiers abroad.

The Love Lives On Act would ensure surviving spouses are able to retain their benefits from both the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) upon remarriage at any age. The bill includes surviving spouses from active-duty, veterans and retired servicemembers. Our military and their families served honorably and earned their benefits through their service and sacrifices.

Our national security is dependent on our Coast Guard and their mission. H.R. 2693, Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act of 2023 would ensure the Coast Guard be provided with the same personnel protection as all other branches of our Armed Services.

There are still many bills that would support our veterans, active-duty military, and families. Keep up to date and make your voice count.

Please encourage members to log on to [www.legion.org/legislative](http://www.legion.org/legislative) and join [www.facebook.com/groups/ALALegislative](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALALegislative) for alerts, bulletins and updates on legislative action. Also sign up for the Grass Roots Center on the Legion website. We have the power in our voices to advocate for our veterans, military, and their families. Our support is desperately needed to urge our lawmakers to also make a difference.

## Junior Activities- Judy Wallace

Wow! Are we ready for that family gathering with the people we love? I can't believe how time is racing by so fast and I am trying to stay caught up. I mean after all I am thinking like an ALA Junior and or maybe it's a SAL Junior. We do have small legs and we have to keep up with the grown-ups, or do we? No, I believe the grown-ups have to keep up with us! I am glad to say we have so many Juniors who are so busy with all the activities related to our Legionnaires to include volunteering to place flags in cemeteries for Memorial Day. Many counties reported Juniors participating in the celebration of the Fourth of July and Flag Day parades that were held over the Summer. As we draw near the holiday season, many Juniors helped to prepare for Early Bird Dinners, and Halloween Parties to include the very popular Trunk -n-Treats! Even as I go through the reports, I see we have many newly active Juniors who are in the midst of Holiday Harvest Dinners. Many are decorating their American Legion Post and helping a family enjoy holiday decorations outdoors. What an awesome way our Juniors are finding ways to be involved in their community. I saw there was this eyeball soup that knocked it out of the park! Something about the student has now become the master! Imagination is awesome when your young and are able to play it out even at the recent Halloween Party that was held at Six Star Post 637. We also have Juniors who are involved with recruiting new Members. Onondaga County included their Juniors in recruiting new Members. When we say let's get our Juniors involved, they really did it! This also includes another county who included pictures of a Junior Member reading the POW/MIA Ceremony for the National Commander's Dinner. This same Junior also served as a page for the ALA Department President. How cool is that! Way Cool! Right! I could go on with more of what the counties have reported, but I really have to get to some important and exciting news. Did you know that National has approved for SAL Young Members from 8 to 17 years old to attend the National Junior Mission Meetings?! They sure can! There is still space available for the National Junior Meetings. January 25, 2025, Des Moines, Iowa. February 1, 2025, Las Vegas or Boston. Registration includes breakfast, lunch and a free t-shirt. I know we have many Juniors who are possibly seeking higher education after they graduate. Any Member from your unit may nominate a Junior Member of the Year (JMOY). To find details regarding this scholarship, type in your browser ALA Junior Member of the Year. Scroll down till you see Junior Member of the Year and click on the link. There is a chance the Junior Member could win a \$5,000 Scholarship. The Nominations deadline is June 1, 2025. If you win the big money, you also win a trip to the ALA's National Convention. There are other scholarships available if you go to My Auxiliary Member Portal and sign in. Click on Junior Member Activities under Committees, scroll down, and you will find four (4) other Scholarships applications available to Juniors to include Spirit of Youth, Junior Member Loyalty, Children of Warriors National Presidents', and the James H. Parke Scholarships. Let's get the word out to our Juniors. There is free money to be had! Oh! But there's more Scholarships available to our Juniors. The Department of New York has Seven (7) to include Department, District, Raymond T. Wellington Jr. Memorial, MaryAnn K. Murtha, Helen Klimek Student, Past President's Parley, and The Cerullo Memorial Scholarships. Our Juniors have all this available to them for free. Let's make this easy and make a folder with all the applications and help them further their education for a positive productive future.

## National Executive Committee - Linda Tome

NEC members were requested to attend a virtual Executive Session of the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee on Monday, October 21, 2024 via Zoom webinar. Unfortunately, and as a reminder to all, executive session is a confidential session, only for the voting members of the NEC and invited guests. The voting members of the NEC include the NEC from each department and the national officers. Past national presidents were invited to attend this executive session. Therefore, and unfortunately, I am not at liberty to share what was discussed at this meeting.

And just this week, another NEC Special Executive Committee meeting has been called for Tuesday, November 26th. So stay tuned???? But unfortunately, I still won't be able to share! ☒

## Public Relations-Julianne Barton

There is a chill in the air, but Public Relations is always HOT, HOT, HOT!!! Veteran's Day pictures and social media posts should be the beginning of your April reports! Everyone should start compiling their activities. It is hard enough to remember last week; forget remembering things for 6 months, which is when the next report is due to Department.

**\*\*\*Did you know that there is a Public Relations poster contest at Mid-winter?\*\*\***

There certainly is a contest at Midwinter!! The theme is "POW/MIA's, what/who are they and how can we honor them?" It should be based on how you or your Unit promotes recognition of POW's/MIA's, during ceremonies or meetings. All of the rules can be found in the Plan of Action on page 187. Go to the Department website -[deptyn.org](http://deptyn.org), click on programs, scroll down, and click on Public Relations, scroll down, and click on 2024-2025 Plan of Action.

Everything is spelled out and the winner will be announced Saturday morning. Show everyone what you are doing through a poster!!!

Even if you may not make poster, follow those directions to the Public Relations section of the Plan of Action. The information regarding all the awards for this administrative year is spelled out. Start working on your entries now. But be sure to double-check the guidelines. There are also links regarding Social media posting. Take a few minutes to look them over.

Please remember Public Relations and Membership go hand in hand. Perception is everything. Always promote the American Legion Auxiliary in a way that encourages retention and recruitment!!!! We are our own best ADVERTISING!!!!

**PUBLIC RELATIONS TIP-PUNCUATION SAVES LIVES!!!**

I like cooking my family and my pets. (I don't, I promise)

I like cooking, my family, and my pets. See the difference!! Be sure to proofread!!!

I wish you a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!!! May your days be merry, and your load be light. May all your troubles take flight!!!



## Department Office Updates- Barbara & Caitlin

- Please do not send DD214's/active-duty documentation into the office with applications. Once the Post Adjutant/Officer signs the application (ORIGINAL SIGNATURES – NO PHOTOCOPIES) and the membership chair (ALA) verifies all supporting documents, return the supporting documents to the member. The office only needs the completed – signed application with the dues and transmittal. Remember – if the veteran is living,he/she MUST BE A CURRENT PAID MEMBER IN THE AMERICAN LEGION. Remember to check which era the veteran served and the relationship of the veteran to the ALA applicant. Please circle the appropriate relationship to the veteran.
- Applications need to be complete and legible otherwise they will be returned to the unit membership chair. New members' addresses needs to be complete. No abbreviations on city/town. All membership applications must be presented to the unit membership chairman with the proper documentation prior to being submitted to the office for processing.
- Membership chairs – if your unit members move, change any contact information, phone numbers, emails, etc., please send the change to the Department office or if you have unit write or unit full, please make the appropriate changes so the information is updated in a timely manner. This also pertains to unit President, Membership Chair and Unit Treasurer.
- ATTENTION ALL ALAMIS FULL AND UNIT WRITE USERS: Please enter your completed membership applications in the ALAMIS system as you have the ability to do so. If you have Unit Full, you should enter the application, making updates to the members information and paying the dues. However, you still need to send the completed application WITH the new members ID number and unit number on it. Failure to follow simple instructions will result in your ALAMIS access to be suspended.
- Newsletters – E-mail copies of the Newsletter are available to any member wanting a free copy. Please e-mail anyone of us at the office with a valid email and we will get you on the list. If you do not have email and someone in the unit/county would like to receive it on your behalf, please let us know so we can add them to the list. If you receive a copy of the newsletter via email, please share it with the members in your unit or county. Mailed copies of the Newsletters are available at the cost of \$15.00 per year.
- All Department issued checks must be deposited within 90 days. Going forward the treasurer will not reissue checks that were not deposited in a timely manner.
- All checks sent to the office should be made out as follows: American Legion Auxiliary, Department of New York and indicate in the memo line what it is for. Also, please remember to sign the check.
- All donations should be sent to the department office and not the committee chair.
- When submitting a donation form please indicate what unit or county it is.

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## America's VetDogs Update

Through the generous donations during Past Department President Mary Farley's administrative year, the Department was able to sponsor three puppies for our veterans. They are Farley, Poppy and Malvie. On October 26, 2024 Farley finally graduated from his training and was officially paired with her veteran Joseph. Dennis Farley, Caitlin Keaveny, Travis and Logan Kessel and I attended the Graduation Celebration in Smithtown, NY. Farley was very receptive of Logan! It was a very special day for all of us!



**AMERICA'S VETDOGS** EST. 2000

### Joseph & Farley

**Trainer/Instructor:**  
Cheyenne Whitetree

**Puppy Raisers:**  
Emmy Sharp  
Carly Walsh

**Puppy Sponsor:**  
American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of New York  
The Farley Family

**I.F.T. Sponsor:**  
Dogtopia Foundation  
Dogtopia of San Antonio-Alamo



A photograph of an elderly man with glasses, Joseph, wearing a blue t-shirt with 'BONE COLLECTOR' printed on it, sitting next to a black dog, Farley. They are outdoors with green foliage in the background.



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