



*The American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of New York, Inc.*



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*2025 February 2025*

*Department President's Message.....Kimberly A. Quick*

Hello everyone. I am writing this newsletter with only 5 of the 62 county visitations left to attend. Your hospitality and generosity have been so great, and I cannot thank you all enough. Thank you especially for all the donations to Homeward Bound Adirondacks. Your donations for their services will help so many veterans heal.

Please do not forget about the April 1<sup>st</sup> Unit reporting deadline, and the April 10<sup>th</sup> County reporting deadlines. I am looking forward to hearing reports from our Department Chairmen about all your great work.

I hope you are all reviewing your activities and are planning to enter for awards. Please make sure you read the award descriptions, instructions, and deadlines. You don't want to let your entries be disqualified. Awards and instructions change every year just like the programs themselves, so please double check all the information in the Plan of Action for your award entry.

Recently a situation came to my attention that a member was offended by the comment of another member. It was a reminder that something we say to another person may seem innocent enough in our thoughts but can be translated by the receiving party as hurtful or offensive. Let's all remember to be kind to each other, and to forgive one another.

Our Department Homecoming celebration will be held May 17, 2025, in Clifton Park, Saratoga County. Look for more information coming soon.

*From the Department Office - Barbara, Caitlin, and Tara*

- **The 2026 Unit Data form (BLUE FORM)** for renewal notices will be mailed to Unit President on file by the beginning of March 2025. It will have a detailed example of how to fill out the proper dues and a chart. It will be available as a fillable PDF to download off of the Department website under the membership tab. **Make sure you are using the 2026 form only.** Please complete the entire form and do not leave anything blank. **This form is due back to the Department Office no later**

**than May 1, 2025.** If your current rate is not sufficient, please make sure you bring it up at your unit meeting and vote on the increase prior to the deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup>.

- The 2026 per capita for Department and National for senior members is \$28; the junior per capita is \$6.25. If you do not submit your form by May 1, 2025 , and your unit votes to raise the dues after the deadline, National will charge a processing fee to change the dues rate, no exceptions.
- National will be printing the **2026 Membership cards and rosters on April 1, 2025.** This means that any changes, new members, rejoins and transfers made after April 1, 2025 will not be reflected on the Unit's 2026 membership cards and rosters.
- At this time, the current year (2025) dues have to be paid first before back dues. This now includes 2024 dues. We process renewals/new members ALL year; please do not hold onto it until the Fall.
- Please remember that 2026 renewals will be available to pay in July 2025.
- Please do not send DD214's/active-duty documentation into the office with applications. Once the Post Adjutant/Officer signs the application 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 with a nine-digit membership number. Remember to check off which era the veteran served and the relationship of the veteran to the ALA applicant. Please circle the appropriate relationship. PLEASE make sure to get rid of all old applications and use the current applications to avoid mistakes.
- Applications need to be complete and legible otherwise they will be returned to the unit membership chair. New members address 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.
- Units with Unit FULL and Unit WRITE ALAMIS access must send the completed membership applications signed by the Post Adjutant or Post officer to the department office once you enter it. Please include the Unit number and new ID# on the application. Keep a copy for the unit file. Failure to adhere to the directions will result in your ALAMIS being terminated immediately.
- All transfers need to be sent to the department office as well as all data forms for deceased members.

- Membership chairs – if your unit members move, change any contact information, phone numbers, emails, etc., please send the change to the Department office so the information is updated in a timely manner. If your unit has ALAMIS Full or Write this should be done as soon as the member notifies you of their change. This also pertains to unit President, Membership Chair and Unit Treasurer.
- Newsletters – E-mail copies of the Newsletter are available to any member wanting a free copy. Please e-mail either one of us at the office with a valid email and we will get you on the list. The Newsletter is emailed to all Unit/County Presidents if we have your email address. 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 do not have anyone in the unit and/or county with an email to receive the email newsletter for you, please contact the Department Secretary for a copy.
- Mailed copies of the Newsletters are available at the cost of \$15.00 per year.
- All Department checks issued 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 from.
- All donations which are sent by the County will be acknowledged to the County that issues the donation check.

*Membership.....Maureen Morgan, Chairperson*

Happy Valentine’s Day!!! The Department just finished Midwinter Conference, and it was a great Conference. Membership wow, we are at 84.05% as of February 12, 2025. Which is great, we are only .95% off the 85% goal for the Department and the Medal of Excellence that the National President will be giving out at National Convention this year. We have already met 4 out of 5 of the steps that are needed to get the medal. The 5th step is the 85% goal by the 15th of March, and we can reach that goal before the 15th of March.

Next Milestone #4 100% for units by March 17, 2025, let’s see how many units will be in that drawing. For the Counties they need to be at 95% by March 17, 2025. Both drawings are for \$50.00, five winners for units and one winner for county. Milestone #5 is 100% by April 14, 2025, for units and counties, and the drawings are for \$25.00, five winners for units and one winner for county. Remember to start working on your membership reports, April will be upon before we know it.

*VA&R / Service to Veterans.....Lora Rowe, Chairperson*

It was so nice seeing many of you at Mid-Winter. What a wonderful weekend it was and, hopefully, you took lots of notes from the presentations and shared them with your unit. If anyone has any questions regarding VA&R, please reach out to me. If I do not have the answer, rest assured that I will get it for you.

There are still a few outstanding Gift Shop Reports and VAVS Representatives' Annual Joint Reviews. Please forward these to me at your earliest convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you in April about all the wonderful activities you are doing in support of our veterans. Please remember to include lots of pictures. And, I would love to have 100% reporting!!!! Remember to apply for the Department and National awards.

The 2025 kickoff date for the annual Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary Walk-A-Thon is April 1. Work with your SAL on this very important program that helps our veterans.

Let us all take "Action" and make a difference in veterans' lives.

*President's Project.....Lora Rowe*

President Kim's project is Homeward Bound Adirondacks, which is a New York based program located in Saranac Lake.

At Mid-Winter, President Kim spoke on her project and the wonderful and powerful impact this program has on veterans. It was very moving to know what a difference your donations will make in the well-being of so many veterans.

There is still a lot of time this year for your unit and county to have fundraisers. The monies that you raise and donate will have a significant impact on making President Kim's project all the more fruitful.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE donate to President Kim's project. Send your donation to Department and earmark your check "President's Project."

*Children and Youth.....Yvonne Brunner Chairperson*

Greetings to everyone! I trust you all had a delightful and joyous holiday season. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the counties that submitted reports in November. It was a pleasure to read the narratives and see so many cheerful faces in the photos.

The DNY Midwinter Conference was a tremendous success, thanks to the dedication and hard work of our Leadership Chair, Sheila Holman. I also want to express my gratitude to everyone who contributed to the Child Well-Being Foundation. Your generous donations have totaled \$756.28. The Children & Youth slide presentation shared during Midwinter is available for you to present to your Unit or County. If you'd like a PDF file, please reach out to me via email at [nyalchildrenandyouth@gmail.com](mailto:nyalchildrenandyouth@gmail.com).

April marks Children & Youth Month (Military Child Month). The April meeting of your Unit would be a fantastic occasion to honor a military child. Consider incorporating a Military Child Table Setting Ceremony. You might also visit your local officials' offices and invite them to present a Proclamation. If they are unable to attend, ask if a representative can deliver the Proclamation on their behalf. Please remember to obtain a photo release form signed by parents or guardians before publishing any photos featuring children.

The deadline for award submissions related to Children & Youth is approaching quickly. Be sure to consult the Plan of Action, page 46, for more information, and don't forget to include an Award Cover Sheet from page 17.

*Americanism.....Gina Southcott, Chairperson*

An ideology or belief in devotion, loyalty, or allegiance to the United States of America . Or respect for its Flags ,traditions and customs. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt ,Americanism is a question of spirit ,conviction and purpose not of creed or birthplace. Some symbols of Americanism are the US flag, the Great Seal ,bald eagle ,The Star-Spangled Banner, In God We Trust, the Pledge of Allegiance.

When asked what is the first thing that pops into your mind when I say Americanism ,Top 5 answers were , the flag ,proud ,USA ,freedom, respect ,democracy. Don't forget Department Presidents award needs to be mailed to her home by May 1st. For all other awards and deadlines ck out plan of action .

*American Legion Family College.....Debby Herrmann, ALA Liaison*

The 2025 session is almost upon us, and I am looking forward to another great session. It was wonderful to see and hear from members that have already attended commenting on how it was an awesome experience. I have come up with several questions and interest in attending this upcoming session. I brought with me several copies of the application to Mid-Winter, and I believe all but 2 were picked up from the information table. Our goal is to have another full class of 100 Legion Family members join us from June 6, 2025 through June 8, 2025 at SUNY Morrisville.

The application is updated, you can fill it out online and print your application or download it and fill it out by hand using the link on our own website @ **deptny.org**. If you decide to fill it out by hand, PLEASE make sure everything is legible, especially your name as the applications are used to print your certificate. Get your application in as soon as possible. It is a first come, first serve policy. The tuition is \$300.00 and remember we have the Shelby Sobolowski scholarship to apply for. The members selected will have to pay their tuition in advance but will be re-imbursed by Department after the completion of the session. Entries must be received by March 1, 2025.

There is a section on the app. if you want to order a college shirt be aware they are men's shirts so order the size accordingly. As in the past they will be available the weekend of the college weekend.

Please consider joining us in 2025. I ask for those who have attended early on in the development of the Legion Family College to consider coming again as things have changed and continue to change. It is truly a family experience.

*Auxiliary Emergency Fund.....Carol Hassett, Chairperson*

ALA National Headquarters is implementing a three-month deadline instead of six months for Auxiliary Emergency Fund disaster applications effective **March 1, 2025**. This approach balances the need for urgency with accessibility, ensuring more efficient resource allocation and quicker recovery for ALA members.

Any ALA member who applies for assistance for a disaster that occurs after March 1, 2025, will be subject to this change. If ALA members apply for assistance for a disaster that occurred prior to March 1 (ex. Hurricane Helene, Hurricane Milton, CA wildfires) they will still be granted the existing six-month deadline.

A three-month deadline for disaster applications promotes timely aid distribution and efficient resource management. While shorter deadlines may pose challenges for certain populations, these can be addressed through targeted outreach, flexibility for exceptional cases, and enhanced support systems. By making this change, the ALA can better serve affected communities and expedite the transition from immediate response to long-term recovery.

*ALA Foundation.....Cathe MacInnes, ALA Foundation Board President  
Terri Wallace, ALA Foundation Board Treasurer  
Carrie Davenport, ALA Foundation Risk & Compliance Committee Liaison*

THANK YOU, NEW YORK MIDWINTER CONFERENCE ATTENDEES!

Your generosity was overwhelming – your donations to the ALA Foundation Veteran Projects Fund resulted in the distribution of a full case of ALA Challenge Card Decks! Enjoy using them:

- In your Units, ask each member at your meeting to pick a card and read it aloud to the group, then use the ideas to enhance your programs – or to develop new activities!
- As a reference for yourself, especially when someone asks you “What does the American Legion Auxiliary do?” The decks will fit in most purses, and certainly into tote bags and briefcases, so you can always have them handy.
- As gifts – for your retiring President, your newly-elected President, or for new members of your Unit.

These are terrific resources and can be used in so many ways!

And...you just might help the Department of New York to win a National Award! The ALA Foundation will be offering two awards this year:

- one to the Department whose combined donations from members, Units, Counties, Districts/Councils, and the Department itself result in the greatest per capita donation, and
- one to the Department with the greatest number of approved ALA Foundation Grants.

And, of course, help New York to win the Department Merit Medallion Recognition!

*Chaplain.....Sally Johnston, Chairperson*

As your Department Chaplain I am reaching out to you for some help. Its hard to believe that we are in the last few months of our physical year. As you know the Department Executive Committee

meeting will be held in April. At that time, I will be having a meeting with the Department Officers to review our annual Memorial Service that is held during Department Convention.

Please help me by supplying me with a complete list of all of the County Chaplains and their current contact information. I will soon be comparing the Death Notice list that I have with what has been recorded to the department office. Sometimes the lists do not agree. Should that occur this year, I will be contacting the County Chaplains to research it and report to me accordingly. I realize its ease to miss sending the information to department office and myself. We want to do our best to make sure every deceased member's name is recorded and included in the Memorial Service.

Also, I have been getting a lot of "undeliverable" sympathy cards returned to me due to incorrect addresses. Please double check the addresses you wish to have sympathy cards sent to. Not only is it unfortunate that the families of the deceased are not receiving our cards of condolence, but we must also take into consideration the cost of the cards, envelopes and stamps that are not being utilized properly.

Because our Department Executive Committee meeting is "prior" to the last official reporting period April 10, I will accept and look forward to any highlights your Units/Counties have done and include your information my report at April Executive meeting. Remember, however, you will still need to complete your April 10, 2025 report as listed in the Department Plan of Action.

The Department Presidents "Book of Prayers" needs your input. At this time, I only have 2 prayers sent to me for her book. Please don't wait until the end of the year to send your prayers for President Kim's book. Like you, I am a volunteer and pulled in many directions and can't always dedicate the time I should to the committee work.

I do want to thank all you for the work you have done.

In closing I want to share a Facebook post – author unknown, but I felt it appropriate for our organization.

God didn't add another day in your life because you needed it. He added another day in your life because someone out there needs you! AMEN

*Community Service.....Lori McFarland, Chairperson*

*Constitution and Bylaws/Resolutions.....Deborah Morris, Chairperson*

Our Department Headquarters will once again, be sending out Unit Data Forms for 2026, to all Unit Presidents really soon. The reason I bring this up is if your Unit members vote to reduce or increase the Unit dues, the new change needs to be reflected in your Constitution & Bylaws. The dues change form can found on the dept. website [deptny.org](http://deptny.org), go to programs next to Constitution & Bylaws scroll down to #3 form "**Standing Rules #1 & #2 ONLY**" (per Capita change) form. I can email you the form if you are having trouble finding it, just contact me at [nvalaconstitution@gmail.com](mailto:nvalaconstitution@gmail.com). All you need to do is fill out the form, *date it, sign it and email it*. I will review the form, sign it, and return it right back to you via email. I will then forward your docs to the Department office to be filed with your Unit and County C&Bs. governing docs.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I would like to thank the Counties and Unit Chairpersons for the awesome work you continue to do on your C&B and Standing Rules. Remember to share your C&B and SR documents with your grassroots members include your Juniors to, these documents belong to all the members. It is such a great way for everyone to learn and understand the mission and purpose of the American Legion Auxiliary. How awesome for you to be a mentor to help mold your future leaders. I'm getting goosebumps 🥰🥰 just thinking about it you doing just that.

We have **Updates/Corrections to the Dept. Constitution & Bylaws** as per the floor vote at the Department of NY Convention in Niagara Falls. July 19,2024.

PLEASE NOTE: Bold print applies to our Units, Counties and Districts.

1. **Dept. Bylaws, Article IV Committees, Section 1**- removal of the committee Past Presidents Parley. *Please Note:* Units, Counties and Districts may continue to have Past Presidents Parley, at the discretion of each entity.
2. **Dept. Constitution, Article V Department Officers, Section 3**- refer to the Dept. C&B
3. **Dept. Bylaws, Article VI Representation at the National Organization Level, Sections 1 and 2**- refer to the Dept C&B
4. **Dept. Bylaws, Articles X Discipline of Units, Section 6**- Cancellation of a Unit Charter shall be in order when two (2) or more Units merge, when a Unit has fewer than seven (7) members for three (3) consecutive years, when a Unit ceases to function, or under such other conditions as might make such action necessary within a Department.

Our American Legion Auxiliary members regularly go above and beyond, and it makes a huge impact on our veterans, our communities and to all we serve every day. Please know, that it does not go unnoticed from those we serve. They are so very grateful for our exceptional efforts and continued services we provide for them and their families. For Service Not Self.

*Education.....MaryAnn Calbo, Chairperson*

Education starts when we are born and continues throughout our lives; it plays a key role in our development. Our successes in life are measured by what you inspire others to accomplish. The training, sharing and implementation of ideas from each and every one of you only benefit to ensure the future of our organization. That being said, it was my pleasure to report all of your contributions in time and efforts to the Education program. The strength of your purpose is immeasurable.

Please ensure that your scholarships are submitted by the deadlines, (refer to the Plan of Action). Check over all of guidelines to make sure that they are all met. Our future lies in the hands of our youth, and we are here to support them.

Get ready for April, it is the month of military children. April 15 th has been designated Military Child Day, it is called "Purple up Day". That is the day we encourage all to wear purple, which, when all of our military services colors are combined, is purple. Plan on donating clothing, toiletries, and school supplies for our military children on bases and in our communities.

Teachers Appreciation week is May 5 th- 9 th. Plan on the activity of delivering doughnuts or homemade baked items delivered to your local schools with notes of appreciation. Teachers all

deserve recognition for their dedication. We all have fond memories of a teacher who left an indelible mark on our lives.

Please do not forget to report all the incredible work you do.  
Thank you again for all that you do in continuing to support of our precious assets.

*ALA Empire Girls State.....Claire Moran Herrman Chairperson  
.....Members Steph Fallon, Megan Hockaday*

It's February, and time to check the ALA EGS timeline and deadlines!

Remember, your interviews and selection of your citizen(s) and alternate(s) should be made by March 1st! Units should have all fees and selections to the County ALA EGS Chairman by March 15th and the County ALA EGS Chairman should have all fees and transmittals to our ALA EGS Registrar, Magen, by March 31st! Remember, additional copies of the mailed materials can also be downloaded from the ALA EGS website: [empiregirlsstate.org](http://empiregirlsstate.org) under the ALA Resources Tab. Password: GirlsState

Please select Alternate Candidates! Even though your quota may have been reduced in 2025, it does not mean that you shouldn't select Alternates! Many of our Alternates move up to Citizens before ALA EGS begins! So, if you have more High Schools in your County or more Units in your County than slots, select candidates from each Unit and/or High School (including Christian Schools, private schools, and home-schooled students).

Orientation Information will be sent to the email addresses the candidates (Citizens and Alternates) provide in their application in early May.

*We will be launching an online raffle as a fundraiser in the coming weeks!* Watch for information on our social media and purchase your raffle tickets to win \$25 worth of Empire Girls State store merchandise! Want to help support the program? Check out our 2025 ALA EGS Amazon WishList! Search for [ALA EGS 2025 Wish List](#) or go directly to our link: <https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/1RLU38KPNXKMF>.

We also have our Booster and Angel programs, forms available on our website.

We're always happy to answer questions and offer help so please don't hesitate to reach out! Thank you for all you do!

*Finance Committee/Audit.....Patricia Hennessy, Chairperson  
.....Members Marie Mock and Mary Lou Platt*

All mandatory taxes have been received or had to be taken from the County portion of dues due to the county that was not received from a few counties.

Our Financial advisor Macaluso Wealth Management reported that we are financially sound as of December 2024 as well as our Accountant Bonadio and Associates.

Unit treasurers can help you review your income from membership, fundraisers, donations received, and events held so far, this administrative year.

Start reviewing your annual operating expenses, such as bank fees, conferences, conventions, visitation expenses, postage, and printing. Compare your total estimated revenues versus your estimated total expenses. See which areas need attention before starting the budget process for the 2025-26 year. Early planning makes for easier budget preparation.

*Historian.....Patricia Galley, Chairperson*

History is like the circle of life. It's the information from the past, present, and into the future. It's a storyline with the good, bad, and ugly. The captions, minutes, and pictures are worthy. They are interesting too!

That is where the Remember Members and The Veterans History project comes in handy. Let our Junior or Senior members interview and write their short narrative story about what they learned from them. It gives them the opportunity to see what it was like for them. The juniors can also work for a History patch. Or they can apply for the historian awards.

In the month of March , for National History month, the Auxiliary can recognize a different woman each day for what they did for their unit, county, or district. All you need is a snap and captions. Put it on their Facebook page or in the newsletter . Love to see some of them.

Mid-Winter was one of those snap, caption moments, where history repeats itself. The newcomers got a lot of information and hopefully they took it back to their units, counties to share. Hopefully, the rest of us will get a refresher course.

Last but not least please remember reporting is due April 1st. . Can't wait to hear from all of you. Let's get 100%.

*Junior Activities.....Judy Wallace, Chairperson*

Can you believe it's almost March, where did our time go?! I am very excited to update everyone on our Juniors across New York State! Okay, December rolled through so fast that January has come and left. At our Department Mid-Winter Conference, I am happy to report we had eight Juniors in attendance with a couple of new members. Friday night was casual with Ice-Breakers coloring sheets "All About Me Hoodie" and "All About Me Sneaker." While the juniors were coloring, they were able to mingle and make new friends. The Juniors practiced the POW/MIA Ceremony to include setting up the table and ensuring all items were placed properly distanced from each other. They practiced until they were comfortable with the procedure. The Juniors were released around 6:30 to join the Senior members in the Social Mixer where the ladies were able to dress up into their favorite Disney character and or Actress/Actor. I did hear Karaoke was a big hit which also included a photo booth. After Saturday morning breakfast, the Juniors performed the POW/MIA Ceremony in front of the Senior members. It was a great ceremony, and you can be proud of our Juniors as they were professional and very respectful of the ceremony. The Juniors did an awesome job! The Juniors were able to hear the ALA National President Trish Ward's speech. After the National President's speech, the Juniors broke out for their Mid-Winter Conference. The junior meeting was held by the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Keira. Elections were held and all positions were filled. Congratulations to the elected officers for the administrative year 2025-2026.

President- **Keira Blackmer**      1<sup>st</sup> Vice President- **Serena Forest**  
Chaplain- **Rilie Hagerty**      Historian- **Kalynn Stern**

Secretary- Jaedyn Vernacatola  
Treasurer- Ailie Hagerty

Sgt-at-Arms- Ziva Yerdon

After elections, the Juniors were actively flag folding and realized it can be tricky trying to get that semi-perfect triangle. In all, it was a challenge and an accomplished one at that. The Juniors were installed in front of the seniors by our own American Legion Auxiliary President Kim Quick. Congratulations to our future leaders! The Juniors were able to show their creative art by painting inspiration messages on rocks. The painted rocks were to be given to anybody that can use a pick-me-up! Great Idea from your Past Junior President Isabelle Shanno who could not attend her last Junior Meeting as she was off to college. Good Luck Isabelle!

Have you made plans for “PURPLE UP”! Day? Well, it is fast approaching April 15. How about planning an activity and convince your friends to wear purple on April 15. Send your photos... I would love to see those purple smiles!

Update from our Eastern Division National Chair Doreen Gallagher regarding Boston National Junior Meeting! There was a good representation of 31 Juniors from various states including New York. Thank you to those who attended. That is awesome and I hope you made new friends and have new ideas to push our mission forward.

*Leadership.....Sheila Holman, Chairperson*

Happy February! Where the time has gone, only five months left to Department Convention! This year’s Mid-Winter in January was a success. Thank you to everyone that attended and supported this endeavor. Our surveys were quite favorable with a few recommendations that will be shared for next year. Thank you to everyone that contributed to our service project to restock a food pantry for our veterans. I am proud to announce that the Department of New York donated 586 pounds of food, WAY TO GO !! I also want to take this opportunity to thank all our presenters. All of you filled our members with a lot of knowledge that they can take back to their units. Our presentation videos will be up shortly on the Department Website for everyone to be able to review. I also want to give a big shout out to Carrie Davenport, for all her technical knowledge that allowed this Mid-Winter to have gone off smoothly. I also want to give a big thank you to everyone that donated to our service project, which was to fill the shelves of a Veterans Food Pantry. I am proud to announce that the Department of New York donated 586 pounds of food, way to New York!

Remember February is women’s heart month wear your red proudly and support this worthwhile cause.

In closing, we have been able to accomplish amazing things this past year. Thank you for all that you do for this wonderful organization.

*Legislative.....Lynn Visconti, Chairperson*

*National Executive Committeeperson.....Linda Tome*

There have not been any meetings scheduled for this national committee since last year. Our next meeting is the third week in February . . . So, stay tuned!!

It was my honor as the Department NEC to escort National President Trish Ward during the Mid-Winter Leadership Conference in January. We were able to tour the Foreverly House and the Guardian House. The Foreverly House is a new two-family home dedicated to providing a safe and sustainable home for homeless females, including mothers with children. The Guardian House also provides transitional housing for homeless female veterans. These homes are both located in Ballston Spa. She was very impressed with the facilities and asked tons of questions. Touring with us was our Department President Kim Quick, American Legion Auxiliary Foundation President Cathleen MacInnes, Department Secretary Barbara Corker and Leadership Chairman Sheila Holman. We were also able to see the van that was purchased with the great fundraising efforts from Sheila's team and the grant provided by the ALA Foundation!

We had a little additional time, so we went on a one-hour tour of the USS Slater which is dry docked here in Albany. It is the only WWII-era destroyer escort still afloat and the only one in existence with its original battle armament. It was definitely an interesting but chilly tour!

Our National President "had a blast" on Friday night dressed up as Morticia of the Addam's for our FUN night. Saturday, we got down to business and National President Trish spoke of how the ALA has seen in recent years that small-town rural environments are struggling, leadership capacity is dwindling, membership is aging and churning, and infrastructure is weakening. President Ward's focus for her presentation was to help reinvigorate our organization through membership – from the ground up. She is hoping that this will help units succeed.

Unfortunately, her visit was cut short due to weather and flights! She was invited to see the Presidential Inauguration in WDC on Monday and definitely did not want to miss this once in-a-lifetime event! She wished that she had more time to talk to our members Saturday but wanted me to thank everyone for their hospitality during her stay here in the Great Department of New York! **So, thank you to all!!**

### *National Security.....Sandie Baker, Chairperson*

The National Security Program maintains a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families.

Several counties reported either the absence of a Committee Chair or no activity for this program. That brings about the question of Why? We continually serve our active military and their families year-round, and all actions are reportable. Please ensure that your April report is submitted promptly. There are always ways in which we can assist our active-duty service people and their families.

The Salute to Service Members Award can be submitted NOW—right up to the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. The enlisted service members can be E1-E9 from each branch of service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, Coast Guard, Space Force, National Guard/Reserve. Complete the nominating form and all supporting documents. Link is here: <https://member.legion-aux.org/Salute-to-Servicemembers-Award-Form> , directions are in POA also.

The second quarter zoom meeting with the Eastern Division Chair and National Chair is complete. Our focus remains on advocating for the BE THE ONE initiative. Our active-duty service people should be included in this initiative as well as our veterans. 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 to the Eastern Division

Chair. Be sure to check out other links for supporting the National Security Program at [www.deptny.org](http://www.deptny.org) . Look under the *Get Involved* tab at [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org).

Until next time ... keep all of our Active-Duty service personnel in your thoughts & prayers

*Parliamentarian.....Joan Caccamo, Chairperson*

I hope those who attended the Parliamentarian session of the Mid-Winter Conference enjoyed it as much as I did presenting it.

A question was asked that I stated I was not 100% sure of the answer. The question was “does the President vote only to break a tie.”

According to Robert’s Rules of Order (12<sup>th</sup> edition)...the President

- a. May vote at any time, although it’s not generally recommended except in the case of a secret/ballot vote because the Chair is to remain impartial
- b. May vote to break a tie, casting her/his vote after the results are in but not before it is announced, and
- c. May vote to make a tie, resulting in the motion being list, again casting her/his vote after the results are in but not before the vote is announced.

*Poppy.....Laura Booth, Chairperson*

Happy February!!!

It’s been cold outside. Hope everyone is staying warm and enjoying the snow.

Poppy orders have been coming in strongly. Let’s shout out to all our poppy makers for doing an outstanding job.

Now is the time to start working on those poppy posters. Deadline is.

May 1<sup>st</sup>. Please remember to attach the National cover sheet to all submitted posters.

I cannot submit any winners to National without it.

Please login to the National website ([alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org)) for many different ideas for Poppy Day-Friday May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

County reports are due April 10<sup>th</sup>. Counties try to get 100% reporting.

Please email or call me if you have any questions. I will help you the best that I can.

*Public Relations.....Julianne Barton, Chairperson*

This winter has been a tough one, But I bet everyone has found fun and exciting ways to stay warm and promote the American Legion Auxiliary. Midwinter was both fun and exciting. Sadly, there were no entries for the Public Relations poster contest. If your County or Unit advertised the Midwinter Conference, OR had a Superbowl party, please send me the flyer. IF YOU HAVE ADVERTISED ANY OF YOUR ACTIVITES, PLEASE SEND ME THE FLYER!!!!

This would include Facebook, Newsletters, Newspaper articles (please clip the date & include it), pictures of Members wearing branded clothing, or signs out in front of your Post.

All these items will be included in President Kim's Public Relations book. You can email them to me, or snail mail them to me. My address is on the website or in the Plan of Action.

Public Relations and Membership go hand in hand. Promoting ALA in a positive manner to perspective members will encourage them to join. It can also go a long way in helping to renew interest in members who may need to be reminded of all the wonderful things that we do. Promoting the American Legion Auxiliary is done by all of the members, all the time. We are all on the Public Relations Committee.

Public Relations Tip for February-

#### STRATEGIES FOR YOUR PUBLIC RELATIONS TO HAVE A STRONGER IMPACT

1. Use Humor-Helps your message stand out. People love to **LAUGH**
2. Build Anticipation-**EXCITE** people about upcoming events
3. Use Competition-People love to **COMPETE**. (Think sports) Gets people involved
4. Take Photos-Publish and distribute them. **SHOW** people what we are doing
5. Promote the ALA-**BRAG** about the great things we do. Toot your own horn

Please start thinking about the awards that are available because the end of the year is right over the snowbank and around the corner. It might take some time to compile all of your bulletins and flyers. There is a County award and 2 Unit awards available. Please refer to the Plan of Action for the instructions and rules governing each submission. I am very excited to see all of the entries!!!

#### *Warrior Family Assistance.....Maire SantaCroce, Chairperson*

The Warriors Family Assistance Program is unique to the American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York. Introduced during the 2008-2009 administration by Carol Johnson, Nancy Kirk, Karen Poremski, Ann Geer and Sue Britton, this program is an opportunity to reach out to our Veterans experiencing unforeseen financial challenges with a grant of up to \$1,500.

During this current administration we have been able to aid 16 Veterans and their families. We have helped to assist Veterans with unexpected issues such as past due rent or mortgage payments, immediate necessary home modifications or repairs, unforeseen medical bills, utility bills to name a few.

Our Committee, Lora Rowe, Yvonne Brunner, and I, is so grateful to the members across our State who have formed WFA Committees and made that initial contact with Veterans.

I am asking that you all please bring the message of WFA back to your Units and Counties and encourage your members to form a local WFA Committee so they can be prepared to help any Veteran when needed.

When requesting an application please contact me and I will email you a copy right away. Please be sure to read and familiarize yourself with the new cover letter and guidelines before the Veteran fills out their application. Your entire committee should review and approve the application before it is sent to me and my committee members.

This will ensure that all necessary information and documents are submitted.

At any time if you have a question or concern, please call, text, or email me. My contact information is in our Plan of Action.

If there are extenuating circumstances whereas a Veteran needs financial assistance directly because of a catastrophic event, please call me and our committee will do all that is possible to help.

Our local WFA Committees are such an important part of this process. You are the first to identify Veterans in need. You guide that Veteran through the application process, lend support and comfort. Answer questions, reassure him or her that they are important to us, that we are grateful for their service and that we are here for them.

Thank you to all who have participated in securing a grant so far this year.

*SAL-ALA Walk-a-thon.....Maire SantaCroce, Co-Chairperson*

WALKATHON 2025 “They Marched for Us, Let’s Walk for Them” Kickoff April 1, 2025

Thank you for all of your past support and participation.  
Last year the Walkathon raised over \$66,000 in support of our Veterans in New York.  
Looking forward to surpassing that milestone this year with your amazing work and dedication.  
Details about the Walkathon, ideas to help raise funds, Boots logos, etc. will be on the ALA and SAL Websites soon

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Legion Auxiliary**

**105 Years of Service Not Self**

