American Legion Auxiliary Department of MD, Inc.
1589 Sulphur Spring Rd., Suite 105
Baltimore, MD 21227
Phone- 410-242-9519 / Fax-410-242-9553



September, 2026 Bulletin

President's Notes

Hello to all the American Legion family,

First, let me tell you about what has been happening since I have taken over Presidency
7/25/2026 - I attended Dept. Attachment Commanders (John Davies) banquet, and he discussed his project Operation Second Chance. Very informative
7/26/2026 – we had our budget meeting at Post 278
7/26/2026 – I had the honor of installing my Units (19) new Officers
8/1/2026 - I attended Unit 29 Joint Installation of officers – very enjoyable
8/15/2026 – we had our 1st DEC meeting at Post 40
8/16/2026 – I attended Legion (TAL) DEC meeting at Post 109
I have been attending as many as I can of the National Pre-convention meetings as possible
I would love to come to as many meetings and functions as possible if I can. You will have to email or call me to invite me to come.
Don't forget the Chairman's meeting at Post 10 – 9/12/2026
Looking forward to a great year for the entire American Legion Family.
Yours in Patriotism,

Pat Walker
ALA Dept. President
aladpmd1@gmail.com
240-841-9983

CHAPLAIN REPORT

O Lord, you mark the journey of life with change. Once again we witness your creation moving from one season to the other. Change is your instrument of growth that brings us to a deeper relationship with you. May your Word be the lantern that guides the roads of change in our lives. Amen

Paula Grimes – Dept Chaplain



THE SECRETARY'S CORNER



DEC Meeting Schedule:

Below is the latest information on the DEC Meetings that have been scheduled. All Meetings start at 10:00 AM.

Meeting Type	Date	Unit	Location
Chairman's Meeting	September 12, 2026	Unit 10	Boonsboro
Fall Conference	October 9-11, 2026	Post & Unit 128	Aberdeen
DEC Meeting	November 14, 2026	Unit 38	Dundalk
DEC Meeting	February 13, 2027	Unit 29	Denton MD
DEC Meeting	May 1, 2027	Unit 285	Baltimore MD

FOR DEC Meetings, Committee Chairs, please send all reports electronically to hq@alamd.org for inclusion in the meeting notes after each meeting. Please also bring the required hard copies as well to each meeting. Thank you!

Chairman's Meeting:

Please don't forget to sign up for the Chairman's meeting. We're using Sign Up Genius to capture attendance. Thank you! Here's the link - https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0D4DADA823A7F8C43-65061140-decmeetings

Or the QR code.

Year-End Department Impact Report:

To prepare for the end of the year in 2027, figured I start now and remind everyone that it's everyone's responsibility to keep track of data that we may not be used to collecting, since it's different than the Year-End Reports that are submitted for awards. This data collection is a big deal since National provides it to Congress that shows the impact of our organization. There are tracking sheets that can be used at the Unit and District level (https://www.legion-aux.org/impact-numbers-report-form). If you have questions or need more information email or call me.

Your contact information:

The office is working on getting the latest set of lists together as well as the latest Unit Officer list information so we can create the Blue Book for the coming year. Please let the office know when your contact information has changed; email or cell phone specifically. Of course, please make sure it's updated in ALA MIS but we can also send updates to the various groups so they have the latest contact information as well.

Laura Miller – Department Secretary

AMERICANISM BULLETIN

Americanism
Happy Birthday America!! We should still be celebrating our countries Birthday. PLEASE, send me pictures!! I have not received any. I would like to use them on my display board for Fall Conference. Send through e-mail or text. I do not use Facebook!! Thank you.

The Americanism essay contest dates are changing. As soon as the National Convention is over and we have the new cover sheet and title, please begin contacting your local schools. Don't forget the home-schooled children. Most local libraries have a list of them. I will not be at the National Convention, so would someone please send me the title. Thank you.

The new date for picking them up from schools etc. is Jan. 15th. Units first place winners go to the District President by February 15th. Districts first place winners go to Department Chairman by March 15th. Department first place winners are sent to Eastern Division by April 15th. The date changes help the schools and the Department Chairman. Please contact me with any questions.

I came across this poem I would like to share with all of you.

AMERICA

America, I can call you mine...
The prairies wide, the hills that climb,
Each river that would reach the sea,
Our heritage- Democracy.
America, oh, wondrous land,
With loving heart and outstretched hand,
A home for all 'neath freedom's light,
Believing in the good and right.
America, forever true,
Beneath our flag of red, white and blue,
A lasting faith, a trust to keep,
A harvest rich the worthy reap.
From sea to sea, oh, wondrous span,
A dream worthwhile for every man,
No other country quite as fine...
America, I'm proud you're mine!

God Bless all of you!!

Linda Sarkisian Americanism Chairman lindasarkisian@yahoo.com 301/602-5276
Nola Willis Americanism Vice Chairman nolawillis@atlanticbb.net 410/490-3625

CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORT

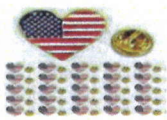
Good Day ALA Department of Maryland

Our Children and Youth leadership is as follows:
Annette Vaughn – Unit 259 (Children and Youth Chair)
Christina Thompson – Unit 128 (Children and Youth Vice Chair)
Parnice Green – Unit 259 (Children and Youth Junior Chair)

Our **2026-2027 Children and Youth Program is "OUR MILITARY KIDS" (ourmilitarykids.org)**

Our Military Kids funds activities for eligible military children so every military child feels seen, supported, and empowered. Our Military Kids serves children of National Guard or Reserve service members who are experiencing an overseas deployment OR activation on a stateside, named mission and children of Veterans or military in any branch of service who are receiving care for combat-related injuries or illness. Our Military Kids helps to build children's self-confidence, enhance family wellbeing, and strengthen a shared sense of community.

We will also support the American Legion Child Well Being Foundation (CWF). The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation contributes to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children and youth by aiding progress in the field of child welfare through research, studies, surveys, projects, or by supporting programs and activities benefiting the welfare of children and youth.

In support of fundraising, we are selling Flag Pins ($5),  Flag Heart Pins ($5), 

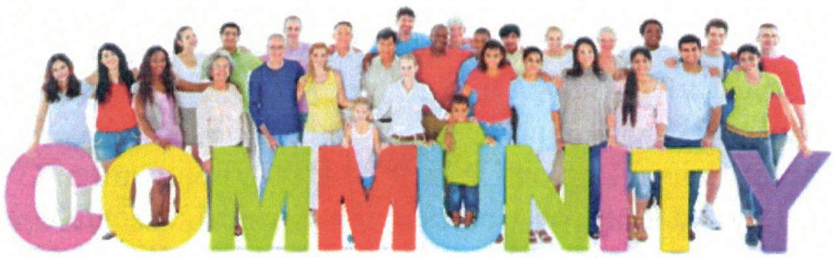
and Purple Ribbons ($3)  in support of the Month of the Military Child (April) and Purple Up Day, April 15th. All proceeds will go towards our donations to Our Military Kids and The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation (CWF). Please reach out via email to AnnetteEmail@yahoo.com to obtain pins. Please contribute individually and please promote our mission at the Unit and District level.

We thank you for your support.
Your 2026-2027 Children and Youth Team

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT

Hope everyone had a great summer, Fall is here before you know it.
Community Service, our Purpose: The purpose of the Community Service is to promote the American Legion Auxiliary's commitment to making our communities better places to live by supporting local service projects.
There are a lot of things you can do in your community for the month of September.
Labor Day September 7th
9/11 Day of Remembrance: Support your local First Responders, fire fighters, police, EMT etc. Take them prepackaged meals, snacks or a handwritten Thank you note.
Assist veteran programs: Volunteer to drive veterans to medical appointments or participate in telephone check-in networks through local VA facilities.
National Grandparents Day September 13th give out hand written notes to the grands in your community and in your post.
These are just a few things going on in September that you and your unit can do.
Don't forget Fall Conference next month in Aberdeen, hope to see you there.

Joyce "Jaye" Cooper Chrm
Jaye0713@gmail.com
Allison Thomas Vice Chrm
allisonthomas676@gmail.com



CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS REPORT

Constitution and Bylaws
Per the National organization we do not "approve" your Standing Rules. We "review" them to be sure there is no conflict with Department or National rules and may make suggestions for changes your Unit might consider. However, barring any conflict, your rules are in effect as soon as the Unit votes them in. While you do not have to wait for approval you do need to send a copy to me and the Department Parliamentarian as soon as possible. If possible please email my copy to me. Thanks!

Rusty Beeg, C&B Chairman
301-602-7214 or rbeeg5908@gmail.com

CONVENTION 2026 REPORT

Report coming next month.

Sandi Dutton Convention Chairman 301-613-7807



CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

SOS!!!!! I need 3 or 4 more volunteers for the festival at the State Fair on September 12. Since this is a conflict with the Department Chairman's meeting several of the usual volunteers will not be available. If you might be interested but need more info, please call, email or text me so I can give you the details. Believe me, it is a rewarding day!
Rusty Beeg, Chairman
301-602-7214 rbeeg5908@gmail.com

FALL CONFERENCE

FALL CONFERENCE

One more month and we're marching on to Aberdeen. Remember when making reservations at a hotel (the ones that are on the flyer) use the code ALA Fall Conference. We have one more hotel that you can add to the list, Comfort Inn: 980 Hospitality Way, Aberdeen, Md 21001. 2 double beds $160 per night. Friday night October 9th: 11 rooms available, Saturday night October 10th: 20 rooms available. (including Breakfast and WIFI)410-273-6300.

We really need your help! We need door prizes, auction items, and brown bag raffle items. You can bring them with you to the Fall Conference. If you're not going to the Fall Conference and just want to donate, you can drop off at our department office.

Friday night will start promptly at 7:00 p.m. So that we can finish by 9pm and you can have the rest of the night to do as you please. We will have a few program presentations, meet and greet and we will have ice cream towards the end of Friday night. The kitchen will be open at the Post at 6pm with food for purchase until 8pm.

The session on Saturday will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. We will have program presentations by Department Chairmen; we will break around with noon for lunch. You will be on your own for lunch. And will end around 4pm. 5:30 to 6:30pm Social Hour and 6:30pm Dinner.
We will have more information for you in a few weeks. If you have any questions, please contact Lynette or me.

Joyce "Jaye" Cooper Chrm
Jaye0713@gmail.com
443-590-7114

Lynette Brooke-Dean CoChrm
ncdpresident2021@yahoo.com
410-440-2321

GIRLS STATE BULLETIN REPORT

Maryland Girls State

ALA Maryland Girls State 2026 was a huge success. Maryland was represented well at Girls Nation by our Senators - Senior Senator, Shreya Dinesh, sponsored by Unit 135 and Junior Senator, elected American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation Vice President, Teresa "Tessa" Ahn, sponsored by Post 156. Vice President Ahn also authored "The Men in Menstruation Act" legislation brought to ALA Maryland Girls State 2026 and taken to ALA Girls Nation to be heard on the Senate floor. Please check out our Facebook page for pictures and links to the ALA Girls Nation Times.



ALA Maryland Girls State 2027 is scheduled to be held **June 20 - 25, 2027** at Salisbury University. Staff will be ***required*** to attend from June 19 - 25, 2027 (Saturday morning to Friday evening).

More information will be distributed at the Fall Conference. *If your unit is unable to sponsor an interested applicant, please forward her name to Director Brianna Jackson at alamdgs@gmail.com stating your unit is unable to sponsor. We will help find a sponsor.* ***Please do not turn anyone away due to lack of funds. We can help!***

There will ***only*** be three (3) in-person orientations and one (1) Webinar. All dates and times will be included in the Fall Conference packet and posted by October 9, 2026. There will be a third option - recording with a quiz - if your citizen is absolutely unable to attend one of the in-person or the webinar. This third option will be by request only and the citizen will need to pass the quiz to satisfy the mandatory orientation requirement.

Finally, did you tell someone about Girls State? Girls State's mission is to promote, promote, and promote some more. This year we would like at least one (1) girl from every County and Baltimore City! We can ONLY do this with the help of the Units and District Representatives. If you have ANY questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please spread the word.

Brianna Jackson (38), Director - **alamdgs@gmail.com**
Robyn Anzulis (191), 1st Vice Director
Kristen Barry (191), 2nd Vice Director
Committee: Rusty Beeg (136), Joyce Cooper (19), Rocky Berry (293), Stephanie Maceiko (136), Kyrese Johnson (170), and Briana Washington-Yotko (293)



Gold Star Mother Report★

Gold Star

Sunday September 27th is Gold Star Mothers and Family Day. On this day we honor the mothers, fathers and families of fallen military service members. This day is also known as National Gold Star Mother's Day, the day serves as a reminder of the losses suffered by military families.

Your Hero will not be forgotten...

Respectfully,

Penny Adams

Gold Star Chairman

717-752-2178/boomomo63@gmail.com

Junior Activities Bulletin Report



Junior Project: Soldiers Angels
2026-2027

The Honorary Department Junior President, Alaina Zeigler was asked, "Is there any Foundation or Organization that you would like the DEC to consider and approve as the Junior Project for 2026-2027. She wanted to research to find one that would be meaningful and benefit Military Service Members and their Families. She narrowed her choice down to: **Soldiers Angels.**

Soldiers' Angels is a worthy veterans-service organization that directly supports service members, veterans, and military families by providing "aid, comfort, and resources."

Their mission reminds us that our responsibility to those who served does not end when they take off the uniform. They support veterans in the surrounding Maryland Region and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Through our V A & R Program we support Veterans at 5 V A Medical Centers (Baltimore, Loch Raven, Perry Point, Martinsburg, Washington DC) and at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. That's a total of 6 facilities.

Our goal is to raise funds for Soldiers' Angels so that they can continue providing meaningful programs and resources to the military and veteran community. Every dollar raise will represent something much greater—it represents gratitude, compassion, and a promise that our veterans will not be forgotten.

Together, we can make a difference for those who sacrificed so much for our country.
They served for us. Now it is our opportunity to serve for them.

"Sparkler for Soldiers Angels-Lighting the Way with Love and Service!"

Motion: I move that the Junior Project be "Soldiers Angels" with a goal of $3000 - $5,000.

The Soldiers Angels

1. Focus on daily necessities, food, clothes, shoes, hygiene and personal care, as well as; baby products, pampers, baby food, wipes-towelettes, soap, shampoo, lotions, baby oil, socks, shoes, clothing, bottles and milk.
2. Snack items, down-time items, such as; puzzle books, coloring books, pen/pencils, magazines, and handheld digital games.
3. Counseling for active duty and spouse and/or significate other.
4. Assisting in the military with suicide prevention and suicide violence in the home or at work.

The Department of Maryland Juniors are going to work diligently and honorably to promote the good well of the American Legion Auxiliary Junior Project and would love the support of all the Units. We are working toward welcoming all the young juniors to our programs this year 2026-2027. May we work hard to accomplish all our goals for our new and old junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Maryland, Inc., We will send out the future meeting for the Juniors soon. Thank you, all the Department of Maryland, in advance for your cooperation with our junior program.

Chairman	Vice-Chairman	Junior Chairman
Wendy Rice-Morton	Cynthia Cooper-Smothers	Tabatha Davage



DEPARTMENT OF MARYLAND HISTORIAN 2027

Good Day Department of Maryland Unit Historians.
The following are the Guidelines and Scoresheet for Department Senior History (Rule Book, Pages 95-96). Please follow the detailed Guidelines and submit your Unit's History no later than May 25, 2027.

GUIDELINES & SCORESHEET FOR DEPARTMENT SENIOR HISTORY

I. Introduction (10 scoring points)

1. Title Page
a. Unit History of _____
b. Name of Unit Historian
c. Date: Current administrative year
2. Foreword or Dedication
3. Photograph of Unit Senior President (optional) (If used, 5 x 7 in. black and white or color.) (DEC 8/5/2017)
4. Prayer
5. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America
6. First verse of The Star-Spangled Banner"
7. Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary

II. Historical Content (70 scoring points)

1. List of elected and/or appointed Unit Officers for current administrative year
2. List of Unit Chairmen or committee appointments for current administrative year
3. The History shall be written as a factual narrative beginning May 1st and ending April 30th. (DEC 11/8/14)
4. The signature of the Unit Historian should immediately follow the final paragraph of the history.
5. Index (optional)

III. Appearance (10 scoring points)

Cover: Soft cover binder for loose-leaf paper, preferably blue with 2.5-inch gold foil American Legion Auxiliary seal centered on the cover or a regulation binder with imprinted seal. (May be purchased from Department Headquarters)

1.Paper: Plain, white, 81/2 by 11 in.

2. Page Setup: a. Margins - Left and right margin should be 1.25 in.; top and bottom margins should be I in. b. Pagination - Page numbers should begin on the first page of the Historical Content. They should be centered and placed 0.5 in. from the bottom of the page.

3. Spacing: Double-spaced with the exception of the Introductory pages (i.e., Title Page, Foreword or Dedication, Photograph of the Unit President(optional), Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, first verse of "The Star-Spangled Banner" and Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary), which shall be centered in the middle of the page. Paragraphs may be indented or in block form.

4. Text: 12-point font, Times New Roman or Arial style font

5. Technology: Computer preferred however a typewritten or handwritten history is permissible. If typewritten or handwritten, the page set up should not vary from what is required of computer users.

IV. Arrangement (10 scoring points)
1. Written in the third person
2. Clear, concise language with correct spelling.
3. No decorations, computer graphics pen or ink drawings, illustrations, extra material, or newspaper clippings,
4. Be original and unique in thought and presentation
V. Deadline:
Unit Histories MUST BE RECEIVED by the Department Historian NO LATER than May 25 to be eligible for judging.
RECOMMENDATIONS:
Document your history after every event, or at least monthly.
Study the Guidelines and carefully follow the instruction for the Introduction (10 Points); Historical Content (70 Points); Appearance (10 Points); and Arrangement (10 Points).
Have other Unit members (Eagle Eyes) review the Guidelines and your History Book before submission.
Purchase the Blue Cover from Department Headquarters.
Submit your History Book no later than May 25, 2027.
BEST WISHES!
Annette Vaughn, Department of Maryland 2026-2027 Historian

LEADERSHIP REPORT

SEPTEMBER, 2026

Growing as Leaders

Leadership is not simply about having authority or being in charge. It is about influencing others, making responsible decisions, building trust, and helping a team succeed. To grow as leaders, we must continually develop our skills, learn from our experiences, and be willing to improve.

One important way to become a stronger leader is through **self-awareness**. Good leaders understand their strengths, weaknesses, emotions, and behaviors. Asking for honest feedback from coworkers, mentors, or team members can help us recognize areas where we need to grow. Being willing to admit mistakes and learn from them demonstrates humility and builds trust.

Another key part of leadership growth is **effective communication**. Leaders need to listen carefully, explain expectations clearly, and make sure others feel heard and respected. Strong communication prevents misunderstandings and creates an environment where people are comfortable sharing ideas and concerns.

Leaders also grow by **taking responsibility and making decisions**. Instead of avoiding difficult situations, effective leaders face challenges directly and consider how their choices affect others. Even when a decision does not produce the desired outcome, leaders can learn from it and use that experience to make better decisions in the future.

Strong communication prevents misunderstandings and creates an environment where people are comfortable sharing ideas and concerns.

Even when a decision does not produce the desired outcome, leaders can learn from it and use that experience to make better decisions in the future.
Finally, great leaders focus on **developing other people**. Leadership is not about making yourself look successful; it is about helping the entire team succeed. Encouraging others, recognizing their contributions, providing guidance, and giving people opportunities to take on new responsibilities can create a stronger and more confident team.

Overall, becoming a better leader is an ongoing process. By practicing self-awareness, communicating effectively, taking responsibility, learning from mistakes, and supporting others, we can continue to grow. The strongest leaders understand that leadership is not a position—it is a commitment to continuous learning, service, and positive influence.

Kyrese Johnson
Leadership Chair

LEGISLATION

Advocacy Begins With Us

As we begin a new Auxiliary year, September is an ideal time to renew our commitment to legislative advocacy. As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, we have an important responsibility to remain informed and use our collective voices to support legislation that improves the lives of veterans, servicemembers, and military families.

The American Legion's 2026 legislative priorities include preventing veteran suicide, improving mental health care, strengthening services for women veterans, ending veteran homelessness, improving the disability claims process, supporting military quality of life, and ensuring the successful implementation of the PACT Act.

Suicide Prevention and the "Be the One" Mission

September is also Suicide Prevention Month. Advocacy in this area means supporting legislation and funding that expand access to mental health services, strengthen community-

based outreach, and ensure that veterans and their families know where to turn for assistance.

We can also support The American Legion's Be the One mission by being willing to listen, reach out, and help connect a veteran with appropriate resources.

If you or a veteran you know is experiencing a crisis, contact the Veterans Crisis Line:

* Call: 988, then press 1
* Text: 838255
* Online: VeteransCrisisLine.net

You do not have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to receive assistance.

Advocacy Is Civic Engagement

Legislative advocacy does not require us to be political or partisan. It requires us to be informed, engaged, and willing to communicate respectfully with our elected officials.

Members are encouraged to register for The American Legion's Legislative Action Alerts. These alerts provide timely information about important legislation and make it easy to contact your congressional representatives when your voice is needed.

September also includes Constitution Day and Citizenship Day on September 17. This observance reminds us of the rights and responsibilities we share as citizens. Please make sure your voter registration information is current, learn about issues affecting veterans and military families, and encourage others to participate in the democratic process.

The American Legion Auxiliary does not endorse political candidates, but we strongly encourage informed and responsible civic participation.

Take Action This Month

This month, I challenge every member to take at least one legislative action:

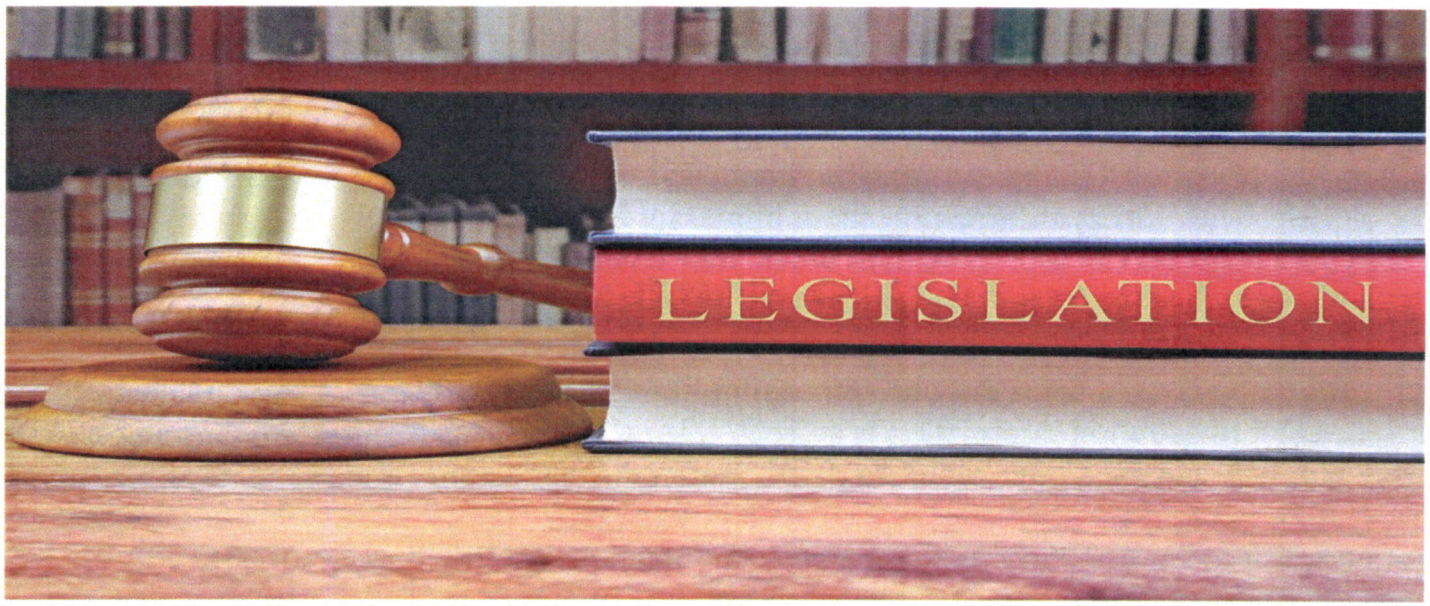
* Register for a Legislative Action Alert.
* Contact an elected official.
* Attend a town hall meeting.
* Share accurate information about a veterans' issue.
* Help someone understand how proposed legislation may affect our military and veteran communities.

Every email, telephone call, letter, and conversation matters. When Auxiliary members speak together with a clear and unified voice, we strengthen The American Legion Family's ability to advocate effectively for those who have served our country.

Let us remain informed, stay engaged, and continue turning our appreciation for veterans into meaningful action.

Respectfully submitted,

LaTia N. Jones
Legislative Chair
American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Maryland
Unit 259



MEMBERSHIP REPORT



Membership, Membership, Membership

The Department MEMBERSHIP THEME this Year is:
"This Is What They Fought For — America the Beautiful"
Membership: Honoring 250 Years by Growing Our ALA Family
"This Is What They Fought For — America the Beautiful"

As America celebrates 250 years, we have a wonderful opportunity to honor those who fought for the freedoms we enjoy by strengthening the organization that continues to serve our veterans, military families, and communities — the American Legion Auxiliary.

Membership begins with YOU!

Here are the District Membership Themes:

District 1: Statue of Liberty

Theme: Lighting the Way to Membership

Token: Statue of Liberty

Carry the Torch by Welcoming, Mentoring and Retaining Members

District 2: Eagle

Theme: Let Membership Soar

Token: Eagle

Encourage Units to Spread their wings, Reach Higher and Bring New Members into the Legion Family, Especially the Auxiliary

District 3: Red Rose

Theme: Let Your Membership Bloom

Token: Red Silk Rose

Plant the Seed of Membership through Recruiting, Nurturing Current Members, and Growing Stronger Together

District 4: Liberty Bell

Theme: Ring in the Membership

Token: Small Torch or Statue of Liberty

Ring the Bell for Every Membership Milestone and Celebrate Units Reaching their Goals

District 5: American Bison

Theme: Strong in Membership

Token: Plush Bison

Represent Strength, Perseverance, and Moving forward together towards 100% Membership

District 6: Declaration of Independence

Theme: Commitment to Membership

Token: Small Scroll tied with a Patriotic Ribbon

Challenge Every Member to Renew and invite Someone New to Join Our Mission.

District 7: Star Spangled Banner

Theme: Stars, Stripes & Membership Pride

Token: Music Note

Celebrate every Member as a Star who helps the Auxiliary Shine

District 8: American Flag

Theme: Raise the Membership, 1 Star at a time

Token: Miniature American Flag

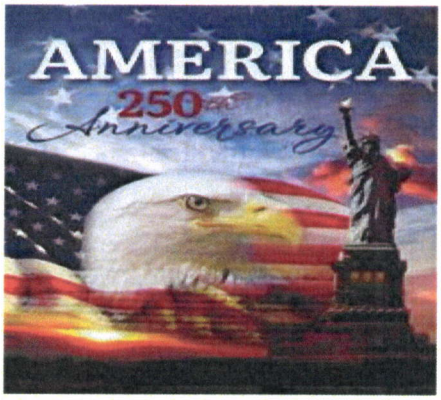
Every New and Renewed Member adds another Star to the ALA Family

Our Amazing Juniors

Theme: Lighting the Way to the Next 250 Years

Token: Sparklers

They are the Sparklers that Light the Way!!



Every District, every Unit, and every member has an important role in growing our ALA family. Membership is not just the responsibility of the Membership Chairman. We are ALL recruiters!

Membership: EVERY LEVEL, ONE MISSION

Department President: Commander-in-Chief of the 250th Celebration

Department Membership Chairman: Guardian of Growth

Department Office: Membership Independence Hall

District Presidents: Ambassadors of MD

District Membership Reps: Patriot Membership Trailblazers

Unit Presidents: Guardians of the Legacy

Unit Membership Chairman's: Builders of the Legacy

Unit Members: Patriot Membership Recruiters

"Let's Guide the Way, One Member at a Time, Because THIS is what they fought for: America the Beautiful

Starr Purnell
Department 1st Vice President
Membership Chairman 2026-2027

MUSIC REPORT

Organization Support: I would like to continue the "Musician of the Month" spotlight to recognize musical talent within our organization. Have someone at your unit you would like to spotlight? Please send me an email and they could be spotlighted in the bulletin.

Music Library Update: Our Theme Song for the Year titled **"Red, & White, & Blue"** and it is ready. An Audio Recording will be posted on YouTube - search *ALAMD Music Playlist* - and the lyrics are below. There will also be a membership song coming soon. Look out for that.

I would like to thank my mother, Melba Gilmore, and my niece, Helena Wood, both members of Dundalk Unit #38 for joining me in singing our theme song at the August DEC Meeting.

-Brianna Jackson, ALA Dept. of MD Music Chair

Red, & White, & Blue

an arrangement parody of *"America the Beautiful"* by Katherine Lee Bates and Samuel A. Ward
and *"Total Praise"* by Richard Smallwood

"O beautiful for spacious skies
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!"

This is what they fought for
A land of hope and grace
Where freedom's light shines
brightly still
Upon each heart and place.

From mountains high to Chesapeake,
Their legacy remains
With grateful hearts we pledge our self's
To red, and white, and blue.

America, America
America, America
America, America
America, America

NATIONAL SECURITY FOCUS

American Legion Auxiliary
Prepared • Patriotic • Resilient
Remember • Prepare • Protect
Ivory N. Harris
Department of Maryland National Security Chair,

September provides several important opportunities to recognize the role each of us plays in supporting national security. National security is not limited to the military or federal government. Prepared families, informed citizens, strong communities, emergency responders, and continued support for our service members all contribute to the safety and resilience of our nation.

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

One of the main focuses during September is National Preparedness Month. This observance encourages individuals and families to prepare for emergencies before they happen. Natural disasters, severe weather, power outages, fires, and other emergencies can happen with little warning.

A simple emergency kit should include:

- Water and nonperishable food
- Medications and basic first-aid supplies
- Flashlights, batteries, and phone chargers
- Copies of important documents and emergency contacts

Disaster Readiness and First Responders

Disaster readiness plays an important role in national security because communities are stronger when residents know how to respond. Members can support readiness by signing up for local emergency alerts, learning basic first aid or CPR, checking on elderly neighbors, and knowing where local shelters are located. First responders - including firefighters, law enforcement officers, emergency medical personnel, and emergency managers - are essential to community safety and resilience. Units can recognize their service through thank-you cards, appreciation baskets, invitations to speak at meetings, or simple public acknowledgments.

Patriot Day - September 11

Patriot Day honors the nearly 3,000 people who lost their lives during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It is also a time to remember the courage of firefighters, law enforcement officers, emergency medical personnel, military members, and everyday citizens who responded during and after the attacks. September 11 reminds us of the importance of unity, service, preparedness, and remembrance.

American Legion Auxiliary
Prepared • Patriotic • Resilient
SERVICE • REMEMBRANCE • READINESS

POW/MIA Recognition Day

POW/MIA Recognition Day reminds us of the service members who were prisoners of war and those who remain missing in action. Their service and sacrifice must never be forgotten. American Legion Auxiliary members can help keep their memory alive by participating in recognition ceremonies, displaying the POW/MIA flag, sharing educational information, and supporting military families.

Cybersecurity Awareness and Protecting Veterans from Scams

National security also includes protecting personal and financial information. Criminals frequently use phone calls, emails, text messages, social media, and fake websites to target veterans and military families. Members should avoid sharing sensitive information with unknown individuals, use strong passwords, enable multi-factor authentication when available, and be cautious of messages that create a false sense of urgency.

Veterans and military families should remember that legitimate organizations generally will not pressure them to immediately provide banking information, passwords, Social Security numbers, or payment through gift cards or unusual payment methods.

SEPTEMBER UNIT ACTION

- Review emergency contacts
- Build or update a 72-hour kit
- Recognize a first responder
- Observe Patriot Day and POW/MIA Recognition Day

CYBER SAFETY REMINDER

- Use strong, unique passwords
- Turn on multi-factor authentication
- Do not click suspicious links
- Verify requests before sharing personal information

National Security Begins With Us

Whether we are building an emergency kit, honoring those lost on September 11, recognizing POW/MIA service members, thanking first responders, or helping veterans protect themselves from scams, each action contributes to stronger families and safer communities. As American Legion Auxiliary members, we can continue supporting national security by remaining informed, prepared, and willing to serve.

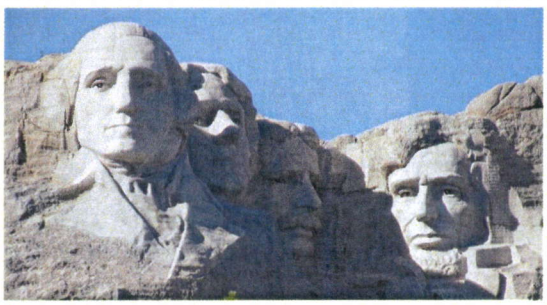
Remember the past. Prepare for the unexpected. Protect our communities.

PARLIAMENTARIAN REPORT



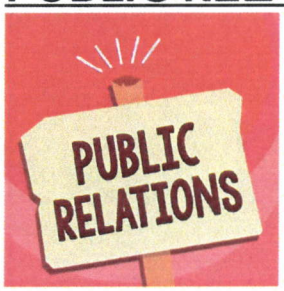
Linda L. Green
Parliamentarian

PAST PRESIDENTS PROJECT



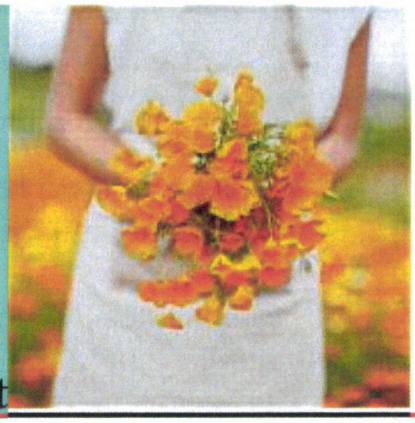
Joanne Weis

PUBLIC RELATIONS



Sharon Holter





Poppy Report

Our first Poppy to talk about – the Orange Poppy

The orange poppy flower symbolizes enthusiasm, joy, and resilience. Its vibrant color represents energetic passion and a zest for life, often inspiring individuals to pursue their true desires and embrace creativity.

Symbolism and Spiritual Significance

- Enthusiasm and Joy: Orange poppies are associated with positive emotions and a lively spirit.
- Resilience: They bloom brightly even in harsh conditions, symbolizing strength and the ability to overcome challenges.
- Healing Power: The flower signifies healing and the capacity to bounce back from difficulties, encouraging optimism.

Cultural Representations

- In various cultures, orange poppies are seen as symbols of hope and renewal, often used in floral arrangements to convey heartfelt messages.
- Overall, the orange poppy is a powerful symbol of positivity and strength, making it a meaningful choice for gifts and personal reflection.

Don't forget you can start your Poppy Poster at any time, so the kids have plenty of time to create them. I have attached the Poppy Poster rules and Cover Sheet so you can get started hitting the schools, churches, girl scouts, boy scouts, any where you can find a kid. The last two years has been getting fewer and fewer posters, so can we make this year an amazing year for the posters. Come on you District Reps for poppy's lets get motivated, so we can raise lots of money for the Poppy Program for our Veterans, C&Y and Honor Flights.

And please let's not forget our Miss Poppy's. please send me pics of all that these precious children doing what they do to promote the Poppy Program.

You Members are the Chairmans saviors when it comes to supporting our Veterans. So, thank you from the bottom of my heart!!!

Suzzette Reid
Dept. Poppy Chairman
301-219-4480

Chris McKay
Vice President Chairman
443-994-9402

Unit Development & Revitalization

Growing Stronger Together: Membership is More Than a Number

Every American Legion Auxiliary unit wants to see its membership grow, but successful units understand that growth begins long before a new application is completed. Membership is about building relationships, creating meaningful experiences, and helping every member discover their place in our mission.

When we welcome new members, we are not simply increasing our numbers—we are strengthening our ability to serve veterans, military families, and our communities. Every new member brings unique talents, ideas, and experiences that can help our organization thrive.

Retention is equally important. Members stay where they feel valued, informed, and connected. A simple phone call, handwritten note, invitation to participate, or personal thank-you can make all the difference. Members who understand the purpose behind our work are more likely to become lifelong Auxiliary leaders.

One of the greatest tools for retention is education. Take a few minutes at each meeting to share information about an ALA program, explain the responsibilities of an officer, review a section of your governing documents, or discuss basic parliamentary procedure. These "knowledge moments" help members gain confidence and encourage future leadership.

Strong units also recognize that leadership development should never stop. Today's committee member may become tomorrow's unit president. Encourage members to chair a project, attend department training, or participate in district activities. Leadership is learned by doing.

Don't forget that healthy units regularly review their Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules. Current governing documents provide clarity, protect the unit, and ensure consistency during leadership transitions. When everyone understands how decisions are made, meetings become more productive and members feel more confident participating.

Financial stewardship is another key component of revitalization. Members should know how funds support the mission and why transparency matters. Regular financial reports, approved budgets, and sound internal controls build trust and accountability.

Every American Legion Auxiliary program—from Americanism and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation to Children & Youth, National Security, Poppy, and Education—offers opportunities for every member to serve. When members find a program they are passionate about, they become engaged, enthusiastic ambassadors for the Auxiliary.

As we look ahead, let's remember that revitalization isn't about changing who we are. It's about strengthening our foundation, developing leaders, welcoming new members, and ensuring our mission continues for generations to come.

Unit Challenge September

Choose one member you haven't seen in a while. Reach out with a phone call or handwritten note to let them know they are missed and invite them to your next meeting. Sometimes one conversation is all it takes to reconnect someone with the mission.

"Strong units don't happen by accident. They are built one member, one leader, and one act of service at a time."

Learn. Lead. Serve.

Department of Maryland American Legion Auxiliary
Unit Development & Revitalization Committee

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

We know we have all been very busy helping out our Veterans. Here is some information on the Homeless Stand Down at the VA's.

Stand Down Events

Stand Downs are typically one- to three-day events during which VA staff and volunteers provide food, clothing and health screenings to homeless and at-risk Veterans. In addition, Veterans also receive referrals for health care, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment, mental health counseling and other essential services.

Here is the next Stand Down Event that is scheduled at a location in Maryland.

October 8, 2026	**Perry Point, MD**	Roy Payne | (443) 240-5048 roy.payne@va.gov Albert Pacitti | (443) 206-2435 albert.pacitti@va.gov

Link for future events: https://department.va.gov/homeless/stand-down-events/

Let's continue to assist our Veterans.

Committee Chairman
Christina Thompson
410-688-3601
Thompson21001@yahoo.com

Martinsburg VA Hospital

Martinsburg VA Hospital

Volunteers continue to support the hospital with their time and needed donations.

Bingo continues monthly with a Unit sponsoring from District 8 bringing snacks each month.

Volunteers help at the Women's Boutique twice monthly helping veteran women get much needed toiletries and clothes they might need. Items are donated from the District. No needs at this time.

The VA Rep keeps in contact regularly with the hospital for current veteran needs. **Needs** at this time: 3-4 blade razors, t-shirts (size M-2x, boxers (M-2x, no tidy whities). I'm glad to shop and send receipts.
The Food Pantry is always in need of food. When a veteran comes in for services and a need is seen; they can take as much food as needed. Again, it is donated. **Needs are** SF Fruit cups, canned chicken/tuna, wheat pastas and shelf milk.
VA Baby Shower was held for 62 moms. The moms went home with a carload of donated items. Volunteers helped with the shower. Pictures posted on FB.

Martinsburg VA Rep
Diane Lowe
VAVS Representative
Martinsburg VA Hospital
Diane Lowe

VAVS - Washington DC VA Medical Center

The final VAVS Committee Meeting for 2025-2026 year was held via Microsoft Teams on August 3, 2026. Plans are underway for the 2026-2027 year as follows:

The Community Living Center (CLC) still has bingo parties for the residents by the staff. However, canteen books are always needed.

Fisher House will host a 15th Year Anniversary celebration scheduled in September.

Holiday Basket Raffle is back! Tentative dates are December 1-3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Each organization is invited to enter a basket for raffle with a theme of their choice to be raffled at $1 each, 6 for $5, or 12 for $10 (cash only). Drawing details to be determined.

Winter Haven even will take place on November 7, 2026. Some activities will be indoors; food, DJ, coats and books will remain outside. More information to follow.

As more information is received, I will keep our Department advised. Donations are still being handled electronically and are always needed for the Veterans.

For God and Country,
Linda L. Green
VAVS Representative

VAVS – Charlotte Hall

Service, Not Self!
Joyce Baki
410-449-9515
Joyce.Baki@Yahoo.com

VAVS – Lock Raven

Good Afternoon Everyone,
I'm excited to introduce myself as the new Voluntary Service specialist for Loch Raven VA Medical Center. My name is Janell Norton, and you may have seen me around or spoken with me before, but just in case we haven't connected yet, I wanted to take a moment to reach out and share a little bit about myself. Previously, I spent six fulfilling years as the Community Outreach specialist in Public & Community Relations at Perry Point, where I helped drive impressive growth in enrollment and workload for our VA Health Care Medical Centers. Over the past year, I've been balancing both Community Outreach and serving as the Voluntary Service specialist on detail at the Baltimore V AMC. In March, I happily stepped into a supporting role within CDCE at Loch Raven and now, as I settle into my new position, I'm eager to get to know and collaborate with each of you.
Looking ahead, we have some wonderful dates and opportunities coming up to honor and celebrate our veterans. I'm currently reviewing our calendar and would love to arrange activities or visits for Veterans Day, which falls on November 9, 2026. Our plan is to celebrate with our veterans throughout that week, starting November 9th and wrapping up on November 13th. If your organization is interested in any activities to celebrate or even just stopping by for a visit, please reach out to me-we can work together to schedule something meaningful and show our veterans how much we appreciate them. I believe it would be fantastic if we could coordinate something special for them.
Thank you for all you do to support our veterans. I look forward to connecting and hearing from you soon.
Janell Norton
Voluntary Service Specialist
Center for Development and Civic Engagement
Loch Raven VA Medical Center
3900 Loch Raven Boulevard
Building 1, Room 129
Baltimore, MD 21218
Office: (4J 0) 605-7000 ext. 55877
1

SERVICE TO VETERANS
Home/Field 2026-2027

Hello, everyone! I'm looking forward to another amazing year of the Auxiliary volunteering and supporting our Veterans at home and in the field. Here's a recap of how we can be a great assistant to our veterans.

Service to veterans includes any assistance given to a sick or injured veteran in hospice programs, nursing homes, foster homes, convalescent homes, halfway homes, adult day care centers, community residential facilities, alcohol centers, homeless shelters, or wherever veterans reside in the community. This can involve organizing stand-downs, assembling care packages, tray favors, greeting cards, helping with a veteran's burial, or maintaining gravesites as well as serving, cooking, or shopping for active-duty military member, veterans, or their families in your home or theirs. Volunteering is the core of our organization. (SERVICE NOT SELF).

A good starting point is volunteering at your own Post. Some Legionnaires are now infirm, confined due to illness or unable to drive, and spend most of their time at home or in a nursing home. Contact community leaders to learn about programs that serve veterans and identify their needs. After recognizing their needs, brainstorm with your unit or American Legion Family on ways to address them.

Service to Veterans volunteers record their hours with the unit chairman, who then reports to the department Service to Veterans chairman using the provided report forms. These hours are added to the total impact hours that the American Legion Auxiliary members contribute each year to support service members, veterans, and their families. This helps ALA members see the significant influence they have in veterans lives, and provides ALA National Headquarters with the tools to showcase this impact and report to Congress.

However, Service to Veterans does not include services provided to veterans at a VAMC (Veterans Administration Medical Center or Hospital.

MCVET is always in need of volunteers and donations. Check out their calendar and their wish list on their website, www.MCVET.org. Your unit may be able to prepare a meal for the veterans there, spend time connecting with them, or make donations from their wishlist. Contact Janelle Mabry at 410-576-9626 or Jmabry@mcvet.org. Another wonderful organization that helps our veterans and offers great resources is The Baltimore Station. The Outreach Coordinator is James Hardy, at 410-752-4454 x301, jhardy@baltimorestation.org, or www.baltimorestation.org. They could also use volunteers and help fulfill their wish list.

Shelley Scott, Director
Home and Field Services



Poppy Poster Contest Rules

Units shall sponsor contests in local schools. When schools do not conduct activities, other youth groups — including Junior members — may participate under direct supervision of the unit.

Contest Classes

- Class I: Grades 2 and 3
- Class II: Grades 4 and 5
- Class III: Grades 6 and 7
- Class IV: Grades 8 and 9
- Class V: Grades 10 and 11
- Class VI: Grade 12
- Class VII: Students with special needs defined as:
    a. Those in special education classes.
    b. A student recommended for special education classes but who has not been admitted due to a waiting list or various other factors.
    c. A child identified as having a disability, but not in a special education class due to lack of facilities; identification contingent upon discretion of school officials.

Poppy Poster Requirements

1. Each poster shall have a fitting slogan not to exceed 10 words. Articles "a", "and," "an", "the" are not to be counted as words. The words "buddy" and "buy" cannot be used.
2. The words "American Legion Auxiliary" must be used in the design of the poster and will not be counted in the 10-word count.
3. Each poster must include a red poppy.
4. The department shall determine the closing date of the unit contest. The poster shall be on 11x14" poster board. (Drawing paper will not be accepted).
5. The United States flag may be used as long as there are no infractions of the flag code.
6. Posters will be judged using the following criteria:
    - 50% - poster appeal (layout, message, originality)
    - 40% - artistic ability (design and color)
    - 10% - neatness
7. Media used shall be watercolors, crayons, powder or oil paint, handmade paper cutouts, ink or textures, acrylics, pencils, and markers.
8. Written in ink on the back of the poster (not attached) shall be the class in which the entry is submitted, the name, address, age, and grade of the contestant and the name of the department.
9. Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through submission of artwork, contestants and their legal guardians grant non-exclusive reproduction and publication rights to the works submitted and agree to have their names and artwork published for commercial use without additional compensation or permission.

10. The poster shall be the work of only one individual.
11. The label "In Memoriam" from the veteran-made poppy may not be used.

Poppy Poster Contest Judging and Awards

1. Each department shall establish its own procedure for judging.
2. A citation will be given for the most outstanding poster in each classification within the five divisions.
3. Unit members should follow deadlines and process for the department. All department entries are due to the division chairman by June 1.
4. While ALA representatives will do their best to return all posters, it is not guaranteed. We recommend participants take a picture or scan their poster for their records.
5. Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through submission of artwork, contestants and their legal guardians grant nonexclusive reproduction and publication rights to the works submitted and agree to have their names and artwork published for commercial use without additional compensation or permission.

POPPY POSTER CONTEST
COVER SHEET

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) sponsors a Poppy Poster Contest for students in grades 2-12, including students with special needs. Grade levels are divided into seven classes. One award in each of the seven classes will be presented in each division. Winners will receive $50 and a $50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship fund. National winners will be posted at www.ALAforVeterans.org after national convention.

Poster Classes:

Class	Grade Level
I	2 and 3
II	4 and 5
III	6 and 7
IV	8 and 9
V	10 and 11
VI	12
VII	Students with special needs

Class competing in:_____

Sponsoring ALA unit:_____

Due date for student to return to ALA unit: _____

To Be Completed by the Student/Parent:

Student Name: _____

Address (Street, City, State, Zip): _____

_____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone:_____

School Name: _____

City/State of School: _____

Parent or Teacher Name and Signature: _____

Auxiliary Use Only (Must be completed for entry to be considered.):

Sponsoring Unit Name/Number: _____

Signature of Unit Poppy Chairman/President: _____

Unit winner due to Department on:_____Department:_____

Signature of Department Chairman: _____

Department winner due to National Poppy Division Chairman by June 1

"This is What They Fought For-America the Beautiful"

District 1: Statue of Liberty
Theme: Lighting the Way to Membership
Token: Small Torch or Statue of Liberty





District 2: Eagle
Theme: Let Membership Soar
Token: Eagle Figurine or Feather

District 3: Red Rose
Theme: Let Our Membership Bloom
Token: Red Silk Rose





District 4: Liberty Bell
Theme: Ring in the Membership
Token: Small Torch or Statue of Liberty

District 5: American Bison
Theme: Strong in Membership
Token: Plush Bison or Carved Buffalo





District 6: Declaration of Independence
Theme: Commitment to Membership
Token: Small Scroll tied with a Patriotic Ribbon

District 7: Star Spangled Banner
Theme: Stars, Stripes & Membership Pride
Token: Music Note or Miniature Song Book





District 8: American Flag
Theme: Raise the Membership, 1 Star at a time
Token: Miniature American Flag

Juniors

Theme: Lighting the Way to the Next 250 Years
Token: Sparklers

Department President: Commander-in-Chief of the 250 th Celebration

Department Membership Chairman: Guardian of Growth

Department Office: Membership Independence Hall

District Presidents: Ambassadors of MD

District Membership Reps: Patriot Membership Trailblazers

Unit Presidents: Guardians of the Legacy

Unit Membership Chairman's: Builders of the Legacy

Unit Members: Patriot Membership Recruiters

"Let's Guide the Way, One Member at a Time,
Because THIS is what they fought for:
America the Beautiful



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

FALL CONFERENCE



THIS IS WHAT THEY FOUGHT FOR.
AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL.

WHEN: October 9th to 11th 2026

WHERE:
Bernard L. Tobin
American Legion Post 128
44 N. Parke St.
Aberdeen, Md. 21001

HOTEL INFO:
Rooms held under ALA Fall Conference:
Most rooms have king size beds/ some will have pull out couches.

Holiday Inn
10 rooms held
$179.00 a night
1007 Beards Hill Rd.
Aberdeen, Md. 21001
410-272-8100

Hilton Inn Garden Aberdeen
King bed: Sleeps 2/ $145.
Suites: Sleeps 4/ $179.
Free parking and wifi.
1050 Beards Hill Rd.
Aberdeen, Md. 21001
410-272-1777

Hampton Inn & Suites
10 Rooms held:
King standard $179.
10 rooms held: King with pull out will be $199.
Holding at these prices includes Free breakfast, parking and wifi.
795 West Bel Air Ave,
Aberdeen, Md 21001
410-273-0202

La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham
793 West Bel Air Ave,
Aberdeen, Md 21001
410-672-3009

Home2 Suites by Hilton
20 Newton, Rd.
Aberdeen, Md. 21002
410-272-0203

Comfort Inn
980 Hospitality Way,
Aberdeen, Md. 21001
410-273-6300

Feel free to book online thru Booking.com, Expedia.com, Kayak.com, Hotel.com just to name a few.

FRIDAY NIGHT: 10/9/26
NETWORKING – KARAOKE & ICE CREAM
Come and meet some new members from around our state and meet our Eastern Division National President. Miss Cellaneous will be our Guest DJ.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY
EDUCATION AND UNIT DEVELOPMENT
Refreshments.

SATURDAY EVENING: 10/10/26
BANQUET
Cost $35
(Limited seating so sign-up quick get your RSVP on now.)

★ HONOR ★ SERVICE ★ UNITY ★


Let's build a world
where compassion is louder than criticism,
curiosity is stronger than judgment,
and lifting each other up
becomes the norm again.
Join the Kindness Movement.
Be kind.
Always.
It matters.