



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF IOWA

SERVING VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Auxiliary Communique - Winter 2015-2016

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Legislation

Legislative Day set for January 20

Jan Carlton, Department Legislative Chairman

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Legislative Day has been set for January 20, 2016 in Des Moines. Legislative Day is when we can join Legionnaires and other veterans from across Iowa to speak with Senators and Representatives about issues affecting veterans, military, and their families. Approximately 300 veterans attended Legislative Day in 2015. Here is the tentative schedule. The schedule can also be located on the American Legion website: www.ialegon.org.

Even if you are not able to attend Legislative Day and participate in activities, you can still contribute by keeping in touch with your legislators through emails & letter writing.

You can also subscribe to the American Legion Legislation *Take Action Alerts* at www.legion.org/takeaction to receive e-bulletins to support or oppose certain bills in Congress.

Are on Facebook? If so, I would encourage you to join the Iowa American Legion Auxiliary Page and the ALA National Legislative Group Page. The ALA Legislative Group is for anyone interested on issues affecting our veterans.

I wish peace and health to each and every member across Iowa. Enjoy the upcoming holidays.

LEGISLATIVE DAY SCHEDULE

9:00 a.m.	American Legion Family Briefing Department Headquarters
9 - 10 a.m.	Visit Vendor Tables Capitol Rotunda - First Floor
10:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Veterans Day Program Capitol Rotunda - First Floor
10:30 a.m.	Locate your elected officials to discuss legislative initiatives - Visit vendor tables
12:00 p.m.	Depart Capitol

Quilts of Valor Retreat

January 8 - 10, 2016 - The Quilted Steeple, 2605 - 90th Ave., Lone Rock

Join us for a weekend of fun, fellowship and food, service to veterans, food, and a stitchin' good time. Oh, and food. Did I mention food and chocolate?

The Quilt of Valor Quilt Retreat will be held at The Quilted Steeple near Lone Rock - a beautifully restored former church and parsonage, surrounded by the peace and tranquility of rural Iowa. Learn about it at www.quiltedsteeple.com.

The fee for the retreat is \$125 which includes your spacious sewing area, lodging with five meals (Friday evening to Sunday morning) and beverages. There is an extra refrigerator in the retreat center for guests who want to bring other beverages, snacks or other food.

Day retreats for those living close by would be \$50 for the weekend and will include your sewing area, Friday evening meal, and Saturday lunch and dinner. If you can only come for the day, the cost is \$25.

You need to bring your sewing machine and personal tools. Cutting tables, pressing tables, irons, and individual lighting at the tables is provided. fabric and patterns will be available due to the generosity of our members, or you can bring your own.

Not a quilter? No problem. If you can stitch a straight line, we will get you started quilting! Send in your reservation today - spots will fill up quickly.



Send registration form and fee (available online at www.ialegon.org/ala/Announcements), to: QOV Retreat, American Legion Auxiliary, 720 Lyon St., Des Moines, 50309. Questions? Contact Ann Rehbein amrehbein@msn.com or 515-232-9299.

Iowa Girls State

Drake University - June 12-17, 2016

Mary Andersen, Girls State Director

For the first time, I was able to attend our high school's Veterans Day assembly. It is tradition for our Boys State and Girls State citizens to speak at this assembly, and this year those students were my son and one of my private lesson students. They both spoke highly of their experience last June, saying it was "the most transformational 6 days of my life thus far", and "a life-changing experience". They also said it taught them things like "persistence," "respect for our country, our flag, and our Veterans", and the "courage to make the most of every opportunity." I was glad to hear their positive remarks about the programs, and look forward to finding the students who will attend in 2016.

Girls State is a program of the Auxiliary near and dear to my heart, because it is what brought me to this treasured organization. Many of you already heard the news that we have a new location this year, and have questioned why we decided to change. I sent an email to a member in Western Iowa, and saved it, so I could more eloquently repeat myself:

The cost of Iowa State was requiring a significant subsidy from the general fund to meet expenses. The Girls State Board was charged by Department President Diana Shaddock and the finance committee to investigate alternate sites as an option to reduce costs. We asked for bids from 10 different locations and received 7 proposals. Some places either could not meet our facility needs, or our time line in June for the event. We visited 6 of the 7 sites - one came in at an expense higher than ISU.

Drake was chosen due not only due to savings (\$0 subsidy in this year's budget), but also because the girls can be housed in a single dorm; meetings can be held in one building, which is nearly adjacent to the dorm; and the cafeteria building is also next to the dorm. There will be no crossing busy 4 lanes of traffic back and forth at meal times.

Des Moines allows for a central location for Inauguration, so that more families can attend the event, without taking an entire day off from work. With Drake as our location, it is also a hope that we can provide the girls with a visit to the Capitol

building, similar to what the boys get in their experience. The staff at Drake is very excited to have us, and we look forward to this new adventure!

Despite the savings, the Girls State budget still needs to watch its pennies. Because of our new location, we are unsure of the details of our needs, so the best way you can help this program is through donations of gift cards to WalMart, or plain Visa gift cards - so that we can obtain necessary supplies upon our arrival. (Such as power strips, materials for directional signs, other office needs, and the meals for staff prior to the opening of the cafeteria.) At any time, you can most certainly send monetary donations earmarked for Girls State to the Department Office. If you want to specifically sponsor a portion of the Girls State program, you can list your name or Unit and how you'd like to "sponsor" us. For example, room rental, staff training meals, photos, instruction manuals, campaign supplies, Inauguration reception, and so forth.

We will also be holding our annual silent auction at the Department Mid-Winter conference on Saturday evening for you to not only bring some items to donate, but to bid (and bid, and bid!) on items to raise funds for the Girls State program. If you are bringing items to the conference, you can bring them to the registration desk on Friday, or the Girls State table at the programs fair Saturday morning.

Deadlines, deadlines...the ones to keep in mind for Girls State are December 1, 2015 to send in money for your registration of your citizens; and February 28, the date your Girls State citizen needs to complete her online paperwork. This year's registration fee remains \$400.

Speaking of paperwork, we continue to have problems with citizens not completing the final step of their registration and completely filling out the medical information. This is very important to our nurse, in the event that care is needed for the citizen, and is much easier if it is in place on time, so that she does not have to individually contact each girl who did not successfully fill it out. However, the Girls State website is currently under construction, so please have your

citizens wait until after the holidays to try to access the online registration information. (Thank you for your patience!)

Another thing to remember in the spring (but we'll remind you now) is to fill out the request form by April 30, should your Unit need a refund. However, if you want someone to gain the experience of Girls State with your reservation, Bev Copple will be working with Units who have a paid reservation, but no citizen to attend, with Units who have more girls interested than they can send. Perhaps you already reached out to a nearby community that is also part of your school system to see if your Unit can help another young lady with the experience of a lifetime - but if you need assistance, Bev will be taking care of this for us. You may contact her via email to arrange this, but when you do, please insert "Girls State" in the subject line, so she knows the utmost importance of your message! Her email address is: sloancafe@aol.com and I hope that we are able to reduce our refund payment next spring to nearly \$0.

Board member Ann Rehbein and I attended the annual Girls State Director's conference in Indianapolis in September, and learned that the Samsung scholarship application will be entirely online this year. That means the applicants must have it completed in its entirety prior to arrival, as the window for submission will close the day of our opening session, so that we might judge our applicants and announce a winner at Inauguration. The link will be added to the Girls State website (which is currently under construction) that girls can access after registration.

Dates of the 2016 session are June 12-17. My contact information is as follows: email:

andersma9678@gmail.com or phone 641-919-0752. If I cannot take your call because I am busy at an event, or at school, please leave a message, and I will get back to you. Or send an email - I can sometimes access that more easily.

Please encourage a young lady from your community to attend Girls State. I know we have many "rising STARS" who will benefit from attending next June!