

2026-2027 PROGRAMS ENGAGEMENT PLAN



**Department President
Judy Ring**

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**Department Executive Director
Crystal Wright**

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This year, we celebrate America's 250th birthday. Throughout our nation's history, and across our great state, the American Legion Family has grown into something truly special. With that spirit in mind, my theme this year is:

Focus on Family.

The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion, and the American Legion Riders are a family like no other. We stand beside one another through events and fundraisers, celebrate the victories, and offer support during difficult times. One of my songs this year is "Chosen Family," and it reflects this theme beautifully. It reminds us that we do not have to be related, and we do not have to look the same, to walk through life together. Our shared purpose, service, and commitment are what make us chosen family. In that same spirit of family, I am proud to join Commander DeKock in supporting a joint project this year.

Together, we will be raising funds to support **Americans for Independent Living** (AFIL). This organization supports Veterans and their families with housing assistance, provides needed furniture to help make a house feel like home, and offers home modifications for aging and disabled Veterans to improve accessibility and mobility. AFIL also assists with food, clothing, resumes, and other resources that help Veterans move forward and succeed in life.

My second project is **Healing at English River Outfitters (HERO)**. HERO is one of the few organizations that offers healthy outdoor activities for Veterans, their families, and the surrounding community. Their outdoor experiences include hunting, fishing, and hiking, and they also provide all-terrain equipment for Veterans with physical limitations. HERO recognizes the importance of clinical treatment while also working alongside veteran service organizations and hospitals to provide meaningful support, connection, and healing.

My final project is **IOWA BLUE STAR MOMS**. Blue Star Moms is for mothers, grandmothers, foster mothers, and adoptive mothers of

Veterans or active-duty service members. If you have ever sent a loved one off on deployment, you understand how difficult that can be. This organization supports not only military mothers, but also the families who remain at home. Their objectives are to:

- Support one another through every stage of military life, from enlistment to deployment, homecoming, transition, and beyond.
- Send care packages and messages of encouragement to deployed service members.
- Volunteer in Veterans Affairs facilities, state veteran's homes, and community organizations.
- Honor and remember our Fallen Heroes and support Gold Star Families.
- Participate in patriotic events, ceremonies, and community outreach programs.
- Advocate for awareness of the unique challenges faced by military families.
- Serve veterans and active-duty military members through countless hours of volunteer service each year.

No military family should ever feel alone. Through Blue Star Mothers, members find understanding, friendship, and a strong network of support from others who truly understand the military family experience.

Each of these projects reflects the same heartfelt mission: supporting our military members, Veterans, and their families.

Membership is always an important topic of conversation. This year, I encourage each of you to look around your community and consider where there may be opportunities for growth. Are there organizations whose members may also be eligible to join our American Legion Family? Have you visited your local recruiter's office to share information or ask about new enlistments? These are just a few ideas to help us continue growing together while strengthening the family we are so proud to serve.

Judy Ring, President
American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Iowa
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Department of Iowa American Legion Junior Auxiliary

2026–2027 President's Message

Hello everyone!

My name is Penelope Elmer, and I am honored to serve as your 2026–2027 Department of Iowa Junior Auxiliary President.

I'm excited for a year filled with opportunities to help our veterans, serve our communities, make new friends, and have fun together. Every act of kindness, no matter how small, makes a difference. I can't wait to see what our Junior Auxiliary members across Iowa accomplish this year!

Our 2026–2027 Projects

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Iowa (Collect Donations)

- School supplies
- Board games
- Card games

Puppy Jake Foundation (Collect Donations)

- Dog food
- Dog toys
- Dog beds

Ronald McDonald House Charities

- Aluminum can tabs

Together, these donations will support children, veterans, and families across Iowa.

Grow Your Local Junior Auxiliary

Help make our organization stronger by inviting a friend to join, volunteering at your local American Legion or Auxiliary Post, participating in activities, and supporting our veterans.

My Challenge to Every Junior

This year, I encourage you to try something new—volunteer at an event, help with a donation drive, or invite a friend to join.

Remember, **you are never too young to make a difference**. Your kindness and willingness to serve truly matter.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Department Junior President. I look forward to an amazing year and can't wait to see all that we accomplish together!



AMERICANISM

**WHAT IS AMERICANISM? WHAT DO WE DO?
WHAT'S OUR PURPOSE?**

**THE PURPOSE OF THE AMERICANISM
PROGRAM IS TO PROMOTE PATRIOTISM AND
RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP.**

DID YOU KNOW?

**REPORTS
DUE BY
APRIL 30,
2027**

THINGS WE DO:

Americanism Essay Contest,
Flag Etiquette, The
American Legion's Flag
Advocacy, America the
Beautiful Coloring Book

SOME OF THE PROGRAMS WE HELP SUPPORT:

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL TEAM, THE
ORATORICAL CONTEST, JUNIOR
SHOOTING SPORTS, STAR SPANGLED
KIDS, WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA,
CITIZENS' FLAG ALLIANCE

Rosemary Lancaster
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A LITTLE CHANGE MAKES A "LATTE" DIFFERENCE



For the Auxiliary Emergency Fund



If you listen to the national news on any given day,
you know that natural disasters are occurring at an alarming rate!
Deadly tornadoes, massive floods, ravaging wild fires, earthquakes
... so many hurting and in desperate need of help.



The ALA is a well-respected service organization that proudly provides assistance to U.S. veterans and military families whenever we have the opportunity (e.g., monetary help, emotional support, basic necessities). The unfortunate reality is that many of our ALA sisters and brothers are affected by natural disasters and life events beyond their control creating financial hardship, and they need us, too.

With this year's *Focus On Family*, perhaps we can direct a few more resources to those in our own ALA family who need us.

What if each of us gave up JUST ONE LATTE or specialty coffee PER YEAR and donated that money to the AEF instead? Imagine the amount of help that would provide for someone who desperately needs it! Let's challenge each other to come up with creative and fun ways for each unit to add an additional \$50 to their AEF donation this year.
(Considering over 400 units in the Department of Iowa, the impact would be mind-blowing!!)

Wishing you a LATTE success with this challenge!



Sharon Luellen (luellensharon@gmail.com) 515-707-1711

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

★ DEPARTMENT OF IOWA ★

BE THE ONE

*Every Veteran.
Every Day.
Every Life Matters.*



TO ASK. TO LISTEN. TO ACT. TO SAVE A LIFE.

Be The One is The American Legion Family's mission to reduce the number of veterans and servicemembers who die by suicide. The American Legion Auxiliary is committed to standing with veterans and their families by offering support, encouragement and hope.



BE THE ONE TO ASK

Reach out to veterans and their families. Ask how they are doing—really ask. It could be the most important question you ever ask.



BE THE ONE TO LISTEN

Listen without judgment. Let them know they are not alone. Sometimes, just being there makes all the difference.



BE THE ONE TO ACT

Help connect veterans to support. Encourage them to seek help. Know the resources. Act until help is received.



*A simple conversation
could save a life.*

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW
IS IN CRISIS, HELP IS AVAILABLE.**

**988 | VETERANS
CRISIS LINE**

CALL OR TEXT 988, THEN PRESS 1

Confidential. 24/7. Free. You are not alone.



★ BUDDY CHECK. REACH OUT. BE SUPPORTIVE. ★

Together, we can prevent veteran suicide—one conversation at a time.



As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, we are proud to Be the One for our veterans, servicemembers and their families. Let's lead with compassion. Let's save lives. **Let's Be the One.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Chairman, Tammi Quinlan

641-660-6613

Tquinlan1970@gmail.com

Veterans Strengthen America.
BE THE ONE ♥ MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Chaplain

President Judy has chosen Deuteronomy 31:6 as her bible verse. "Do not fear the road ahead for God walks with you. His hand will guide you and His grace will sustain you through every trial."



What does a chaplain do? Remember that we do not promote any one religion, we must not offend anyone.

Things that a chaplain may do: Be in charge of religious services for the Unit, visit members and veterans in nursing homes or who are shut-ins. Keep in contact with Gold Stars Families, volunteer at community projects. Make a prayer book or devotional book, while doing this encourage member participation.

A Chaplains' Prayer Book is available at Emblem Sales or you can download it from the National website.

If you have a prayer request, please let me know.



Joyce Elliott
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Children and Youth

Helen Hildebrand, Chairman
25615 New Vienna Rd
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563.542.3829



Way of supporting our Children and Youth

Include junior members in functions within you unit, be it making tray favors, monthly card for veterans or shut-ins, to participating in community events.

Schedule time to create and distribute cards for holidays each month or quarter:

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SERVICE



Welcoming the New Year, giving a Valentine, or celebrating St Patty's Day Holiday, Springtime cards along with Easter, or Poppy decorated cards for Memorial Day, Don't forget Flag Day along with Independence Day are great to show our colors, With fall comes Labor Day, simply celebrate the color of fall on a beautiful card, Give thanks for things in life, before ending the year with Christmas cards.

Nominate area youth for both the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award.

Give the community something to be proud of. These children are our future leaders and this could encourage them to grow up and be the leader, or volunteer within the community.

Connect with teachers, as they are the best resource to get the awareness of our American Legion Family and the things we do for the community in the classroom.



They could be the one to get their students to participate in so many different activities during the school year:

Allow you in the classroom to teach flag etiquette, and teach them the importance of the flag. This could lead to flag essay contest within the classroom and beyond.

That teacher might allow veterans to visit the classroom and share their experience, and set up a Veteran's Day program if not already scheduled, or expand on the current event.

Encourage the children and youth to participate in the Poppy Poster Contest. Imagine how you could decorate business windows with these posters for the community to see.

Talk to school counselors, and bring awareness to the scholarship/merit awards that are available.

Give them information regarding our Girls/Boys State programs and how this week of learning produces some great future leaders. Along with it being great addition to resumes and collage applications.

Encourage you junior members to work on earning patches through the Patch Program. Participation in Junior Camp is a great way to learn more about the American Legion Family and to get started on earning patches.

What is Community Service?



Let's show your community what the American Legion Auxiliary is all about: It's not just marching in a **Memorial Day parade**, **serving a meal at the Post** or **volunteering at the local VA hospital**.

We're out and about serving the needs of the community. Let's **start with your schools** and help collect the **supplies they need** to get the year started. (They'll probably need to be restocked by Christmas Time). Everything from Kleenex, Clorox wipes and paper towels, to pencils, markers & crayons.

Don't forget the teachers too; they'd like a treat once in a while too.

The "**Veteran's Stand Down**" is a tremendous way to support our Veterans. Locate one near you and donate items, ie; clothing (men's and women's), toiletries, household products and much more. Iowa events are held in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Mason City and Davenport. **Volunteer a little time too**, you won't regret it!!

Units can **join other organizations** in your community by **making greeting cards**, **tray favors** or **small gifts** to brighten up the rooms/homes of the Veterans/Shut-ins, ie; **4-H, Hospital Auxiliary, VFW**, etc, etc.

There's always the **local Blood Drives and Food Pantry's** that need volunteers too!
Wear your American Legion Auxiliary apparel and stand out!!

Christmas time is a great time to give back to the Community by **collecting "Coats & Mittens"**. **Visits with Santa**, **sponsor Hot Cocoa after the Holiday Parade**, etc, etc.

Lastly, Reporting!! National has No Idea what all we do for our Veterans and their families if we don't report it. I'll look forward to reading updates as they happen in **Your Community!!**

YOU are Community Service?

Community Service Chair Elaine Brookins
at 563-203-0815, rebroadkins423@yahoo.com or 1017 8th St E, Cresco, IA 52136

EDUCATION



Cheyenne McDaniel

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140 SE Cherry Ave, Earlham, IA 50072

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Education Committee is to promote quality education for children—especially for military children—and adults. Standing Rule #6, Mission Outreach Programs.



IMPORTANT DATES

2025

- Nov. 16-20: American Education Week

2026

- March 1: National Scholarship Applications Due
- April 15: Purple UP! Day for Military Children
- April 30: Reports due to Department
- May 3-7: Teacher Appreciation Week
- June 1: Award Submissions Due



SCHOLARSHIPS

- Link: <https://iowaala.org/forms/>
- Select the "Resources for Today's Youth including Financial / Scholarships" dropdown
- NOTE: "Merit Awards" are now "Scholarships"



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MONTH-TO-MONTH EVENT IDEAS!





Finance: Dollars and 'Sense'

The world of finance is constantly changing so we must be responsible in taking care of our dollars using common sense. Our financial status reflects more than a balanced ledger; it reflects the structural investment in the stability, resilience and health to "Focus on Family", for our veteran and military families.

This past year, the committee has worked diligently to keep our finances moving in a positive direction. We thank all the units for paying your obligations and membership in a timely manner, which keeps our cash flowing. The best way to keep us focused is to make sure your membership dues are paid once you receive them. This keeps the members eligible for AEF and helps attain our membership goals for the state and national organization. Obligations are mandatory to be paid to the Department office, by October 20th. Each unit receives a report with the accurate amount due- please pay this without any adjustments.

ALA MIS is an electronic system to record membership payments, address changes and generate reports. Your unit membership chair can sign up by contacting Crystal at the department office. This is a useful tool that over forty new units signed up last year! ALA MIS will save time, check writing, copy costs and postage. Truly using our dollars to make sense!

Poppy proceeds are due to the Department office by June 20th. These important donations "Focus on Family" and are crucial to our programs.

Membership is vital to keep our organization up and running. Continue to retain, recruit and renew members.

All department expenses are reviewed by our committee. If you are able to donate mileage and/or per diem, we would appreciate it but if not your time and energy to support the program are valuable to this organization. These actions affect the entire organization starting at the unit, county, district and department level by serving others over self.

Sincerely, your 2026-2027 finance team:

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Iowa Girls State



Iowa Girls State, Hawkeye Girl State, Iowa American Legion Auxiliary Girls State

So many titles, so many ways of saying Iowa Girls State. Which one is correct? Depends on who you talk to. But one thing is for sure, they all describe a program of the American Legion Auxiliary - American Legion. No matter what you call it. It is a five day conference, focusing on leadership, patriotism and government.

When is it? June 13-18, 2027

Where is it? Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa

Who can come? Any girl exiting her junior year with at least one semester of high school left. The attendee can be from a public, private, or homeschool. She must be in good standing with her school, have qualifications of leadership and an interest in civic opportunities.

How can a girl attend? By being selected by an Auxiliary unit (or an American Legion post if there isn't an active Auxiliary unit in the area). Reserve your spot on CampWise by December 31, 2026. Please use your unit's previous log in, **DO NOT** create a new one. If you are unsure of your previous login, contact Crystal at Department office. Then select a girl or 2 or 10 or 70.

How to Send a Girl Stater

Step 1: In the fall, decide if your unit is participating

Step 2: Reserve your spot by Dec. 31, 2026 through CampWise

Step 3: Select your girl(s)

Step 4: Give unit code to attendee so she can register

Step 5: Pay your invoice via CampWise by April 30, 2027

Step 6: Wish your Girl Stater good luck!

Selecting your representative, units all have their own selection process. There isn't a right way or a wrong way to do it. Whatever works best for your group/area.

After reserving your spot, the email connected to the CampWise account will receive a special code. That code is your unit's identification into CampWise so they know which unit is sending which girl. This also tells us who the invoice will be sent to via email. All communication will be sent to that email concerning any updates about this session.

After selecting your attendee, give her your unit's special code. She will use this code when registering on CampWise. If you send more than one girl, they will all use the same code (your unit code).

After the girl has completed the entire application, all forms must be filled out entirely, the unit will get an invoice from CampWise. Please ensure the attendee uses her personal email, not her school or parents' email. Don't fret, if you have more than one attendee, you can pay after they have all registered. However, you have to pay the invoices no later than April 30, 2027.



Iowa Girls State



You've reserved your spot. You've selected your girl. Now it's time to talk about the fee.

As we all know, the cost of living has increased. Unfortunately, this means so must our Girl State fee.

As an incentive for your attendee to follow through, the attendee will pay the unit \$50 (or whatever amount you feel is appropriate). The unit's portion will be \$450. The total amount sent to CampWise by your unit for each attendee will be \$500.

When costs are greater than the number of girls, the fees must increase. When the number of girls is greater than costs, the fees can stay steady. Please help the cause and support this worthwhile program by sending a girl or 2 or 10 or 70.

Reminder - anyone outside the organization can financially contribute to the program. However, the unit or post must write the check to CampWise, as this is a program of the American Legion Auxiliary.

If you have any questions concerning the Girls State program, whether it's about the selection process, registering, or the program itself, don't hesitate to reach out to Bev Copple, Danielle Propst, Michele Long, or Paige Copple. We are all eager to promote this tremendous program.

Today We Learn, Tomorrow We Lead. This motto of Girls State can be shared for everyone to take to heart.

Things We Need

- Staff
- Nurse
- Monetary Donations
- Citizens
- Staff
- Citizens
- Gift Cards
- Volunteers with Muscle to help unpack/pack
- Staff
- Golf Cart to borrow for the week

Ever heard of the fountain of youth? Come to Girls State and you'll find it!

Dates

Fall 2026 Decide if your unit is participating
Dec. 31, 2026 Reserve your spot in CampWise (you can go in to edit number reserving later if needed)

April 2027 Your girl has been selected and has completed registration in CampWise

April 30, 2027 Pay your invoice through CampWise (written refund requests also due)

May 10, 2027 Final registration

June 13-18, 2027 Girl State

**** ALL dates tentative to change ****

Girl State Director 2026-2027 Bev Copple (712)420-0272 Sloancafe@aol.com

Girls State Board: Paige Copple, Michele Long, Danielle Propst, Judy Ring, Crystal Wright

Contact information for the board can be found in the Blue Book



Governing Documents

(Constitution, Bylaws, Standing Rules, Policies)

Units, Counties, Districts and our Department organization all need documents to govern how we do things, when we do things, and what is expected of officers and members. These documents should be reviewed annually. Governing documents may not be in conflict with the National or Department Governing Documents.

The **Constitution and Bylaws** are the foundation of the organization. They contain the most essential provisions relating to the organization including the name of the Unit, purpose, membership, officers, meetings, governing (executive) board, committees and parliamentary authority. Amending these documents requires a 2/3 majority vote and prior notice of pending changes. Do not include information that often requires changes.

Standing Rules contain the details of administration. They can be adopted or amended at a Unit Meeting with prior notification, by a majority vote (unless the bylaws stipulate otherwise) or without prior notification by a two-thirds vote. They should contain:

1. Time (day and hour) of meeting, place of meeting.
2. Dues – Senior, Junior, Honorary Life Members, and information on dues that the Unit will pay for specific members (example: Gold Star Mothers, Active Duty Military, those in Nursing Homes, etc.)
3. Election of Officers. When is it held? Which officers are elected or appointed.
4. Installation of Officers – when, where, who is in charge.
5. Election of Delegates to County, District and Department meetings – when and how elected.
6. Audit – when and by whom.
7. Finance
 - a. Working funds for officers, chairmen, poppy purchases, ALA Girls State, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, etc.
 - b. Benevolence - gifts for illness, death, etc. Funeral dinner?
 - c. Expenses for delegates to attend County, District and Department meetings (registration fee, mileage, per diem).
 - d. Courtesies for visitors (Department, District, and County Presidents)
 - e. How bills are paid and who signs the checks.
8. Any other rules specific to your Unit.
9. Date the Standing Rules were amended and signature of President and Committee Chairman.
10. Send approved/signed copy to the Department Office to be placed in your Unit file.

Sandy Deacon, Governing Documents Chairman
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Historian/History



Lest We Forget

Mary Jo McLaughlin
mary.j.mclaughlin.mjm@gmail.com
739 South S Avenue, Nevada IA 50201
515-291-3150

Have fun writing history, like a child blowing dandelions, catching all that takes place in our Legion Family, lest we forget and our great projects blow away in the air. Like the little poppy, remember our veterans, remember our stories. Capture all that we do in words and pictures. Will a child enjoy listening to your unit's story?

Recording our history is a powerful tool for understanding our past and shaping the future. It identifies our purpose and can suggest our future goals. Begin your history with the installation of the new officers. Record your unit's story using the 3rd person (he, she, they, or their names). Record events that happened in your community or world that influenced what your unit did. How did you support veterans, the active military and their families and your community? What activities did your Unit do to include all family members, and all the Legion Family? Include in your story if you had media coverage for any of your events. Record any projects that failed and what your unit decided could turn that event into a success another time. Record the sacrifices and great devotions members made because they were inspired to carry out our mission. Your unit's history can capture the spirit of its members in each activity they do so that you will be inspiring our future generations.

Each unit should email a copy of their History Report to me by April 30, 2027. Keep a copy for your members to read. Do not let your story blow away in the wind; let it inspire your members to carry on for our veterans, our families, our youth and communities. By our next Convention let's see how many of our units will not be forgotten.

Email me pictures, adding captions of who, what, when, where and why, of your unit's and district's activities for our Department President's memory album.





Mary Jo McLaughlin
mary.j.mclaughlin.mjm@gmail.com
739 South S Avenue, Nevada IA 50201
515-291-3150

History Projects

Members Remember History Project

Any member can interview another member to document their story and experiences in our organization's history. This will help everyone understand who the members are, what they do and why the organization matters. Highlight contributions to veterans, service members and their families. Why did they join? Did they lose a close relative? Record stories in five-minute videos and save them, include any projects that they contributed to such as the Poppy Program, Summer Camp, mentoring. Juniors may assist you while doing this project.

Veterans History Project

Any member 15 and older may interview a veteran (serving after WWI to the present) and document their story. The veteran did not need to serve in combat. There are specific questions to ask, many are the same as when interviewing a veteran for a Quilts of Valor Presentation. A complete questionnaire and steps to complete this project can be found by visiting the following website:

<https://www.loc.gov/programs/veterans-history-project/about-this-program/>

Junior History Patch for Juniors in grades 9-12

Juniors complete 12 steps to earn this Patch. Some of the choices to be completed include interviewing Auxiliary members and veterans, helping with the Senior and or Junior History books, making a Unit History museum, organizing a veteran in the classroom presentation, organizing and highlighting articles in the American Legion Auxiliary magazine, creating a data base for Blue Star and Gold Star Mothers and Families, documenting Girls State participants and offices that they held, document names of those attending Girls Nation. Tell the history of the Poppy Program.

Share your stories with me and the social media networks to honor the members past and present and to inspire future generations! (Contact me or visit the National Auxiliary website for further information.)

Junior Activities

Jan Carlton, 2026-27 Junior Activities Chair
107 Blondeau St. #1, Keokuk, IA 52632
Cell (319) 795-8371
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Happy 250th... As we continue to serve, what a great way for our country, our members, and our junior members to renew our patriotism, our service to veterans, and to our communities.

President Judy's theme is "Focus on Family". Include the Juniors in your volunteer work. They are great helpers.

Junior Auxiliary members bring enthusiasm as well as a positive energy to our organization.



The Goal of the ALA Junior Activities program is to develop our junior members into leaders and stay connected with them. The purpose of the Junior Activities Committee is to interest eligible young women under the age of 17 in continuing their membership as a senior member through the positive experience of mission-based volunteering that instills the ideals of the organization.

Resources: American Legion Auxiliary Junior Activities Handbook is a wonderful source of information from eligibility, to officers, youth programs, ceremonies, prayers, and songs. They are available from National Emblem Sales, or on the National ALA website under the member portal, Program Guides. The ALA Communique for Junior Programs are available throughout the year.

Mid-Winter: Will be held February 12-14, 2027 at the Airport Holiday Inn in Des Moines. We will be having activities, more details to come.

Patch Program: Participating in the American Legion Auxiliary Junior Patch Program gives Junior members the opportunity to increase their knowledge of patriotism, citizenship, leadership, health, and fitness. Juniors can be involved with the Patch Program as a group or as an individual. School age SAL members can also participate. Submit your patch forms to me for submission.

Department Junior Convention: Junior Convention will be held on Friday, June 11, 2027 at the Newton Christian Conference Center.

Reports/Awards: Reports are due by April 30, 2027. Please make sure you are sending me everything your Juniors have done throughout the year and please include some pictures...Award for the most outstanding report at the Department Level.

Scholarships: For our Juniors, the Spirit of Youth and Member Loyalty Scholarships are available. Eligibility and further information are on ALA Department website. "Resources for Today's Youth".

Junior Member of the Year/Rising Star: Details on each are available on the National ALA website.





Junior Camp 2027

Junior Camp will be held **June 6 – 11th, 2027** at the Newton Christian Conference Center, southeast of Newton, Iowa. Registration is Sunday, June 6th from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Campbell Hall of the Main Lodge and will end with Department Junior Convention on Friday morning from 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Juniors need to be between the ages of 8 and 18 and be a member of the American Legion Auxiliary to attend. Information about camp can be found on the Auxiliary website or by contacting your Junior Activities Chairman, one of the Junior Camp Board members, Liberty or myself.

Camp fees are **\$350.00 per junior**, and this will include their T-shirt. The registration is on the ALA website, and camp fees are to be sent to Department or paid online by credit card by a specific date which will be on the website and announced at District Conferences. Please make sure you bring all forms including waiver and medical for each junior to registration on Sunday. Each camper will receive a letter before camp of acceptance and list of items to bring and what is not allowed.

Our focus is on a fun filled week of special programs, arts and crafts, ALA patches, guest speakers, recreation, swimming and kayaking at the lake, presentations about our military and veterans, flag disposal ceremony, smores and camp songs, classroom activities and so much more! We are always open to ideas for guest speakers.

Our hope is that our camp continues to grow. Do you know a junior who could attend camp? If so, please sign her up or get the information to Liberty or myself, or Crystal at Department. We will gladly get in contact with the family. We also have Units willing to sponsor a Junior for camp. If you are a Unit that wants to help a junior attend camp, please let Crystal know. Remember: Focus on Family!

Donations for evening snacks and crafts are always welcome! Please make donations to the Department office, using donation form and mark Junior Camp, also put Junior Camp in memo of check. We will be having a fundraiser this year to help defray the cost of camp. This will be announced at the Fall Conference and also in the ALA E-newsletter.

Doris Jackson
Junior Camp Director
1032 Warbler Ave.
Lorimor, Iowa 50149
515-468-1274
danni.jackson408r@gmail.com

Liberty Smith
Asst. Director/Program Chr.
815 Bowery Street, Apt. 3
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
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Junior Camp Board Members

Michelle Copple
Executive Director
Elaine Brookins
Crystal Wright

Alyssa Sparrgrove
Dept. President
Judy Ring



Dawn Aberle
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Leadership happens when DAC is present. What is DAC?

L E A D E R S H I P

The actions, interactions, reactions and exchanges of multiple people produce DAC together. And while organizational leaders play a vital role in setting the tone and making space for DAC to thrive EVERYONE is involved in creating DAC.



Direction - is a shared answer to the question “Where are we going? It’s an agreement on what a team or organization wants to achieve together and serves as the guide for setting shared goals.



Alignment – Direction is where we are going and alignment is how we get there. With alignment, each person understands their role and how it fits with the work of the organization. Alignment recognizes a sense of coordination, while confusion and miscommunication are reduced.



Commitment – the willingness to make the success of the collective a personal priority, where individuals know that their own successes are connected to those of others. People can trust that everyone will make the effort needed to ensure the group is successful, with a balance of give and take.

Leadership is often described by what a leader does or the capabilities they have. Yet while the skills and behaviors of individual leaders are important, the true meaning of leadership is about what people do **TOGETHER. EVERYONE** in an organization contributes to leadership.

Legislative

2026/2027

Stacy Bane
407 1st Ave. N.
Box 711
State Center, IA 50247
Ph. #641-750-3443
email: banestacy@gmail.com

The purpose of the Legislative committee is to provide information and assistance, encourage involvement, and to let American Legion Auxiliary members know about issues concerning the American Legion's legislative priorities. I will do this, to the best of my ability, this year.

These are some of the recurring legislative issues:

- *Veterans Program Funding
- *Veterans Healthcare
- *Veterans Disability
- *Veterans Education & Employment
- *Troops & Family Support
- *Americanism

For information about these and other priorities of the Legion, you can go to: legion.org/legislative. You can also subscribe to the Legion's Legislative Action Alert on this website.

We can show our support for our veterans and Legion even more by being informed and letting our representatives know what we think! The most effective way to get involved is to contact your state legislators. The official website for the state legislature is the Iowa Legislature. Simple! You will be able to find your exact legislator, track specific bills, and see committee schedules. Write to them, email, fax, or call and leave a message. We can make a difference, but we need to be heard!

Please Report your activities to me! Send me your end-of-year reports by April 30, 2027.



What does **FAMILY** mean to **YOU!!!**

Marketing is the process of identifying, communicating, and delivering value to a target audience. In simple terms, it is how an organization tells its story, attracts support, builds relationships, and encourages people to take action, whether that means volunteering, donating, joining, or participating in programs.

For the **American Legion Auxiliary (ALA)**, marketing is not about selling products. It is about raising awareness, growing membership, increasing community engagement, and strengthening support for veterans, military families, and youth programs.

The Programs we will be focusing on this year:

- 1. Increase Awareness**
- 2. Fundraising**
- 3. Increase Event Participation**

Within the American Legion Family, we are including Marketing in one way or another. So, this year with Judy's theme of Family Focus lets support all our members. The Marketing team is working on some ideas and when we finalize them, we will get all the information out to all the District President's and share them when we visit your Fall District Conference

Our Ideas so far:

- 1. Shop.smileassociate.com.**
- 2. Letters from Home**
- 3. Balloon Pop**
- 4. Gift Cert Drawing**
- 5. Music Bingo**
- 6. Sponsorships**

Teresa Shaw
Marketing Chair
(641) 80-1457

Carol Mooney
Marketing Vice-Chair
(563) 590-9299

Kristi Bridges
Marketing 2nd Vice Chair
(641) 660-4105

DEPARTMENT OF IOWA UNIT MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN 2026-2027



UNIT MEMBERSHIP MILESTONES

- October 12 Columbus Day 50%
- November 11 Veteran's Day 75%
- December 31 New Year's Eve 100%

Join ALAMIS!

We STRONGLY encourage
EVERY Unit to sign up for ALAMIS.
Contact Department Headquarters
at

515-282-7987 to ask about the
benefits and the help available to
get started.

****The Delegates at Department Convention voted to
have membership increase by \$2.00 for the 2027-2028
membership year. Please plan accordingly. Total due to
Department for 2027-2028 Membership will be \$30. ****

Membership Questions?

Start by contacting your District
President. For further information or
training, reach out to your representative
from the Department Membership Team.

Districts 1, 2 & 4

Teresa Kramer-Membership Chair

563-542-4422

kramer27@windstream.net

Districts 3, 5 & 6

Rebecca Teed

515-681-8708

rebeccajteed@gmail.com

Districts 7, 8 & 9

Penny Clair

712-828-2503

clair01pc@outlook.com



*Planting the seeds to
grow the family thru
membership*

NATIONAL SECURITY

2026-2027



Protecting Freedom Begins at Home

National security is more than military defense—it starts in our homes, schools, communities, and through the support we provide to those who serve.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- ★ Support our active-duty military, veterans, and their families.
- ★ Promote patriotism by displaying the American flag properly and proudly.
- ★ Educate others about emergency preparedness and community resilience.
- ★ Encourage respect for our Constitution, our freedoms, and those who defend them.
- ★ Participate in patriotic observances and community service projects.



★ EVERYONE HAS A ROLE ★

The National Security Program empowers members to strengthen our nation through education, preparedness, volunteerism, and unwavering support of those who protect America's freedoms.

"Freedom is everyone's responsibility."

— GET INVOLVED TODAY! —



Together, we can build stronger communities, honor those who serve, and help safeguard America's future.



Chairman,
Jacki Bolen



jacki_415@hotmail.com





Parliamentarian

Parliamentary Authority. The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state statute, the Department and National Constitutions and Bylaws, or any special rules of order adopted by the Department of Iowa American Legion Auxiliary.

Remember that you have an entire organization to help you and your unit. Your district and department officers, program chairs and the Department Parliamentarian are available to answer your questions or brainstorm solutions to problems.

Resources Available:

1. Department of Iowa Constitution, Bylaws, Standing Rules (Blue Book) and Policies are available at www.iowaala.org
2. National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org
3. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* is available from Emblem Sales, at local bookstores, and online at www.robertsrules.com/.
4. "Basic Parliamentary Procedure" guide is available in the GUIDES section on the National website: www.ALAforVeterans.org
5. The American Legion Auxiliary Unit Guide provides information, direction to desired information, and guidance to unit members about the history, mission, programs, membership eligibility, customs, and operations of an American Legion Unit. Find this guide at www.ALAforVeterans.org

Sandy Deacon, Department Parliamentarian
3419 Polaris Dr.
Ames, IA 50010
515-450-1027
sdeacon818@msn.com

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

POPPY PROGRAM



The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Poppy Program is a longstanding initiative where volunteers distribute handmade red crepe paper poppies in exchange for donations. Established in 1924, these flowers serve as a memorial to fallen service members and a symbol of support for disabled veterans and military families.

NATIONAL POPPY DAY

MAY 28, 2027

*This is the time where
many units distribute
their poppies.*



**THIS YEAR WE
LOOK FORWARD TO:**

Poster
Contest

Essay
Contest

Non-Traditional
Poppy Contest



For forms and other
information including
The Little Miss Poppy
Contest, visit:

IOWAALA.ORG



POPPY FUNDS CAN BE USED FOR:

- Grocery or gas cards for needy veterans
- Poppy kits or supplies
- Items of necessity for homeless veterans or hospitalized service members
- Honor Flight guardian fees
- ASYMCA food pantries



I look forward to serving as the Department of Iowa Poppy Chairman this year.
Please reach out with any questions or concerns:



Rhonda Russell

712-427-0158

501 Illinois St
Bedford, IA 50833

rhondarus21@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW?

The poppy became the official flower of the American Legion family on September 27, 1920 to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during WW1.

★ HONOR ★ REMEMBER ★ SUPPORT ★

Public Relations

What is Public Relations?

- Managing how information about our organization is presented to the public.

What can you do for Public Relations?

- Facebook is a great tool the ALA uses. Follow national, department, and district pages. Check if your unit has a page. If not, start one!
- Sign up for ALA publications like the e-newsletter and magazine. Inform others of it as well!
- We all have something apparel wise we could wear right? This is a great way to promote our organization. *And don't just wear it to your Legion events ;)*
- Let our organization know what you are up to. Are you planning a kids Halloween event? Let your department chair know!
- Both the department of Iowa and National ALA have websites. There is so much information on there for you, use it!

Need more help with Public Relations?

- Visit <https://www.legion-aux.org/member/resources/pr-toolkit>
 - You will find a Public Relations ToolKit! There is so much more information out there for you!

ALA Academy:

- The ALA Academy is an amazing learning tool!
- There are two courses related to Public Relations for you to take!
 - Take *ALA Branding and Why it Matters to Me!* And *Using Social Media to Your Units Advantage*.

Reporting

- Get your report to me by April 30, 2027. If you mail it plan to have it in the mail 2 weeks before the due date. Things take much longer to get here than you'd think!

Lily McClelland
lilygobart@gmail.com
(319) 486-9113
2813A Mustang St.
NAS Lemoore, CA 93245

RISK and COMPLIANCE

Verlinda Prior, Regine Chock, and Kim Dixon

2026-2027

Risk management involves identifying risks and developing plans to minimize the overall risk.

Compliance management ensures the rules are met to avoid legal penalties.

Last year we determined the risk to the Department and corrected them, also reviewed the list of EIN'S not in compliant as we are doing this year.

I am not going to rewrite what Jamie Barker and her committee complied last year. They did an awesome job. So, this year we are going to center on the EIN'S.

If your Unit, County and or District is not in compliance with the IRS we will notify you at some point. We have a list from National and will be dividing it up among our committee to help you with your problems with being compliant. Filing the 990-N is easy and simple. Simply file on at www.irs.gov/990N scroll down until you see the blue square that says, "Submit Form 990-N [e-postcard]" Now, you must have an ID.me or Login. gov account in order to do this. It is very easy once you have an account. Once this is done you are good to go. Just because we are centering on the EIN'S does not mean that you should not check the other things that are important to your unit, county, or District to be compliant.



Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Alida Kolthoff

5825 Troy Mills Road, Walker, Iowa 52352

jakolthoff@hotmail.com - 319-213-4125

The purpose of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee is to promote programs, events and services that assist and enhance the lives of Veterans, their families, their caregivers and their survivors, ensuring the best quality of life possible and continuing honor of their memory.

****Support Rehabilitation and healing of veterans through arts, crafts, and hobbies**

****Support veteran caregivers, family members and survivors**

****Enroll Auxiliary members as VA Voluntary Service (VAVS)volunteers at VA health care facilities**

FOCUS ON FAMILY

This year as we focus on family, supporting veterans, military and their families left behind, we can ask ourselves the questions below.



VA&R is more than volunteering in a VA hospital, it is supporting other like minded organizations, assisting veterans in your communities, and supporting veteran caregivers, families, and survivors. As you meet each month record your volunteer hours for Veterans, Military and their families, every hour and every dollar count. Recording and reporting bring more resources to our communities and shows the impact we can have in the lives of our veterans and community

Reporting Questions to ask yourself...

How do you support rehabilitation and healing of veterans through arts, crafts, and hobbies?

How do you support veteran caregivers, family members and survivors?

How did you assist local veterans in ways that are outside the VA facilities?

How have you supported your local VA facility?

How have you supported veterans and their families in the community by collaborating with external like-minded organizations such as Honor Flight, Quilts of Valor, Wreaths

Across America etc. ?

What other opportunities have you taken to support your local veterans and their families in your community?