



Legionnaire

Volume XCVIII

Number 6



National Poppy Day - May 26, 2023



The opening lines of the World War I poem "In Flanders Fields" refer to poppies growing among the graves of war victims in a region of Belgium. The poem is written from the point of view of the fallen soldiers and in its last verse, the soldiers call on the living to continue the conflict. The poem was written by Canadian physician John McCrae in May 1915 after witnessing the death of his friend and fellow soldier the day before. The poem was first published in December 1915 in the London-based magazine Punch. At the 1920 National American Legion Convention, the poppy was adopted as their official symbol of remembrance. Frenchwoman Madame Guérin was also invited to address American Legion delegates about 'Inter-Allied Poppy Day.' After the convention, the American Legion too adopted the poppy as its memorial flower and committed to supporting Madame Guérin in her planned U.S. Poppy Day. It was also following this event that the American Legion christened Madame Guérin as "The Poppy Lady from France." Madame Guérin successfully organized the U.S.'s first nationwide Poppy Day during the week before Memorial Day in May 1921 using silk poppies made by the widows and children of the devastated regions of France.

In 1921, an American, Moína Michael, was also named "The Poppy Lady" by The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA). During World War I, she had taken leave from her professorship at the University of Georgia and volunteered as a worker for the American YMCA Overseas War Secretaries Organization. She was also inspired

by the McCrae's poem, and she published a poem of her own called "We Shall Keep the Faith" in 1918. In tribute to McCrae's poem, she vowed to always wear a red poppy as a symbol of remembrance for those who fought in and assisted with the war.

Today the ALA members take charge in celebrating the holiday, supporting the current and future veterans, active-duty military personnel, and their families with medical and financial needs. The ALA has reported that they raise roughly \$20 million a year during this holiday. It is an important holiday to celebrate as it helps many military families but also helps us remember the past events that have taken part in creating this country, and others around the world. On May 26, wear a red poppy to honor the fallen and support the living who have worn our nation's uniform. Anyone can participate in National Poppy Day®. Here are a few simple ways:

- Download the Communications Toolkit from www.legion.org/poppyday, which is full of great information.
- Ask your local government to sign a Poppy Day Proclamation.
- Wear a red poppy all day and tell everyone why.
- Distribute poppies to friends, co-workers and family and tell everyone why.
- Collect donations at your workplace to give to Poppy Program.
- Tell the story on Facebook of who you are wearing your poppy to remember or support on National Poppy Day. Don't forget to tag us! #PoppyDay #LegionFamily
- Accept a poppy and make a donation if you see a member of The American Legion Family in your neighborhood distributing poppies.

Let's share the word about this very important day with our friends and families and continue to find ways to promote the American Legion Family's Poppy Program.

Currently, there are only a handful of states that make the poppy. Nebraska is one of those states, and they ship poppies not only in state, but also to National Emblem Sales and to other states. Anyone is able to make the poppy, but only veterans are able to receive a stipend for them. Nebraska is always looking for new people to make the poppy to keep the supply stocked. If you are interested in leaning how to make poppies, contact the Nebraska ALA Office at 402-466-1808 for more information.

2023 Department Convention Make Your Reservations Now

The 2023 Department Convention will be held June 22 - 25 at the Ramada Inn in Kearney. The DEC will meet at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 22 and at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, June 23. The Joint Session will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, June 23 and the Legion Convention will begin at 3:00 p.m. and go through Sunday, June 25.

The hotel is located at 301 2nd Avenue - Kearney, NE. Rooms are \$84.00 a night and includes a hot breakfast. Call 308-237-3141 to make your reservation. The Convention Registration fee is \$10. For more information, please contact Adjutant Dave Salak.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

The Nebraska Legionnaire
P.O. Box 5205
Lincoln, NE 68505-0205

THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

2023 MEMBERSHIP GOAL: 24,835 MARCH 15TH TOTAL: 21,616 - 87.04%

| | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| DISTRICT 7 - 90.06% | DISTRICT 2 - 89.51% | DISTRICT 15 - 88.17% | DISTRICT 6 - 88.15% | DISTRICT 5 - 87.85% |
| DISTRICT 8 - 87.58% | DISTRICT 4 - 86.91% | DISTRICT 11 - 86.37% | DISTRICT 10 - 85.62% | DISTRICT 13 - 85.43% |
| DISTRICT 1 - 84.81% | DISTRICT 9 - 84.34% | DISTRICT 12 - 84.06% | DISTRICT 3 - 80.98% | |





Commander's Corner

Don Suchy
Department Commander



NEBRASKA AMERICAN LEGION
Department Headquarters Office

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Department President Vicki Ozenbaugh, Marge Suchy, and Department Commander Don Suchy at the President Abraham Lincoln Memorial.

It has been a busy couple of months since our Midyear Conference.

On February 11, my wife, Marge, President Vicki, and I traveled to Springfield, IL for the Abraham Lincoln Pilgrimage. Saturday night we had a meet and greet reception at the hotel. On Sunday morning Department President Vicki Ozenbaugh and I laid a wreath in the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln, followed by a noon banquet.

February 14, I attended the District 15 Convention in Lincoln. I would like to thank Lincoln Post 3 for the great hospitality.

February 18, we attended the District 10 Convention in Wilcox. Sergeant-at-Arms Fred Tisdale and his wife, Mary Lee, accompanied us on our trip to Wilcox. We enjoyed great food and comradeship while we were there.

February 25, I and several other American Legion Family members flew to Washington DC for the Washington Conference. While there we attended several committee meetings at the hotel. One of the meetings that we attended was "Know Before You Go" meeting to inform us about the Veteran Bills that pertain to The American Legion Family. These were the bills that we wanted to discuss with our Representatives, and to share with them how important they are to us.

I would like to express our sympathy to the family of Debra Day, Deb will surely be missed at Cornhusker Boys State, and she was a great asset and volunteer to this program.

My passion has always been for the Children and Youth program. The National organization recognizes April as Children and Youth Month, now is the time to plan an activity at your Post to recognize the children in your community. We also recognize the Military Children in April.

Our sympathy goes out to the family of Don Hilger. Don was our Department Children and Youth Chairman this year. He passed away suddenly on March 4, 2023.

Dick Potter of Valparaiso Post 371, was nominated and selected as "Outstanding Farmer Veteran" sponsored by the Center of Rural Affairs, presented at the 56th Annual Triumph of Ag Expo in Omaha.

Congratulations to Dick, a dedicated veteran and very well deserving. On March 4, my Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms Al Bartek and I attended the District 6 Convention in Kearney at Post 52. There was a great attendance and a lot of information shared.

Until next time, keep up the good work on membership and don't forget to fill out and send in your Consolidated Post Reports.



Department President Vicki Ozenbaugh and Department Commander Suchy presenting the Nebraska wreath at President Abraham Lincoln's grave.

Department Officers

- Commander.....Don Suchy, Valparaiso
- Senior Vice Commander.....John Henry Percy, Papillion
- Area A Vice Commander.....Carl Lorenzen, Blair
- Area B Vice Commander.....Ken Meyer, Creighton
- Area C Vice Commander.....Dick Binder, Minden
- Area D Vice Commander.....Gene VonForell, Crawford
- Adjutant.....Dave Salak, Lincoln
- Programs Director.....Eric Martin, Lincoln
- Chaplain.....Fr. Alexander Borzych, St. Paul
- Historian.....Jennifer Laux, Omaha
- Judge Advocate.....William Harris, Omaha
- Finance Officer.....Mark Novak, Dawson
- Sergeant-At-Arms.....Fred Tisdale, Omaha
- Asst. Sergeant-At-Arms.....Albert Bartek, Valparaiso
- Service Officer.....Levi Bennett, Lincoln
- National Executive Committeeman.....Fred Craigie, Lincoln
- Alternate NECman.....Jim Costello, Bellevue

District Commanders

- Dist. 1.....Judy Walters, Ainsworth
- Dist. 2.....Kelley Hanvey, Center
- Dist. 3.....Michael Ellis, Jackson
- Dist. 4.....Steve Stanec, Alliance
- Dist. 5.....Scott Bell, North Platte
- Dist. 6.....Julie Schnitzler, Kenesaw
- Dist. 7.....Jerry Schulte, Omaha
- Dist. 8.....Bruce Husted, Omaha
- Dist. 9.....Ron Wiest, Moorefield
- Dist. 10.....Don Nelson, Clay Center
- Dist. 11.....Tom Crisman, Crete
- Dist. 12.....William Lawrence, Nehawka
- Dist. 13.....Scott Buss, Sterling
- Dist. 15.....Bruce Gubser, Lincoln

"Serving Our Veterans on the Road to Success"

Nebraska's First Commander – John G. Maher



The 104th birthday of The American Legion was celebrated on March 15th. While there were many people who helped establish the Nebraska American Legion, there were three men who were chosen to lead the organization through its first 18 months.

Allan A. Tukey, of Omaha, is at the top of the Past Department Commanders list. In April 1919, Tukey was appointed by the National Executive Committee as the State Secretary whose function was to establish a state chapter quickly. In May 1919, John G. Maher, of Lincoln, was elected as the temporary State Commander and would serve only until the first state convention. In October 1919, Earl M. Cline, of Nebraska City, was elected in as Nebraska's first State Commander.

The second of these, John G. Maher, is buried in Arlington National Cemetery and while in Washington DC, Department Adjutant Dave Salak visited his grave. This article is some of the history of Maher.

In 1898, Maher accompanied U.S. troops to the Ghost Dance excitement as a special correspondent of the New York Herald. He volunteered to serve as a private in the Spanish-American War, and he went with troops under General John J. Pershing to the Mexican border in 1916 in pursuit of Pancho Villa. In 1917, he volunteered for service in World War I. After serving as the AEF Chief Disbursing Officer in France, he was honorably discharged in 1919. Maher spent much of his time after World War I abroad and returned to Lincoln for a few months each year. He died in 1939.



The **NEBRASKA**
Legionnaire

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Amanda Washburn, Editor
Dave Salak, Publisher's Representative

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Did you know you can read the Nebraska Legionnaire online at www.nebraskalegion.net?

If you would rather receive the Nebraska Legionnaire by email or view it online, send in this form. The email and online edition of the newspaper is usually available a week or so before the paper arrives in your mailbox. All we need from you is your email address.

I no longer wish to receive a printed copy of the Nebraska Legionnaire.

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Member ID: _____

Mail this form to The American Legion, PO Box 5205, Lincoln, NE 68505, or you can email the information to afwashburn@windstream.net



It's History

Jennifer Laux
Department Historian




Straight Talk

Levi Bennett
Department Service Officer



American Legion Department of Nebraska History Word Search

N B I G K D U B S Y I T L F I
 K Z O N A G A O T A H A M O L
 S S N U U T A Z S W J B Y B I
 G L D B L S S E A S C S V C E
 U N A A G D R L C R N E L L A
 J F D V D Q E L D R E K E O H
 K C R O Z I E R A Y K B R R S
 N S W O B O D A O N J A L E T
 A E P T U P T T R I T S V I X
 M J U V R K G E B O M I E Y W
 F Q E F I G T L R W N X A S A
 F G Z N Q K F I W K Z U Q U S
 O T S V D E C O R A T I O N P
 H O C H B A H T R O W T I H W
 N E J K L C O R N H U S K E R

Directions: Search up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the bolded, underlined words described below.

April/May 1933 (90 years ago)

- **ALLEN** Post 131 put on a “Get Acquainted with Your Buddy” **STAG** party and oyster supper. New members, ex-members, and non-members were invited, and practically all the post members were there. A number of non-members were also present, several promising to join as soon as they dug up the money for dues.
- Beginning Sunday, May 21, the Nebraska Department of the American Legion will present a series of Legion **BROADCASTS** from Station **KFAB** at Lincoln. The programs to be given each Sunday after that date for five weeks from 1:00-1:15pm. These broadcasts are designed to acquaint the public with the Legion’s affairs and its state and national program.
- **CROZIER** Post of the Legion has placed a natural **BOULDER** weighing over 5,000 pounds in the cemetery here. On **DECORATION** Day, services are to be held at the spot and a large wreath will be placed on the boulder.

April/May 1943 (80 years ago)

- Brent **BOZELL**, Creighton Prep, won the third annual **ORATORICAL** contest held on Wednesday afternoon, March 31 at Joslyn Memorial in Omaha. Second place was awarded by the judges to Rose Mary **WHITWORTH** of Beatrice.
- **WILBER** Post 101, according to Commander Stanley **HOFFMAN**, has completed its drive for shotguns for the armed forces and has sent them in. It has also advertised for hunting **KNIVES** for the jungle fighters and has received several.

April/May 1953 (70 years ago)

- Craig **SWOBODA** successfully defended his American Legion state oratorical contest championship which he won in 1952 by winning the 1953 contest held at **ATKINSON** in late March. Swoboda, a senior in the Norfolk High School, retained his title in the state contest which saw twelve District champions competing.
- It is official now. **OMAHA** Post 1 is still the world’s largest American Legion Post. The **CORNHUSKER** post turned back a determined membership race staged by Legionnaires of the Leyden-Chiles-Wickersham Post 1 of Denver, Colorado to keep the title by a scant 217 members.

Congressional Budget Office Study “Options for Reducing the Deficit, 2023 – 2032—Volume I: Larger Reductions” equals negative impact on service-connected veterans if options were to be implemented.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has indicated from their studies that in 2021, there were 5.2 million veterans receiving disability compensation from VA because of medical conditions or injuries that occurred or worsened during active-duty service.

According to CBO VA disability compensation has increased substantially faster than inflation, both in total spending and on a per-recipient basis, a trend that CBO expects to continue.

CBO has informed Lawmakers they could make several structural changes to VA’s disability compensation program to limit future spending growth. These options focus on reducing disability compensation via means-testing and age limiting VA disability compensation.

Under one option, VA would be required to means-test all current and prospective recipients of VA disability compensation beginning in January 2024; after that date, veterans would receive full payments only if their gross household income in the prior calendar year was less than an inflation-indexed threshold for that year. Disability benefits would be phased out at a constant rate for veterans with income above the threshold: For every additional two dollars of gross household income, disability compensation would decrease by one dollar. Under that phaseout, veterans with an identified gross household income or higher in calendar year 2023 and who would have received the average annual payment would no longer receive any disability compensation from VA in calendar year 2024. There would be no adjustment in the income threshold for household size.

CBO defines gross household income as the income (before deductions) received by the veteran, his or her spouse, and any dependents in the prior calendar year. Income includes wages and salaries as well as unearned income, such as Social Security benefits, investment income, or withdrawals from a retirement account, but excludes VA disability payments. Household income would be used to determine eligibility rather than individual income because household income is a more comprehensive assessment of all the financial resources available to a veteran.

CBO estimates that reducing or eliminating VA disability benefits for households whose gross household income exceeded the threshold would result in a total of 1 million veterans who would no longer receive any payments, and the number receiving reduced benefits would equal about 500,000. Those numbers would increase to 1.1 million and 550,000 veterans in 2032, respectively.

CBO also provided an option for consideration of reducing VA disability benefits by 30 percent for Veterans who are older than the full retirement age for Social Security.

A third option being circulated by CBO is that of stopping Individual Unemployability payments to veterans who are 67 or older. This option would also make veterans who are age 67 or older ineligible for Individual Unemployability.

I encourage all veterans to take interest in proposals being made by the CBO to their congressional representatives.

Additional details for these three policy options are available on the CBO website at <https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/58631>, <https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/58654>, and <https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/58653>



Valparaiso Post 371 member Richard Potter was presented with the Nebraska Veteran Farmer of the Year Award by Senator Don Bacon at the Triumph of Ag Expo. Pictured is Dick Potter center with his family.

We need pictures and stories! Tell us what your Post, Squadron, or Chapter is doing in your local community. Articles and pictures can be emailed to afwashburn@windstream.net or mailed to The American Legion – PO Box 5205 – Lincoln, NE 68505.




Chaplain's Thoughts
Father Alexander Borzych
 Department Chaplain

Diana Garland, in her book Family Ministry, relates the following: In 1492, two prominent Irish families, the Ormond and Kildare were in the midst of a bitter feud. Besieged by Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare; Sir James Butler, Earl of Ormond, and his followers took refuge in the chapter house of St. Patrick's Cathedral, bolting themselves in.

As the siege wore on, the Earl of Kildare concluded the feuding was foolish. Here were two families worshipping the same God, in the same church, living in the same country, trying to kill each other. So he called out to Sir James and, as an inscription in St. Patrick's says today, "undertake on his honour that he should receive no villainie."

Afraid of "some further treachery," Ormond did not respond. So Kildare seized his spear, cut a hole in the door, and thrust his hand through. It was grasped by another hand inside the church. The door was opened, and the two men embraced, thus ending the family feud. From Kildare's noble gesture came the expression "chancing one's arm."

Forgiveness is a wonderful element that one needs to have in their life toolbox. It has many advantages, including healthier relationships, improved mental health, less anxiety, stress and hostility, fewer symptoms of depression, lower blood pressure, a stronger immune system, improved heart health, and improved self-esteem.

The only thing greater in forgiving is to seek forgiveness. To seek forgiveness, a person must admit to themselves that they have hurt another person. As painful as it is, they must come to the place where they admit you're guilty. No excuses. Asking someone to forgive you requires a broken heart and a willingness to repair the damage you have done. It's not just saying, "Forgive me if you think I happened to have done something wrong." You need to understand the amount of pain you have caused and accept responsibility for it. Talk to God. Ask him to forgive you for what you've done and to give you the strength to talk. Let the other person respond to you without getting defensive. You may need to give the other person time to sort out their feelings. Don't expect him or her to immediately jump up with joy (or forgiveness) the moment you apologize. It is important, if possible, to make sure the person you have hurt says "Yes, I do forgive you." In so doing, they are saying, "I'm not going to keep bringing it up or hold what you've done over your head." Sometimes when you seek forgiveness from others, a lot of people will then turn around and seek forgiveness from you.

The same benefits apply to the person seeking forgiveness as to the one that forgives.

My challenge to you this month is to either seek forgiveness or to forgive someone who has hurt you.




S.A.L. Notes
Chris Casey
 Detachment Commander

Greetings from the Detachment of Nebraska! We are nearing the end of the district convention season. The Sons membership is still extremely low at most of the meetings and leadership is brainstorming ways to reverse this trend. Information regarding the Sons of The American Legion was shared with The American Legion Family in attendance. We asked the Legion (dual) and Auxiliary members, in attendance, to please share information with their Squadrons. Remember that Squadron Data Reports (SDR) are due by April 15th to the detachment headquarters. The form can be completed electronically, but please remember to email a copy to Sandy in Lincoln. This form has become critically important with the individual member renewal function having gone live. Your Squadrons need to fill this out annually, even if there are no changes. They should form good habits for that time in which dues increase at their Squadron. The national organization sets the dues online based on the information received in the SDR.

The American Legion has celebrated "April is Children & Youth Month" for 85 years! During this month of celebrations, American Legion Family members are encouraged to show their local communities the Legion's commitment to children and youth by hosting activities or by becoming involved in programs and organizations that support young people. The National Executive Committee passes Resolution No. 7, American Legion Family Day at its Fall Meeting in October 2022. The resolution established an American Legion Family Day to be observed annually on the last Saturday of April. This year for Legion Family Day on April 29, posts are encouraged to open their doors to members of their community for the day to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of Legionnaires, Sons of The American Legion members, Legion Riders, and American Legion Auxiliary, and to bring awareness to the organization's "Be the One" initiative to reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

The Department and Detachment Conventions will be here before we know it. The Detachment Convention will be held June 23-25, 2023, at the Ramada Inn in Kearney, Nebraska. Please make plans now to attend! The Detachment has a temporary training committee that was established at the Mid-Year Convention, and they have been hard at work. The committee quickly realized that we have had many opportunities for training provided to membership, but we have been plagued with a lack of attendance. The committee shifted focus a bit and discussed ways to increase participation at the conventions. We are currently planning big things for the upcoming convention and new details will be presented very soon. We need to conduct the business of the Detachment, but there is room for having some fun while doing so. We want all Sons of The American Legion members, regardless of age, to know that they are valued and encouraged to participate in your convention. We plan to have a couple of fun events and training for ALL members. We plan to begin the first ever Detachment of Nebraska Children & Youth Academy this June. You will not want to miss this!




POW/MIA
Boyd Yochum
 POW/MIA Liaison

While reading the February issue of the American Legion Auxiliary magazine, a few things in Past Department President Barb Washburn's article caught my eye. Just to tie in what Auxiliary does and what I do with the POW/MIA issue, combined with the start of my winter meetings report to the DEC.

The POW/MIA issue is deep, never ending, and 100% political. As Legionnaires we need to understand the difference between issues that we can support, and politics. When it comes to the POW/MIA issue it is difficult to separate.

This year's Auxiliary special focus of the National Security program is to raise awareness of POW/MIAs and assist in spreading that information throughout our communities. Barb Washburn goes on to say, "A great place to start is the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA)."

My decision when I started writing the POW/MIA articles was to try and look up Nebraska POW/MIAs. Researching this issue, we find that a high number of facts are classified, thus our definition of G.I. is Gone Indefinitely.

How did this come to be? I told myself not to name names, but... As Joe Friday used to say on Dragnet, "just the facts."

In 1990 legislation started in the House of Representatives, a brief and simple document called The Truth Bill, would have compelled complete transparency about prisoners and missing men. (men was appropriate for the time).

The core sentence reads: "The head of each department or agency which holds or receives any records and information, including live sighting reports, which have been correlated or possibly correlated to United States personnel listed as prisoner of war or missing in action from World War II, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam conflict, shall make available to the public all such records held or received by that department or agency." Bitterly opposed by the Pentagon, the bill went nowhere. Reintroduced the next year, it again disappeared. A few months later, a new measure, the so-called McCain Bill suddenly appeared. By creating a bureaucratic maze from which only a fraction of documents could emerge, (only records that revealed no POW/MIA secrets), it turned the Truth Bill on its head.

The so-called McCain Bill became law in 1991 and remains today. Crushing to transparency are its provisions that it actually spells out for the Pentagon and other agencies several rationales, scenarios, and justifications for not releasing any information, even about prisoners discovered alive in captivity. (You can talk with any POW/MIA family member, and they will tell you The McCain Bill needs to be reversed).

Later that year, a Senate Select Committee was created, where senators from both parties worked together to bury evidence.

Without answers to what is hidden in these classified files, one thing about the POW/MIA story is clear: If American Prisoners were dishonored by being written off and left to die, that's something POW/MIA families and the American public need to know about.

Sons of The American Legion Membership As of March 14, 2023

| District | 2022 Members | 2023 Members |
|----------|--------------|--------------|
| 1 | 329 | 276 |
| 2 | 639 | 561 |
| 3 | 224 | 196 |
| 4 | 352 | 347 |
| 5 | 144 | 137 |
| 6 | 1,316 | 1,176 |
| 7 | 732 | 611 |
| 8 | 867 | 739 |
| 9 | 343 | 279 |
| 10 | 364 | 275 |
| 11 | 1,088 | 1,031 |
| 12 | 259 | 186 |
| 13 | 130 | 114 |
| 15 | 145 | 141 |
| Total | 6,932 | 6,069 |

2023 Washington Conference



Nebraska American Legion Family members pictured with Senator Debra Fischer.



Nebraska American Legion Family members pictured with Senator Pete Ricketts.



Nebraska American Legion Family members pictured with Representative Don Bacon.



Nebraska American Legion Family members pictured with Representative Adrian Smith.



Nebraska American Legion Family members pictured with Representative Mike Flood.



The Nebraska American Legion family made donations to Daniel Seehafer's campaign for National Commander 2023-24.



Newman Grove Post 73 presented Prayer Shawls to their members. Pictured starting from top left and going counter clockwise (L to R) Commander Charles Borg and Gerald Lyon. Don Wyant, Ron Bartak, and Charles Borg. Elliot Broberg, Adjutant Ray Flood, and Charles Borg. Don Wyant, Keith Jacobsen, and Charles Borg. Charles Borg, Dennis Lee, Ray Flood, and Don Wyant. Charles Borg and Bill Riese.

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Sacrifice.
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

121
STATE STREET

NEBRASKA
DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS
AFFAIRS

The Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs

State Service Office

is here to serve you!

We can:

- Establish eligibility for veteran, spouse, and dependent benefits (state and federal)
- Assist in completing and submitting claims
- Help with the appeals process

Contact us to set up an appointment or learn more:

- Phone: 402-420-4021
- Email: ndva.sso@nebraska.gov
- Live chat at the bottom right of the page on veterans.nebraska.gov



Rider's Rally

John Arias
Department ALR Liaison



Membership Minute

Steve Bartos - Membership Chairman

As I reported in the last issue of the Nebraska Legionnaire, we did meet our 85% Target Date goal (which we missed in 2022). However, we failed to meet the 90% Target Date goal on March 15th. As disappointed as I am about that, I still applauded the efforts of all those Legionnaires who put forth some extra effort to help round up as many members as they could.

I'm convinced that extra effort most always yields some extra positive results --- and I am equally convinced that you get nothing extra when you do nothing extra. Oh, how I wish it was the case that we just had somebody --- even if only one person --- in every post doing that little something extra to renew and recruit members.

Also, having failed to meet 90% of the goal on the Ides of March, we also defaulted on Commander Don's Big 12 pledge (91.60 % of goal).

There is another target date on April 19th (95%), and that is a lofty goal. But, let's not give up. Let's do what we can to achieve it. For sure, we want to get the renewal rate up to more than 90%. (The "renewal rate" is another percentage calculated by the American Legion that differs slightly from the percentage of the goal. It factors in deaths and transfers throughout the year.)

I urge every post to contact its delinquent members now --- even if you've already done so before. And, don't give up on trying to "renew and transfer" some delinquent members of Post 500 into your posts. There are plenty there --- but they probably won't come looking for you. It has to be the other way around!! You can identify those potential transfers by using the "Find Members in My Area" function in MyLegion.org.

As important as it is to keep working on our 2023 membership, it's not too soon to start thinking about the membership campaign for 2023-2024. The national organization has already released information showing that the first renewal notice for 2024 is going to be mailed out to our members on or about July 1.

Do yourself a favor. Do a little planning NOW and take advantage of the timing!! Hasn't it been said that "timing is everything?"

Assuming that the current paid members of Post 500 will also receive one of those 2024 renewal notices on or about July 1 when the rest of our members get theirs, wouldn't it make sense for YOU to reach out to them at about the same time and ask them to "renew and transfer" to YOUR post for 2024.

Your dues are going to be less expensive, offer these Legionnaires a better opportunity for interaction with local veterans and a chance to become more active ---- if they choose to do so. I've noticed over the last few years that quite a few members of Post 500 renew fairly soon after they receive their first notice. Beat them to the punch!

Have a nice April!

Department Convention Program

It's time to start putting together our Mid-Year Conference Program and the Department is selling space in the program for individuals or businesses to advertise. Please ask around your community to garner support. All ads and payments must be received before January 8, 2023. The program is 8.5 x 5.5 in size. Please contact Amanda at Headquarters.

- \$10 - page split into eight sections
- \$20 - page split into four sections
- \$30 - page split into two sections
- \$60 - Full page

From the Desk of the Department Adjutant Dave Salak:

At the 2022 Convention in Columbus, Resolution 5 "Honoring World War II Veterans" was adopted.

I ask all Posts to go through their membership and identify known WWII veterans and then send me a consolidated list of their names. If their "war era" isn't marked but you suspect they are a WWII member, please call them and verify. We want to honor all our WWII veterans.

At Department Convention in 2023, all WWII names provided to Department will be printed in our Convention Program. Department staff would greatly appreciate your time and effort and request this information not later than May 1.

Greetings Fellow Riders,
 I traveled to Washington DC for the Washington Conference. It was very educational, and I was able to visit Senator Pete Ricketts and Senator Deb Fisher.

On March 4th, I attended the District 6 Convention in Kearney and had many riders present. Danny Stefka and Greg Martin were both present at the District 6 Convention and I appreciate them taking the time from their busy schedule to attend. I do hope that Riders get the opportunity to attend their perspective District Conventions because attendance is important to your Post, Unit, and Detachment. Your attendance can affect whether or not the District Commander can get a quorum to conduct business.

After the District 6 Convention, I attended Squadron 53, Sons of The American Legion, Bull Fry at the United Veterans Club in Grand Island. Attendance by the public and the Legion Family was amazing, and I hope they accomplished their goals.

I have received three nominations for Rider of the Year. The Robert Swanson Rider of the Year Award will be presented to the Rider during our June 23-25, 2023 Convention in Kearney at the Ramada Inn.

At our Mid-Year meeting, Casey Walton had suggested that the 2023 Legacy Rider Across Nebraska coincided with the Medal of Honor Run on Memorial Day weekend. I have decided to schedule the 4th Annual Legacy Ride Across Nebraska on May 26th and 27th, we will leave the United Veterans Club parking lot in Grand Island on May 26th around 10 a.m. and travel to Broken Bow for our first fuel stop and lunch break. We will then travel to Thedford and refuel then turn north towards Valentine where we will spend the night. The next morning we will join the Riders doing the Medal of Honor Run from Valentine to South Sioux City and our Legacy Run will end in South Sioux City on Saturday, May 27th. I have posted this on Facebook and emailed it to the Riders that shared their emails with me. This will give Riders the opportunity to participate in their perspective Memorial Day Ceremonies. There is also a Thunder on the Missouri on Sunday that will end around 1 p.m. I don't have the details on the Missouri run so you'll have to research it. The map and more information are listed below.

As I wind down my two years as Department ALR Liaison, I would like to thank my Assistant Liaisons for all their support and the hard work they have put in to assist me and all our ALRs across Nebraska. For those Chapters that have assisted in Quilts of Valor, my sincere thank you for what you have done for the Quilts of Valor and honoring our fellow veterans. I thank all the Rider Chapters across the State for all the funeral escorts, flag lines and the work you do within your Chapters. This tells me that our veterans, Auxiliary members, and Sons members have been active within their Posts, Units and Squadrons.

If you have any questions or want to start a Riders Chapter, please contact me at 308-352-6824 or email me johnpaularias32@gmail.com.



First Day of Legacy Ride Across Nebraska May 26, 2023

1. Grand Island Vets Club to Broken Bow, NE 79 Miles Clutches out at 10 a.m.
2. Broken Bow to Thedford, NE 69 Miles
3. Thedford to Valentine, NE 66 miles

Second Day of Legacy Ride Across Nebraska (we will join the Medal of Honor Run)

1. Valentine-clutches out at 10 a.m. with lunch break in Atkinson. 45 miles
2. Atkinson to South Sioux City. Fuel stops along the way.

Hotels in Valentine, NE

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Trade Winds Motel (\$95.00) 402-376-1600 | Raine Motel (\$80.00) 402-376-2030 |
| Niobrara Lodge (\$161.00) 402-376-3000 | Super 8 (\$118.00) 402-304-8740 |
| Harmony Inn (\$135.00) 402-376-3131 | |

If you have any questions about the Medal of Honor Run and the activities taking place on MHR, please call Casey Walton (308) 207-5709 or check out the Medal of Honor Facebook page.

American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund provides children, of parents Killed In Action or parents with a service connection rate of 50% or higher, college scholarships opportunities. Each year the American Legion Riders raises at least \$1 million and pays out around \$750,000.00 to children who apply.

Last year we raised \$3,425.00 for the Legacy Scholarship fund.

If you'd like to donate to this Legacy Run Across Nebraska, please send check donations to me, **420 Sherman Avenue, Grand Island, NE 68803.**

All donations will be mailed to the National Legacy Scholarship Fund after the Run.

If you have questions, please contact me, John Arias, johnpaularias32@gmail.com or 308-352-6824.

I work 3rd shift so I sleep during the day but please leave a message.



- Abbott, Roy T., Millard, Vietnam
 Altwine, Thomas L., Kearney, Vietnam
 Anderson, Richard A., Osceola, Korea
 Anderson, Thomas M., Madrid, Persian Gulf
 Arbuthnot, David A., Madison, SAL
 Asche, Wayne, Alma, Korea
 Ayars, Ramon, Lincoln, Korea
 Bade, Thomas E., Omaha, Korea
 Barnes, Thomas L., Newman Grove, Vietnam
 Bartels, Arnold L., Randolph, Korea
 Beach, Ronald, Doniphan, Vietnam
 Beberniss, Cleo L., Grand Island, Korea
 Beckner, Gary, Saint Paul, Vietnam
 Beiermann, Donald, Omaha, GW
 Benke, Wesley, Elkhorn, WWII
 Binger, Eldon D., Plainview, WWII
 Blanchard, Ralph, South Omaha
 Blumenkamp, Ray L., Gering, Vietnam
 Bloomquist, Neil D., Osmond, Korea
 Bowser, Roland, Fort Calhoun, Korea
 Brinkeman, Paul, Lincoln, WWII
 Brinkhoff, Darrel, Syracuse, Vietnam
 Britcher, Mark A., South Sioux City
 Brown, Giles A., Grand Island, Korea
 Brunner, Floyd D., Gering, Korea
 Buresh, Anthony J., Dwight, Vietnam
 Bush, James D., Norfolk, Korea
 Campbell, Clarence Sr., Lincoln
 Carlow, Michael V., Crofton, Vietnam
 Caruso, Gary R., Fort Calhoun, Vietnam
 Cheney, Duane R., Millard, Korea
 Choquette, Adrian O., Campbell, Korea
 Codner, Douglas L., Vietnam
 Cole, Wilford J., Curtis, WWII
 Conroy, Gary L., Spencer, Korea
 Coons, Richard W., Grand Island, Vietnam
 Coover, Robert L., Gering, Korea
 Coufal, Myron, Prague, WWII
 Crankshaw, Ernest F., North Platte, Korea
 Cripe, Terry G., Beatrice, Vietnam
 Currin, Clifford T. Jr., Millard, Korea
 Dahl, Robert D., Grand Island, Vietnam
 Davis, Lyle E., Lincoln, WWII
 Day, Debra K., Utica, Vietnam
 DeHart, Michael J., Ashland, Vietnam
 Delaet, E. L., Lexington
 Dolleck, Larry, Millard, Vietnam
 Dreher, Keith, Hastings, Vietnam
 Dubs, Bobby D., Wood River, Vietnam
 Dunlap, Terry A., North Platte, Vietnam
 Dunn, Robert A., Lincoln, Korea
 Dunn, William C., Kearney, Korea
 Dymek, Daniel D., Grand Island, Vietnam
 Feil, Kevin E., Gering, SAL
 Filkins, Donald W., Grand Island, WWII
 Flores, Gordon, West Point, WWII
 Frey, Milan A., Lincoln, Korea
 Friedrich, Walter J., Plainview, Korea
 Froscheiser, Harvey G., Lincoln, Vietnam
 Gay, William L., Clearwater, WWII
 Gellermann, Ivan W., Wilcox, Korea
 Gloe, Donald, Osmond, Korea
 Gloystein, Floyd, York, Korea
 Green, Donald C., Central City, Korea
 Grieser, Donald R., Lincoln, Vietnam
 Griffen, Thomas E. Jr., Arlington, Vietnam
 Halford, Larry L., Fort Calhoun, Vietnam
 Hall, Ralph E., Benson
 Hanson, Thomas J., Bayard, SAL
 Heafey, James B., South Omaha, WWII
 Hegwood, Milton E., Culbertson, Korea
 Heng, James L., Eagle, Persian Gulf
 Henson, Thomas J., Bayard, SAL
 Higgins, John B., Havelock, Vietnam
 Hilzer, Richard, Gering
 Hoessel, Donald D., Leigh, Korea
 Hoffa, Robert W., Grand Island, WWII
 Holscher, Darrel, Bertrand, Vietnam
 Hornbacher, James M., North Platte
 Hurley, Earl C., Lincoln, Korea
 Jackson, Richard L., Lisco, Vietnam
 Jacobs, Keith M., South Omaha, Vietnam
 Jensen, Kelvin R., Hastings, Vietnam
 Jensen, Larry O., Holdrege, Korea
 Jensen, Theodore V., Hay Springs
 Jindra, Dale J., Howells, Korea
 Johnson, Douglas, Mead, Vietnam
 Kadavy, Wayne E., Valparaiso, Lebanon/Grenada
 Killham, Edward J., Potter, WWII
 Killman, Don, Beatrice, Vietnam
 Kirkpatrick, Vance, Grant, WWII
 Kleine, Lawrence L., Beatrice, Korea
 Kment, Alden L., Schuyler, Vietnam
 Kneifl, Mark D., Newcastle, Vietnam
 Knoedler, Melvin E., Gering, Korea
 Krajewski, Jerry F., Omaha
 Krolikowski, Dennis, Loup City, Korea
 Kuhn, Donald D., Bennet, Korea
 Kully, Michael P., Grand Island, Vietnam
 Lamontia, Anthony, Broken Bow
 Larson, Marvin, Lincoln, Vietnam
 Lavelle, Jack L., Havelock, Korea
 Levene, Robert V., Saint Paul, Vietnam
 Linenbrink, James R., Omaha, Vietnam
 Linhart, James G., Omaha, Korea
 Lorence, James L., Fort Calhoun, Korea
 Loya, Gary J., Lincoln, Vietnam
 Luedtke, Lloyd, Laurel, Vietnam
 Maly, Charles, Crofton, Korea
 Mangnall, Cecil V., Virginia, Korea
 Mannlein, Don, Albion, Korea
 Mapel, Howard T., York, Vietnam
 Marcinek, Charles, Bennington, Vietnam
 McCarville, Leonard, Loup City, WWII
 Meacham, Gerald E., Omaha, Korea
 Meier, Thomas R., Millard, Vietnam
 Mendlik, Marion A., Lincoln, WWII
 Mickey, Robert, Omaha, WWII
 Miller, Charles W., Fort Calhoun, WWII
 Miller, Dennis J., Ord, Vietnam
 Mitchell, Richard, Lincoln, Vietnam
 Mortenson, Stephen M., Fremont
 Muggenberg, Joe, Lincoln, Vietnam
 Mundt, Alvin E., Alliance, Korea
 Munns, John C., Lincoln, Vietnam
 Nielsen, Arnold J., Millard, WWII
 Ohnoutka, LeRoy F., Weston, Korea
 O'Dea, Densel W., Benkelman, WWII
 Oneal, Harold R., Gering, WWII
 Parde, Larry H., Beatrice, Vietnam
 Parde, Lavern H., Beatrice, Korea
 Parks, Jerry, Valentine, Korea
 Pasieka, James, South Omaha, Vietnam
 Patton, William R., Gering, Vietnam
 Peitz, Thomas J., Hartington, Vietnam
 Pinkerton, Gary E., Benkelman, Vietnam
 Pisci, Ross A., Millard, WWII
 Plummer, William J., Sidney, Korea
 Polage, Gale D., Fairmont, Korea
 Pope, Barbara K., Ashland, Persian Gulf
 Praeuner, Kenneth, Tilden, WWII
 Pratt, Louis G., Elkhorn, Vietnam
 Prochaska, Edwin, Prague, Korea
 Prowett, Larry, Palmer, WWII
 Quinn, Phillip J., Loup City, Korea
 Racely, Edward W., Walthill, Korea
 Radke, Eugene A., Big Springs, WWII
 Rassfeld, Richard S., Millard, Vietnam
 Rathman, Elton, Wood River, Korea
 Reichlinger, Dennis, West Point, Korea
 Rice, Carol E., Bellevue, Korea
 Rokey, Laura M., Sutton, WWII
 Roos, Monty W., Maxwell, Vietnam
 Rudolph, Henry, Bartlett, Korea
 Russell, Floyd L., Omaha, Korea
 Ryan, Robert W. Sr., Papillion, Vietnam
 Schaneman, Walter, Gering, Korea
 Schepker, Harold B., Sidney, Vietnam
 Schlichting, A. Barton, Kearney, WWII
 Schmidt, Garry, Lexington
 Schmit, Henry, Osmond, Korea
 Shamplo, Wendell C., North Platte, WWII
 Shirley, William D., Nebraska City, Vietnam
 Shriner, Raymond L., Grand Island, Korea
 Siebrandt, Ronald D., Lincoln, Vietnam
 Skibinski, Joseph C., Ashton, Vietnam
 Slavik, Marvin, Schuyler, Korea
 Sliva, Michael, Columbus, Vietnam
 Smiley, Maurice D., Bridgeport, Vietnam
 Solberg, Randall, Omaha, Vietnam
 Soucie, Leonard C., Lodgepole, WWII
 Sullivan, Mark, Doniphan, Vietnam
 Ternus, Allen, Genoa, Vietnam
 Tetschner, Glenn A., Bartlett, SAL
 Tollefson, John L., Norfolk, Vietnam
 Tomka, Norman D., Dodge, Korea
 Tonniges, Larry A., Gresham, SAL
 Turner, Randy L., Eagle, Persian Gulf
 Ulrich, Harlan D., Wakefield, Vietnam
 Vance, Dominic J., Millard, GW
 Vazzano, Mike J., Millard, Korea
 Veed, Lawrence, Central City, WWII
 Voboril, James, Greeley, Korea
 Wayne, John S., North Omaha, Vietnam
 Wells, Neale M., Grand Island, Korea
 White, Clarence E., Schuyler, WWII
 Wicht, Paul, Grand Island, Vietnam
 Wiese, Robert R., Grand Island, Vietnam
 Wieseman, Dennis W., Gering, Vietnam
 Wilson, Paul K., Omaha
 Windeshausen, H. N., Osmond, WWII
 Winkle, Donald L., Beatrice, Korea
 Witt, Emmett, Bancroft
 Zach, James G., South Omaha, Vietnam

Correction: David R. Odvody of Prague is alive and well.

Events Calendar

April

- 7 Good Friday - Office Closed
- 9 Easter Sunday
- 19 95% Membership Target Date
- 21 - 23 Oratorical Contest - Indianapolis, IN

May

- 8 - 11 Spring Meetings - Indianapolis, IN
- 19 100% Membership Target Date
- 29 Memorial Day - Office Closed

June

- 4 - 10 Cornhusker Boys' & Girls' State - Lincoln
- 19 Juneteenth - Office Closed
- 20 - 21 Boys' Junior Law Cadet - Grand Island
- 22 - 23 Girls' Junior Law Cadet - Grand Island
- 23 - 25 Department Convention - Kearney

Check www.nebraskalegion.net under the meetings tab for upcoming National, State, and District events.

LegionCare: \$5,000.00 Accidental Death Benefit at NO COST* To You



Did you know that starting 1/1/2015, anyone enrolled in LegionCare will be covered for as long as they maintain their membership in the Legion Family – TAL, ALA, & SAL. This new “one and done” approach will save you from needing to re-enroll every five years. The

LegionCare program will continue to cover you for \$1,000 of AD&D coverage. If the accidental loss occurs when on official Legion Family Business, we will cover you for \$5,000 of AD&D coverage.*

All dues-paying Department members have the opportunity to enroll in LegionCare; a complimentary, no cost to you accidental death coverage provided to members of Your Department.

Your Department of The American Legion works hard to provide the most comprehensive benefits to you and its members. As a Legionnaire in good standing, you are eligible for LegionCare. Your Department is committed to protecting Legionnaires and their families, so they've worked with the Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) to arrange this benefit for you. Don't pass up your opportunity to activate LegionCare! You are guaranteed this NO COST coverage with no health questions, no hidden qualifications and no reason to pass up your opportunity for this important coverage.

Although coverage is available at NO COST to you and paid for by the LIT, you must enroll to receive the coverage. Visit www.theLIT.com or call toll-free at 1-800-235-6943 today to activate up to \$5,000.00 in protection.

*For purposes of the LIT, a member of The American Legion, with current year's dues paid, could be eligible for the \$5,000.00 Accidental Death benefit if he/she is traveling to, attending, or returning from an official function at which the Legionnaire represents their Post, District, Department, or National Organization in an official capacity.



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Crawford Post 138 presented a certificate for 50 years of continuous membership to Dr. Vernon Rocky. Pictured (L to R) Area D Vice Commander Gene VonForell and Dr. Vernon Rocky.



Milford Post 171 member Jim Eberly was presented with a Quilt of Valor that was made by the 7th and 8th grade students. Pictured is Jim surrounded by his family.



Newcastle Post 62 presented Quilts of Valor to its members. Pictured back row (L to R) Dennis Knudsen, Martin Finnegan, and Aaron Myers. Pictured front row (L to R) Larry Lorensen, Pat Rohan, Rick Rohan, and Alan Bauman. Not present but also receiving a quilt were Dennis Reinert, Mark Kneifl Jr., and Toni Wright.



Hickman Post 105 members were presented with Quilts of Valor by the Hickman Auxiliary. Pictured top (L to R) Ingrid Chavez and Larry Edgar. Hickman Post 105 presented Harold Hoge with the Post's 2022 Outstanding Member Award. Pictured bottom (L to R) Commander Martin Neal and Harold Hoge.



Arlington Post 71 presented Quilts of Valor to its members. Pictured (L to R) Adjutant Stan Misfeldt, Commander Steve Bremer, Ron Christensen, Duane Hedell, Bob Baker, Gary Denison, and Lonnie Tourek.



Morrill Post 10 presented their yearly scholarship to Jonathan Lane. He also received the Nebraska Gold Star Parents scholarship. Pictured (L to R) Commander Fred Cawiezell, Jonathan Lane, Adjutant John Kammerzell, and Gold Star parents Chris and Bob Wolf.



Alexandria Post 194 presented Quilts of Valor to its members. The five members are all brothers. Pictured (L to R) Bob Summers, Dave Summers, Steve Summers, Joe Summers, and Tim Summers.



Venango Post 270 members were recognized at the new veteran's memorial that was designed and completed by Caleb Costrini as his Eagle Scout project.



Burwell Post 298 received a \$30,000 donation from Dan Patty Kreitman for the construction of the new Post home. Pictured (L to R) Adjutant Bill Weber, Patty and Dan Kreitman, Commander Don Christen, and Bill Warren.



Central Sandhills American Legion Riders Chapter member gathered on March 5th to celebrate the 15th birthday of their Chapter.



Cedar Bluffs Post 158 presented Quilts of Valor to its members. Top picture (L to R) Ronald Freeman, Norman Gerrard, Loyd Dean Janovec, Dan Kortum, Ronald Nick, John Randall Reiger, Larry Wagner. Bottom picture (L to R) Carroll Wiegand.



Past Department Adjutant Burdette Burkhardt was sworn in as the Chief Sergeant at Arms by Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Heavican at the start of the 108th Legislature session at the state capital.



Sidney Post 17 attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly remodeled G. L. Huyett building in Sidney. Pictured (L to R) Commander Les Larsen and District 4 Commander Steve Stanec.



SPRING – A TIME OF AWAKENING



As we move into the season of springtime, it brings an awakening of hope, joy, and cheer. There is beauty all around us. We just need to take the time to see, to touch, and to hear the season awaken.

How does "spring" fit in with our Auxiliary year? We have been working our programs since the beginning of the 2022-2023 season. Now we need to "awaken" our "seedlings" to begin the process of "harvesting" our rewards. The analogy I am referring to is "it is time to report" what you have been doing so we can celebrate your diligent work.

Would a gardener not weed and water to see growth? Why wouldn't we want to see what our units have done to "nurture" our veterans, their families, and their communities? I believe the remarkable "gardeners" of the American Legion Auxiliary have plenty to share so that stronger, healthier, vibrant seeds (members) are excited to continue into the next Auxiliary season.

The Year-End Reports are due to Headquarters by April 20. Please do your part to foster this great patriotic organization by submitting yours. And don't forget the many awards that you can receive by simply completing a narrative or filling out

a form. The ABC Book has all the details, including deadlines.

Did you know that success is a joint effort? Let me share the story about the amazing example of how teamwork can lead to increased efficiency and success. It is the "Goose Story" (author unknown).

"When you see geese flying along in "V" formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone – and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those people who are headed the same way we are.

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs, whether with people or with geese flying south. Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Finally – and this is important – when a goose gets sick or is wounded by a gunshot, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able

to fly or until it dies, and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group. If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that."

My interpretation of this story is that (1) the ALA is one large goose family that shares the common direction to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families; (2) we know the impact we have as one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military, and their families when we are headed in the same direction; (3) we might need a little work on replacing the "head goose" at the Unit, County, or District level; so a little more "honking" to encourage others to take the lead is necessary; and (4) we provide support and stick together through it all! That last point reinforces my desire that we always treat each other with respect as it is important for our "V" formation (in this case "V" stands for Victory)!

Geese instinctively help each other. They support each other and are interdependent. This is the type of help, support, and security we need as individuals. We all realize that life is not easy, but the more people we can enlist to "fly in our formation," the better chance we have of growing our organization. We need to expand our support system. Where can we look for these people? Think outside the box—school events, airports, museums, waiting in line at the grocery store, the lake, etc.

Now that we have "awakened" ourselves to report and submit narratives, as well as related our ALA to geese that included some lessons and reasons to increase our

membership, let us plan how we can celebrate our successes. Isn't it great when you have a family reunion or any other type of get-together with family and friends? Those times are memory-making when we gather as a group to reminisce and exchange ideas. You will have that opportunity in June!

The 2022-2023 Department of Nebraska Convention will be held in Kearney, June 23-25, at The Ramada Inn. This is the perfect opportunity to reminisce about your year, which leads to exchanging ideas as well as celebrating our ALA successes. I hope you are making plans to attend (a tentative schedule is in this issue). Let's make this the largest "goose-family" reunion ever!

The following poem by Helen Steiner Rice shares my sentiment about each and every one of you as an Auxiliary member.

"Every Day Is a Reason for Giving—and Giving Is the Key to Living!"
So let us give "ourselves" away
Not just today but every day . . .
And remember a kind and thoughtful deed
Or a hand outstretched in time of need
Is the rarest of gifts, for it is a part
Not of the purse but a loving heart—
And he who gives of himself will find
True joy of heart and peace of mind.

Never Forget, Ever Honor,
Vicki Ozenbaugh
Department President '22-'23



| 2023 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION The Ramada Inn – Kearney, Nebraska June 22 – 25, 2023 | | |
|--|---|--------------|
| Thursday, June 22 | | |
| 1:00 pm | ALA Department Executive Committee Meeting | Paradise 1-2 |
| 7:00 pm | Special Committee Meetings (if needed) | Paradise 1-2 |
| Friday, June 23 | | |
| 8:00 am | Registration Opens | |
| 9:00 am | ALA Formal Opening and General Session | Paradise 1-2 |
| 11:45 am | Recess for Lunch | |
| 1:00 pm | Joint Session and Memorial Service | Paradise 3-4 |
| 2:40 pm | ALA Reconvenes | Paradise 1-2 |
| 5:00 pm | District Caucus | |
| 5:30 pm | Recess | |
| 5:45 pm | Nominating Committee Meeting | |
| 7:00 pm | Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Meeting | Paradise 1-2 |
| Saturday, June 24 | | |
| 8:00 am | Registration Opens | |
| 8:30 am | ALA Reconvenes | Paradise 1-2 |
| 11:00 am | Gold Star Recognition Service | |
| 11:15 am | Past Department President Memorial Service | |
| 12:00 pm | Children & Youth Luncheon | Kearney Post |
| 1:45 pm | ALA Reconvenes | Paradise 1-2 |
| 4:30 pm | Special Guests and Candidates Reception | Pool Area |
| 6:00 pm | Catholic Mass Worship Service | Paradise 1-2 |
| 7:00 pm | Tentative American Legion Family Gathering | Kearney Post |
| Sunday, June 25 | | |
| 8:00 am | American Legion Family Joint Worship Service | Paradise 1-2 |
| 9:15 am | ALA Reconvenes | Paradise 1-2 |
| 11:00 am | Installation of Officers | |
| 12:00 pm | Close of 2023 Convention Post DEC Meeting and 2023 National Convention Information Charlotte, North Carolina – August 25-31 | |

YOUR PRESIDENT IN DC

One of my favorite places to visit is our nation's capital --- Washington, DC. I represented you at the 2023 American Legion Washington Conference along with the Nebraska American Legion delegation and other Auxiliary members. In total, we had sixteen American Legion Family members visiting our Senators and Congressmen.

I was able to attend the National Security Commission session on Monday, February 27. Some highlights from that session:

□ "It's the people we must take care of and keep our military ready"—Patrick McGuigan, Senior Defense and Veterans Affairs Advisory for Senator John Boozman, AR

□ "Actions not verbs" was the message from Senator R. Clark Cooper

□ "Quality of life assessments for our Military Bases across the world" --- National Commander Troiola

□ POW/MIA emphasis with DPAA for closure for families --- National President Koutz

Four resolutions were presented:
□ Resolution 2 --- Policy on Taiwan --- committee recommended rejection

□ Resolution X --- Afghanistan War Commission --- committee

recommended adoption

□ Resolution 22 --- Clarifying definition of incident to service in relation to the Feres Doctrine, which bars military servicemembers from bringing claims against the federal government --- committee recommended approval

□ Resolution 45 --- Establish separate Paramedic/Emergency Medical Tech awards --- it was referred back to the committee

Several of The American Legion's legislative top priorities are:

• Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors --- Limit how much lawyers can charge

• Concurrent Receipt --- Ensure retirees receive full VA disability and DoD retirement pay

• Military Quality of Life --- Ensure our active-duty's quality of life is sufficient so they are not deterred when defending our nation

• Pay the Coast Guard --- In event of government shutdown, ensure active and retired Coast Guard receive pay

• Protect the

American Flag --- new changes are being proposed to U.S. Flag Code dealing with proper retirement of flags when they can't be burned due to toxic exposure from the material they are made from

The link to all priorities can be found at: <https://www.legion.org/legislative/agenda>.

Our delegation was able to personally address the eleven legislative priorities to Nebraska's 118th Congressional representatives. But, it does not end there. We must continue to be the "voice" for the nearly 1.6 million US military veterans and servicemembers. Do your part to contact your representatives to see where they stand on the veterans issues and encourage them for their support.

Vicki Ozenbaugh



AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

It is the policy of the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA), a national public benefit 501(c)(19) not-for-profit veterans organization auxiliary headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, to provide temporary and emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or personal crisis.

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) was established by the 1969 bequest from the estate of Auxiliary member Helen Colby Small, which funds combined with donations to the AEF Fund shall be used solely for AEF Grants.

Currently, AEF grants provide temporary assistance to eligible members during a time of financial crisis when no other source of aid is readily available to pay for shelter, food, and utilities. Assistance will not be granted to pay medical expenses or credit card debt.

Currently, AEF funds may be

used to provide emergency assistance to eligible Auxiliary members in areas devastated by a natural disaster, including flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, or other severe weather.

Currently, emergency assistance will not be granted to pay medical expenses, insurance deductibles, taxes, credit card debt, or damage to a secondary or seasonal residence.

Currently, the maximum grant award is \$2,400; and the applicant for assistance must have exhausted all other financial options and provide proof of "past due" bills.

Donations to the Nebraska AEF funds are coming in, and I thank you. Remember, this is the one and only ALA program that is dedicated to "Members Helping Members." We never know if and when we may need assistance. Thank you for all you do to help fellow members.

*Beverly A. Neel
AEF Chair*



Members of the Davenport American Legion Auxiliary #335 delivered a supper of soup, crackers, and cookie bars to local Veterans and their wives in Davenport honoring the 104th Birthday of the American Legion.

QUILT OF VALOR

The Eustis American Legion Auxiliary #257 hosted a Christmas soup supper on Monday, December 12th, for the American Legion and Sons of the American Legion members and families.

Bob Dutton was presented a Quilt of Valor for his 4 years of service in

the Air Force, including one year in Vietnam. Thank you for your service, Bob.

Lore Boerkircher was the maker of the quilt.

Pictured are: Helen Dutton, Bob Dutton, and Melissa Thompson



MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to all the members and units who have called to discuss the STAR article on State Life Members (SLM). Good conversations and great questions. The understanding of our members on the impact the Department bears each year when paying the national portion of dues for our SLMs is commendable. Together, we can work this out.

I have been asked, "Am I in trouble with my SLM?" "Do I have to do anything?" "Why must I now pay more; I already paid for life." I even had a Legionnaire contact me who was quite adamant --- "you cannot ask members to pay more dues if they already paid for life." I did determine that he is not an ALA

member, so I was able to advise him he can share his opinion but had no voice in this conversation. I think we parted on good terms.

That Legionnaire is very right - we cannot ask SLMs to do anything. We offer options if they feel so inclined to help ease the Department's financial burden on their behalf. Only SLMs can make that decision. We approached this topic back in 2018, and the response from our SLMs and units was awesome. We raised some good money to ease the financial burden. I can simply say that if any member or unit is so inclined to continue to ease the Department's burden, donations to the Permanent Member Fund would be welcomed

Remember to send your assignments a couple weeks before the month they are due.

| 2023 CENTERPIECE AND TRAY FAVOR ASSIGNMENTS | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Month | Grand Island VA Med Center 10 Centerpiece | Central NE Veterans Home 215 Tray Fav | Bellevue Eastern NE VA Home 24 Centerpiece | Norfolk VA Home 20 Centerpiece | Western NE VA Home 13 Centerpiece | Western NE VA Home 90 Tray Fav | Omaha VA Med Center 75 Tray Fav |
| April | #147 Crete | #225 Eddyville | | #253 Platte Center | #133 Culbertson | #133 Culbertson | Dept. Jrs. |
| May | #126 Broken Bow | #288 Farnam | | #307 S. Souix City | #213 Wallace | #213 Wallace | #264 Dorchester Jrs. |
| June | #95 Curtis | #193 Ohiowa | | #70 West Point | #312 Broadwater | #312 Broadwater | #20 Fremont |
| July | #141 Hampton | #52 Kearney | #268 Benington | #302 Leigh | | | #226 Benington |
| Aug. | #365 Davenport | #52 Kearney | | #176 Jackson | | | |
| Sept. | #290 Elwood | #209 Franklin | #1 Omaha | | #12 Chadron | #12 Chadron | #1 Omaha |
| Oct. | #290 Elwood | #316 Elm Creek | | #322 Monroe | | #364 Naponee | |
| Nov. | | #218 Exeter | | #357 Brunswick | #10 Morrill | #54 Laurel | #160 Polk |
| Dec. | #257 Eustis | | | #302 Leigh | #10 Morrill | #133 Culbertson | |
| Jan. | | | | | | | |
| Feb. | #251 Arcadia | | | | | | |
| Mar. | | | | | | | |

Please check with your (Med Center) Assignments to see if they are accepting items before you make or send them.

Service to Veterans Chairwoman: Alice Vieselmeyer Ph:(402)947-9001 Email: alicevies@aol.com

"VETERANS CRISIS LINE"

Thank you to all who donated Valentine cards and treats for the veterans who had appointments at the clinic. They always enjoy being remembered.

April is also Volunteer Month. So, thank you to all of you who volunteer and help make the lives of our veterans better with your service. Service not Self!

FYI. There's is a **new, easy-to-remember** way to reach the "Veterans Crisis Line." **Dial 988; then Press 1.** Millions of veterans have already called when they needed crisis support. They are there

if and when you need them. Every day, responders at the Veterans Crisis Line help people going through a crisis. They are qualified, caring responders who are ready to listen. No veteran should go through a crisis alone. Your life is worth it. Keep fighting and never give up.

You can still call the original Veterans Crisis Line number **1-800-273-8255 and Press 1.** Learn more at "VeteransCrisisLine.net"

*Yours in Patriotism and Service,
Linda Varejcka
Lincoln CBOC*

SYRACUSE UNIT 100

President Jenice Bates and Americanism Chairman Therese Juilfs of Syracuse Unit 100 presented award certificates and checks to the winners of the Americanism essay contest. 1st place --- Pressley Wilhelm, 7th grade, daughter of Jeremy & Irene Wilhelm, Syracuse;

2nd place --- Mason Flores, 7th grade, son of Emily Bohnart, Unadilla; 3rd place --- Brenna Sayer, 10th grade, daughter of Steve & Erin Sayer, Dunbar. The unit had 73 essays submitted from Middle and High School students at Syracuse-Dunbar-Avocca Schools.



HISTORY

The Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary has a rich history of great leaders starting in 1921 with our first Department President, Minnie Penney, and continuing through 2023 with Department President Vicki Ozenbaugh. And, there are many, many more.

Our history narratives and books are a way to highlight those leaders and those who shaped our history. I challenge each unit to look through their history reports and remember those who paved the way for their unit and the activities and amazing things that were accomplished in the past. It is up to current members to share the past and help continue to make our future bright.

This is a reminder that end-of-year reports are due to Department Headquarters on April 20th. I hope that many of you will also send in your Unit Narrative Histories. I can't wait to read each of them and then bind them all together for our Department archives. I know that Department President Vicki can't wait to see them as well.

I have received a few District History Books to judge for the 2022-2023 contest, but I hope to get even more. If you have any questions, please send me an email at amandafaye33@gmail.com or give me a call at 402-480-1472.

It was great to see so many of you while at District Conventions. I hope you enjoyed them and learned as much as I did. Thank you to everyone for their hospitality.

*Amanda Washburn
Department Historian*



and appreciated. I have loved the conversations, and I am here to continue that conversation.

Nebraska has slipped in the Northwestern Division and National rankings, which was foreseeable and expected. However, our efforts to collect renewals cannot stop. We were at 3,000 members from Goal on February 22, 2023. There were 1,862 renewals to collect, leaving another 1,138 members to sign up new or rejoin. So, Nebraska has its work cut out for it. Each member can have an impact on getting to that magical figure of Goal: 17,091. We know it is not easy.

We know there are members who just wait until the last minute to pay dues, but perhaps they do not

understand all ALA members need to have their new membership card on January 1st of each new year in order to continue as a unit officer, a unit program chair, a unit active member, a member with voice, and --- more importantly --- a unit member with a vote.

If you fit this description, we would encourage you to begin a new habit and pay next year's dues between July 1 and August 1st each year. The Department can start to send the next year's dues to National on August 1st. Be one of those members to be first in line to pay your annual dues. Renewals should all be collected by Mid-December in order for members to have that new membership card in hand on

January 1st. I know we can do this. Please mark your calendars today and be prepared to send your dues on July 1st.

We continue to promote PULF (Paid Up for Life) memberships. It is a lump sum payment based on your age and your current unit dues. Many members are taking on this payment as are SLMs. Have questions? We are here to assist in any way we can. You just need to ask. I encourage members to decide before the end of May 2023.

Thank you, members. Blessings to all.

*Beverly A. Neel, Chair
402 369 0152
bbneel1912@gmail.com*

CANDIDATES FOR DEPARTMENT OFFICES - 2023-2024



DEBRA ALBERS BIO

Debra Albers has been a continuous member of the American Legion Auxiliary for 50 years. She was initiated at the Harm-Sangen Unit #140 in Sterling in 1973. She is a member through her father, Paul Straube, who was a World War II veteran. In 1981, she transferred her membership to Davenport Unit #335 in Davenport, Nebraska.

Mrs. Albers has served the Department of Nebraska as Department President in 2016-17, Vice President, Historian, and Chaplain. Department Chairmanships have included Children and Youth, Legislative, Community Service, Education, National Security, and Past President's Parley. She was a member of the Cornhusker Girls State Staff for 7 years.

Debra attended National Conventions from 2014 through 2022. At the 2015 National Convention, she was awarded first place in the Northwestern Division for her 2014 -15 Nebraska History. In 2022-23, Deb is currently serving as Vice Chairman of the National Community Service Committee; and has served as 2021-22 National Junior Activities Chairman; 2019-22 National Education Chairman; 2018-19 National Junior Activities Committee Member; and 2017-18 Northwestern Division Education Chairman. She is currently Vice President of her local unit and has served in many capacities.

A member of Bonne Chere' 8 & 40 #767, Deb served as Departmental Chapeau in 2021-22 and attended the National Marche in 2022. Also a member of the Order of the Eastern Star in Davenport, she served as Worthy Matron for 21 years and has been the chapter secretary for nine years.

Debra attended the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics. Mrs. Albers was a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher at Bruning-Davenport USD and retired after 38 years of teaching in 2014. She was the President of the Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers of Nebraska in 2002-03 and received the FCS Teacher of the Year Award in 1996.

Debra is married to Tregan Albers, an Ohioa Sons of American Legion member, and farms near

Davenport. They have two sons, Tregan II and wife Sarah, of Omaha, and Trenton and wife, Stephanie, and three grandsons Marshall, Ethan, and Jonah and one granddaughter, Eleanor. Her sons Tregan II and Trenton, and grandsons Marshall, Ethan, and Jonah are members of the Papillion Sons of American Legion.

VICKI CYBORON BIO

Vicki Cyboron is a candidate for the high office of Department Chaplain. She is a Paid Up for Life (PUFL) 42-year member of Shipmann Mogensen Unit 201 in Boelus and is eligible for membership in the Auxiliary through the service of her dad.

Her membership started as a Junior member. Vicki has been an active member at the Unit, County, District, and Department levels. She is currently serving as Acting Unit President for her mother, and a two-year term as Howard County President. Plus, she is currently the Grand Island VA Medical Center Deputy and Department Resolution Chairperson.

Past positions that Vicki has served include District Six President for two years and two years as District Historian. On the Department level, Vicki served five years on the Finance Committee and three years as Finance Chairman. She served a three-year term as President of the Nebraska American Legion Press Association (NE-APLA) and as National Vice President of the National American Legion Press Association (NALPA).

Vicki graduated from Midland Lutheran College with a degree in Business Administration. She has worked at Pitney Bowes Presort Services for fifteen years. currently as Collection Specialist.

Vicki is also a member of the Custer County DAV Auxiliary Unit. She is the current Junior Vice President and on the Audit Committee of the Department of Nebraska DAV Auxiliary. Vicki attends Faith Lutheran Church in Nysted.

She looks forward to and appreciates your support in serving as Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary Department Chaplain. She says being part of this amazing organization is an honor and privilege to spread the word about our support to our veterans, active personnel, and children & youth.

RUTH HEITBRINK BIO

I have been a member of the American Legion Auxiliary for 50 years. My eligibility is through my father, Paul Straube, who was a WW II veteran. Even though he passed several years ago, his passion for our country has kept me engaged in continuing to be an active member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Currently, I am serving as the Chaplain for the Department of Nebraska and the President of Sterling Unit 140.

Past Positions within ALA include:

- Department of Nebraska Legislative Chairman 2019-2022
- Past District 13 President
- Past District 13 Vice President
- Past District 13 Chaplain
- Johnson County President

Past positions outside of the ALA include:

- Executive Board of Directors for Energy Solution Center, Washington DC
- Board member of Home Builders of Lincoln
- Board member for Friendship Home of Lincoln

I am a Sterling High School graduate, and I hold an A.A.S. in Business and an A.A.S. in Event Planning. In July of 2022, I retired from Black Hills Energy after 26 years as Account Manager for Southeast Nebraska.

I am married to Dan Hietbrink and have two daughters, Meri and Lori, and a grandson, Ken 'Yahta.

LISA MOORE BIO

Lisa Moore is a 27-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She is eligible for membership through her Grandfather, Donald Neumann, a World War II veteran. Her parents are both Vietnam veterans.

She is a PUFL member of Red Cloud Unit 238 in District 10, and she has the full endorsement from her unit and District 10.

In Swanton Unit 258 (District 11), she held offices as Unit Vice President and President. She also was Saline County Secretary and District 11 President. She has also been Home Service Chair (which is now Service to Veterans), Membership Chair, Public Relations Chair, Girls State Secretary, Girls State Advisory Board, and Junior Activities Chair. For 5 and a half

years, she served as Department Secretary.

She is also a member of 8 and 40 de Nebraska #9, Salon 767. She has held various salon chairmanships. She has also held all of the Departmental Leadership positions, including Chapeaux Povouir member.

She has been married to Jim Moore for 36 years, and he fully supports her activities with the American Legion Auxiliary.

She is currently employed with Kawasaki Rail Car in Lincoln, Nebraska.

AMANDA WASHBURN BIO

Amanda Washburn is a candidate for the high office of Department Vice President. She is a 29-year member of Bickel-Nelson Unit 360 in Cook. She is eligible for membership in the Auxiliary through the service of both of her grandfathers in World War II.

Amanda has been an active member at the Unit, District, Department, and National levels. She has also held offices during her years as a junior member, including Department Junior President, Northwestern Division National Vice President, and Honorary National Junior President. As a senior member, she has served as Department Junior Activities Chairman, a member of the County Government Committee, a member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, member of the Girls Nation committee, the Northwestern Division Junior Activities Chairman, and a member of the National Education committee. She is currently serving as Department Historian, the Northwestern Division VA&R Chairman, and the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chairman.

Amanda graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a degree in History. She currently works as the Executive Assistant at the Nebraska American Legion. She is also a member of the 8/40, VFW, United Commercial Travelers, and American Lutheran Church in Ashland.

Amanda looks forward to serving the Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary and appreciates your support in her future endeavors.

VICKI OZENBAUGH BIO

ALA greetings to my fellow Auxiliary members! I have announced my intention to seek election to the 2023-2024 National Executive Committee position for Nebraska.

After my year as your Department President, I feel you probably know me. Yet, we do provide biographies of all candidates, so here is "me" in a nutshell.

My Auxiliary background:

- Proud 46-year ALA member
- Membership to the Franklin Unit No. 193 in Ohioa, Nebraska
- Eligible through the service of my former husband
- Unit President, Vice-President, Chaplain, Membership Chairman, and various program chairmen usually associated with Education and Children & Youth
- Fillmore County President and Vice-President.
- District 11 President (twice) and Vice-President
- Department Americanism (twice), Education (twice), Leadership (twice), and Children and Youth

My personal background:

- Born in Geneva, Nebraska and lived in Nebraska my entire life
- Graduate of University of Nebraska and high school teacher for eight years
- Self-employed career in "making a house a home" for 20 years (for those who might remember Home Interiors and Gifts)
- Twenty-five years as a postmaster with the United States Postal Service (plus nine years as a non-career USPS employee)
- Member of St. John Lutheran Church, Ohioa
- Current St. John's administrative secretary, Sunday School superintendent, and teacher.
- Member and officer of the Ohioa Rescue as an EMT
- Member and officer of the Ohioa Chamber of Commerce
- Member Fillmore County Foundation
- Mother of three sons and proud grandmother of ten (five boys and five girls)

It would be my honor to represent you as Nebraska's NEC, working together in serving our veterans, their families, as well as our communities and youth.

WASH. DC CONFERENCE – RENEE VAN WINKLE

As your Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chair, I was invited by National President Vickie Koutz to attend the 2023 American Legion Washington Conference in Washington, DC. What a wonderful experience!

How many of us have heard about Camp Lejeune? One of the sessions I attended was educating us on Camp Lejeune. I learned that

a veteran or their family should not contact the lawyers that we see and hear in the commercials on television or the radio. It is estimated that if they do win for the veteran, they keep 50% to 80% percent of what the veteran receives. This is one point that we shared with our representatives when we visited The Hill on Tuesday, February 28. They agreed a cap should be placed on the

settlement received.

I also learned there is a deadline to file. It is August 9, 2024. Once a veteran is enrolled, they stay enrolled through the complete process. Please share that deadline with anyone you know affected by Camp Lejeune.

A question was asked if a veteran died from being at Camp Lejeune, what could be done. The lawyer presenting the session said the

widow can file (and should file) as it is the lawyer's responsibility to prove what happened.

Another thing we need to know is every veteran has a right to be buried at a National Cemetery --- a place of honor. It was reported that 94 percent of veterans live within 75 miles of a National Cemetery, where they have earned a plot from their service to their country.

As a first-time visitor to Washington, DC, I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was my privilege to represent Nebraska as your Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chair.

*Renee Van Winkle
VA & R Chr.*

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER REMEMBRANCE

Matthew 5:4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Romans 14:8

If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

With Memorial Day approaching, I have been thinking about what our organization does for remembrance and commemoration. When looking up the word "remembrance" in the dictionary, you receive a whole array of meanings. The definition that stuck out to me was "something that serves to bring to mind or

keep in mind some place, person, event, etc.; memento." Paying remembrance and commemorating service members is one of the major duties each American Legion Auxiliary member holds.

When we conduct POW/MIA Remembrance programs and recognize Gold Star Families, we bring the memory of service members to people's minds. Also, one of the most important mementos we utilize is the poppy. Poppies represent the soldiers who fought and lost their lives for our country and the sacrifices that were made for freedom.

The story of the poppy is one we share throughout the year and gives a spotlight during our days of remembrance. All of this combined helps us recognize the sacrifices that every service member and their family have to go through

and reminds us to keep them in our prayers.

PRAYER: O God, we give you praise for these people who have allowed us to serve and worship You in freedom. Bless their families. Bless those they love. Give them your great favor, this day, and every day.

Help them to walk wisely. To stay covered in your armor. Give them godly discernment. Make them constantly aware of what lurks close by whether on the battlefield or at home. Help them to be men and women of prayer, realizing that this is where their greatest help comes from. Help them to stay united and strong, bold and resolute, determined and unwavering. Amen
(Source: www.christianity.com)

Ruth Hietbrink
Dept. Chaplain

In Memoriam

Received February 10, 2023 to March 10, 2023

| | |
|---|--|
| Connie J. Mathson..... Morill.....10 | Margaret A Arens..... Crofton.....128 |
| Jane Row..... Chadron.....12 | Marilyn Cunningham..... Arnold.....130 |
| Deborah M Garner..... Chadron.....12 | Delores Kreifels..... Springfield.....143 |
| Kay M Raile..... Norfolk.....16 | Arline Raitt..... Genoa.....144 |
| Lela Walter..... Fremont.....20 | Ruth Carlson..... Genoa.....144 |
| Annie Thomas..... Auburn.....23 | Nancy Badura..... Plainview.....148 |
| Shirley A Roebke..... Beatrice.....27 | Corinne Adelson..... Polk.....160 |
| Mae L Parde..... Beatrice.....27 | A Margery Clifton..... Pawnee City.....168 |
| Virginia J Easton..... Gordon.....34 | Janet Reinsch..... Nelson.....187 |
| Karen Oberhauser..... Madison.....35 | Roberta J Hinton..... Cambridge.....199 |
| Loretta Armbruster..... Grant.....40 | Leah A Williams..... Wallace.....213 |
| Judy K Carlson..... Laurel.....54 | Kathryn A Teten..... Talmage.....246 |
| Mary Royal..... Emerson.....60 | Sally Hinojosn..... Talmage.....246 |
| Regina C. Leininger..... Sutton.....61 | Alyce Coufal..... Colon.....265 |
| Jo A Koehler..... Wausa.....63 | Eileen B Bauer..... Spalding.....299 |
| Sandra Cox..... Valentine.....90 | Janice Hollers..... Cody.....319 |
| Elaine Rozmiarek..... St. Paul.....119 | Barbara A Lemmert..... Pleasant Dale.....354 |
| Joan E Vandenberg..... David City.....125 | |

EDITOR'S NOTE

Please send articles and pictures for future editions of "THE STAR" to Lorene Bartos, Editor at 7441 San Mateo Lane, Lincoln, NE 68516 or email to: ALATheStarNE@yahoo.com. Send photos as jpg attachments. Material for the next issue needs to be submitted by MAY 10, 2023

ATTENTION UNITS

There are still spaces available for Girls State Delegates. If your unit would like to send its alternate or another young lady, there is room. If additional funding is needed, contact other businesses or organizations in your area. Girls State alumni may be another source. Please contact Girls State Secretary Roxanne Hiatt with questions.

Roxanne.m.hiatt@gmail.com
(402) 405-9505 or (402) 466-1808

SPRING IS AROUND THE CORNER!



Please tell me that Spring is coming! The Winter of our Discontent is a real thing. Up here in the North Country, the poor momma cows and the cattlemen who care for them are suffering greatly and need our prayers. And, as if the Covid lockdown wasn't hard enough, the multiple snow days are leaving teachers at wits end.

Is there anyone in your unit who would be willing to go spend some time with the kids? It would help greatly if you would try playing patriotic music, Negro Spirituals, and marching songs to burn off some steam on their little legs. Please, don't try to whitewash the songs, as history is what it is --- especially if you can teach them the stories behind the songs.

The most fulfilling part of teaching, I am told, is when a student from years ago comes up to a teacher to tell them what a difference they made to them --- unbeknownst to the teacher at the time. Auxiliary members, you have a lifetime of knowledge to share! As with the little gospel light, keeping it under a bushel is the worst thing you can do.

At the turn of the century, I shared with my mother my sadness of never getting to know my grandmothers as a full adult. She gave me the best advice ever: "Well then, you should go care for somebody's grandma." Your kids don't listen to you? Grandkids get bored with you and don't bother to look away from their tablets? You have love and knowledge to share. Go - Spring forth with the new season.

Jean Vackiner
Dept. Music Chair



Pictured is Jessie Kiser, she turned 90 years old on August 28, 2022. Jessie has been a member of Dannebrog ALA Unit 241 for 55 years and has held every office in the post. She currently is our Secretary/Treasurer. Jessie is a remarkable lady, and we are so proud to have her as a member and our Secretary/Treasurer. She does an amazing job for us, and she rarely misses a meeting. And, you will normally find her helping out, too. Thank you, Jessie, for all you do for us and the ALA.

Thank you for all the sympathy cards, memorials, and prayers for my husband, Harlan Dean Ulrich. I really appreciate the thoughtfulness.
Carol Ulrich, Past Department President

MESSAGE FROM YOUR FINANCE CHAIRMAN

The Building Committees appointed in June 2020 by Commander Wooten and President Paes have been diligently looking for buildings that are for sale and would be suitable for our organizations.

They found one that, with a few minor changes, will work perfectly and give both organizations more room. As a one-floor building, it is handicap accessible and compliant. An offer has been made and accepted, and it is expected that we will take possession sometime in April.

It will take a lot of time and effort to go through our current offices and archives, etc. --- especially in the basement. So, if you are asked and have the ability to lift boxes and carry boxes, please consider helping.

Also, as you may have heard at

the Department Convention, The American Legion will be voting on a resolution to print only six editions of the Legionnaire/Star per year. If passed, this would save the American Legion Auxiliary approximately \$10,000 per year!!!!

Per our Standing Rules, Section G, we do not have to vote on this. (The American Legion Auxiliary "The Star" is a bi-monthly publication beginning with the April 1980 issue. Effective in the 2012-2013 year, "The Star" combines with The American Legion "Legionnaire" and follows the "Legionnaire" publication schedule. (6-26-2014)).

Adeline Hanel
Finance Chr.



Millard American Legion Auxiliary Unit 374 held its 2023 Cornhusker Girls State interviews in late February. The judges had a hard job deciding who, from the group of 22 outstanding girls from 5 schools, would attend this year's Cornhusker Girls State. Pictured (l to r) are judges Vicki Cyboron, Rebecca Redlinger Wesch, Sally Johnson, and Karen Brink.



Therese Juilfs, Education / Children & Youth Committee chair for Syracuse Unit 100, observed Read Across America Day on March 2 by visiting the Syracuse Middle School and reading a book to 3 groups of 4th, 5th, and 6th-grade students.



DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL

- 9 Easter
- 15 Military Kids Day - Wear Purple
- 20 End-of-Year Reports Deadline
- Poppy Posters due to Chairman
- Narrative & History Books due to Historian

MAY

- 1-5 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 10 Articles due for the June issue of "The Star"
- 14 Mothers' Day
- 15 Peace Officer's Memorial Week
- 26 National Poppy Day
- 29 Memorial Day - Department Headquarters closed

FOR YOUR ADVANCED PLANNING

- June 4-10, 2023 ALA Cornhusker Girls State - UNL Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska
- June 22-25, 2023 Department Convention, Kearney, Nebraska
- August 25 - 31, 2023 National Convention, Charlotte, North Carolina