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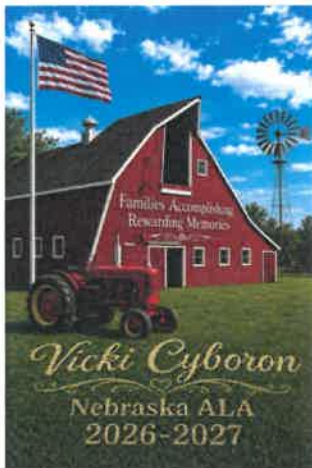
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2026 DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

UNIT PRESIDENTS

It is important that you share this newsletter at your meetings and inform others that all Newsletters are available on the Nebraska Website (nebraskalegionaux.net). Thank you!!

FROM YOUR DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT

FAMILIES ACCOMPLISHING REWARDING MEMORIES (FARM)



My name is Vicki Cyboron, from Boelus Unit #201. Thank you, for electing me your 2026-2027 American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Department President for Nebraska. I am looking forward to this upcoming year and seeing the wonderful things we will accomplish.

My theme is "Families Accomplishing Rewarding Memories." If you look at the first letter of each of those words, it spells FARM. This is a way to honor our parents. FAMILY is very important to me. There are different types of family. It can be blood, it can be our church, our community and our Legion Family. The word ACCOMPLISHING is a word my dad used in his theme when he was Nebraska Department Commander 15 years ago. Plus, we know it is always REWARDING, when you are with family as it makes many wonderful MEMORIES.

For me, when I see a barn the first thing I think of is, did they milk cows like we did growing up? The barn can symbolize different things for each of us because barns provide families with means of purpose. When you drive around and see a barn, do you see the same barn each time? No, you do not. It is like each of our Units; we are not the same. We have the same goal by honoring our veterans, helping our children and community. Each Unit does not do things the same way when doing a program/event, but at the end of the day we all accomplish amazing things.

My projects this year will be the Gift Shops that are held in December at Grand Island VA Medical Center and Omaha/Papillion VA Medical Centers. What a rewarding memory this brings to the volunteer, and it is so meaningful to each of the veterans who receives the gifts or gift cards. This was also my mom's favorite program. Another project is Caregivers. Being a caregiver is not an easy job, as I was one. More information about this project will be coming out.

I look forward to traveling throughout Nebraska and seeing all of you.

To quote my dad when he was Commander, *"Working together as a team, we can and will accomplish our goals"*

Vicki Cyboron
Department President

FROM THE OFFICE
NEW YEAR SAME ORGANIZATION

Roxanne Hiatt, Secretary/Membership Clerk

We are starting a new year with new officers. Every year is kind of the same as far as the monthly goals for the year. New officers mean new ideas. We already have a new theme and symbol. Last year we stirred things up. This year we are going to celebrate family and our roots. I've seen years that had symbols of music, baseball, windmills, eagles, Uncle Sam, hearts, apple pie, soldiers, doves, flags and many, many more – all with the same goal – to keep our organization viable to carry out our programs.

Every program is a part of this mission. Our main goal is to support veterans and their families. There is support for our active-duty military and their families. We also support children of our military families and in our communities. We remember and honor our deceased. We promote our poppy and make the days of our Home residents and Hospital patients brighter with tray favors and centerpieces. We support The American Legion in their legislative efforts for veterans. We are great volunteers!

We have a little (not so little) program called Community Service that supports all the things we do in our communities. For the youth we sponsor Americanism Essays and Poppy poster contests. We provide scholarships and host Girls State for our teens. Some counties sponsor Government Day for high school students.

But one of the important things that personal membership gives you is support in time of need. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund – AEF is there in time of disaster or personal need and is like no other program in our organization. It is managed strictly on donations, and it takes care of US.

That brings us to membership. All the above things happen because you are a member. All the publicity and promotions for our organization begins with members. It is a new membership year. Keep supporting by submitting your dues now. Once you do you can move ahead with all the good deeds mentioned above. You joined because someone you love gave you the opportunity through their service. Thank them by continuing your support through your membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.



A NEW FISCAL YEAR IS HERE!
Vicki Ozenbaugh, Department Treasurer

Here we are in the 2026-2027 ALA Fiscal Year. Has your Unit prepared a budget for this Fiscal Year? Why do I ask? Because you will find the yearly donation forms in this newsletter.

Please note that there has been one change in the donation forms. You **WILL NOT** receive the "Gift Shop Assignment and Vets Home Assessment" form this year. At the 2026 Pre-DEC meeting in Columbus, two standing rule amendments were presented.

Standing Rule #1 – Section T – VA&R, Item 4 was approved to replace the Unit Gift Shop Assignment with a Unit Donation Request.

Standing Rule #2 – Section T – VA&R, Item 5 was approved to replace the Unit Veterans Home Assessment with a Unit Donation Request.

The reason for this change is to increase the funding for both programs because they have not kept pace with associated costs. So, in place of the Gift Shop Assignment and Vets Home Assessment form, you will find two new lines on the Nebraska Veteran Projects donation form (the green sheet).

Please don't overlook this change. Your continued support of our Veterans and their families is very much needed and appreciated.

Reminder to Districts and Counties—your checking/savings accounts should have a current Department officer associated with it. If you have not made the change, please do. Thank you!



EDUCATION

Sara Fuchs, Chairman

Hello and welcome to the 2026-2027 American Legion Auxiliary year where we can all make a difference in the lives of our youth and teachers through the Education Program! Maybe we, as members, can learn a little bit along the way as well. It's never too late to learn something new!

Throughout the year I will share ideas about what each unit can do within their own communities "to promote quality education for children—especially for military children—and adults" (Standing Rule #6 – National Committees-Mission Outreach; Education), and I invite each of you to help educate ME with your unique ideas for projects and events so I can share those ideas to other units across Nebraska.

Following are some ideas to get our year started.

- **Promote quality education for children, especially for military children and adults:**
 - Participate in ALA's "Give 10 to Education"
 - Stay tuned for a special announcement for the 20th anniversary of this program!
- **Participate in American Education Week (November 17-21, 2026).**
 - Introduce yourself to school principals, counselors, and teachers, and tell them about what the Auxiliary does.
 - Ask if there are school events you can help with.
 - Consider donating books to the library (remember to ask permission before purchasing) or ask if there are classrooms you can visit and read to the children (or offer to be the person a student can read TO).
- **Encourage schools to participate in Month of the Military Child and Purple UP! Day on April 15 to honor their students who are military children.**
 - Present the Military Child's Table Setting Ceremony at your school, unit meeting, or at your post.
 - Sponsor a Purple UP! Day in your school on April 15 by providing purple items for students to celebrate with.
- **Participate in Teachers Appreciation Week (May 3-7, 2027).**
 - Recognize school staff with special treats or maybe host a breakfast for them.
 - While Parent-Teacher Conferences are usually in October and February, ask schools if you can help provide meals or snacks for the teachers on conference nights.
- **Support and promote the Auxiliary's Education Program and scholarship opportunities of the American Legion Family.**
 - Contact your school's Counselor and promote the American Legion Auxiliary's Scholarships. Visit <https://nebraskalegionaux.net/education/> to find links for both National and Nebraska scholarship opportunities.
 - Promote the American Legion Scholarships by visiting <https://nebraskalegion.net/scholarships/> to learn more about the Legion's scholarship opportunities.
 - Look for the updated scholarship information to be available online in October.

As you volunteer and promote all these programs, be sure to keep track of what you do, how many hours you contribute toward the programs, and always take pictures! If you have any questions, you are always welcome to contact me by calling or texting 402-641-4534 or email msfuchs80@outlook.com.



FINANCE COMMITTEE
Donna Hatfield, Chairman

Why districts and counties MUST HAVE the Department Treasurer or Secretary as an additional signatory on all your bank accounts

The American Legion Auxiliary is an organization with multiple levels: national, department, unit plus levels considered intermediate bodies such as districts and counties. Unlike units, intermediate bodies (districts and counties) are created by and wholly accountable to the department and are considered subsidiaries to the department. As required by United States trademark laws and the American Legion Auxiliary National Bylaws, all Department subsidiary organizations of the American Legion Auxiliary (districts and counties) shall be subject to regulation by action of the Department governing bodies of the American Legion Auxiliary. As a subsidiary organization one of the rules of corporate law in keeping with required uniformity under U. S trademark law is "The department treasurer or financial officer must be a signatory on all accounts of the subsidiary."

In short, districts and counties need to have the Department Treasurer or Secretary as a signatory on your bank accounts. A second signatory can access the account without owning it, while the primary holder remains legally responsible.

Changes to Gift Shop Assignment and VA Home Assessment

In previous years, the Gift Shop Assignment and the VA Home Assessment request were on one sheet with the requested amount for your unit (based on your unit membership) stated for each fund. This was mailed to your unit with the General donation sheet and the VA & R donation sheet in the newsletter.

The donation sheets you receive in this newsletter will not include the sheet with the Gift Shop Assignment and the VA Home Assessment request this year because these two items have been added as a line item on the "Nebraska Veteran Projects" (green) donation sheet. They are listed as "Gift Shop" and "Veterans Home Appreciation" (Name change from "VA Home Assessment").

The Finance Committee debated ramifications of changing from an assignment/assessment to a donation and considered how it will affect unit response for the Gift Shop and the Veterans Home Appreciation. It was decided that units are very generous when it applies to helping veterans and their families. The committee hopes your unit will continue to donate to the Gift Shop and to the Veterans Home Appreciation funds as you have in the past. Please let your donation reflect our confidence in you and your generous heart.



LEADERSHIP

Vicki Ozenbaugh, Chairman



What does "leadership" mean to you? By its definition, it is a process of social influence that guides, inspires, and empowers a group of people to work together toward a common goal. It is not a job title or formal authority, but actions, collaboration and achieving shared results. So based on that definition, as your Leadership Chairman my role will be to involve you in ways to work our ALA programs for the mission of ALA – to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

I urge you to take advantage of the many opportunities throughout this Auxiliary year to learn (or perhaps refresh) yourself about the ALA. Fall Round Ups (see dates and locations on page 7) are a great place to kick-start yourself.

Mark your calendars for President Cyboron's Leadership Training and Homecoming Dinner. It is scheduled for Saturday, October 24 in Boelus. Whether you are a new or seasoned member, I guarantee you will have fun as you learn about our programs.

And then there is the ALA Academy courses on the National website (alaforveterans.org). This is a 24/7 opportunity to learn on your own, whenever it works for you. If you need help in logging on or locating the training, let me know. I will get you on the right track.

One more resource I'll mention are the Department Chairmen. If you would like a particular topic covered at your Unit, County, or District event, contact and invite the Chairman. If it doesn't work for them to attend, I'm sure they will get you information to share. And, of course, I'm here for you. Just call (402-759-0411), text (402-759-0411), or email (ala.ozenbaugh@gmail.com). I'll help in any way I can.



ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL MEMBERS

Labor Day, Monday, September 7, is "Veterans Day" at the State Fair. The ALA Department of Nebraska will be participating in a couple of events. We will have a table during the Resource Fair that is prior to the Veterans Program at the Big Iron Events Center. The program begins at 10:30 am, and the keynote speaker will be Astronaut Clayton Anderson. We will then participate in the special Celebration Parade dedicated to Veterans that begins at 1:00 pm. Commander Doug will be driving the Legion van, so if someone needs to ride, they can ride in the van (limited number). The parade will be a Legion Family event, so let's get our whole family involved. Free admission for the American Legion Family. For additional information on the program and other events for "Veterans Day", visit www.statefair.org/veterans-day-celebration.

Nebraska this year is one of the five locations for the Mission Training provided by National. It will be held in Omaha on November 14. We are one of three Mission Trainings that will be held with The American Legion National Information Conference and the SAL Regional Meeting. What is Mission Training? Would you like to learn more about working the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary? Would you like to network with national leaders and other members in your district who share your passion and enthusiasm for helping our veterans? During this one-day conference, you'll be inspired while learning more about working the ALA's core

programs in an interactive and fun environment. Many of the American Legion Auxiliary Mission Outreach programs will be covered during this conference.



MEMBERSHIP

Justina Birkel, Chairman

I am excited for the upcoming membership year. We are going to have fun reaching out and getting to know your members. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need help with anything. I am here to help out.

President Vicki's theme Families Accomplishing Rewarding Memories is centered around barns. The barn is a meeting place that is a place of comfort and shelter. We are going to build a strong barn over this membership year piece by piece. If you have a barn, you need some animals to go with it. At the Post DEC meeting in Columbus the District Presidents chose which animal mascot their District was going to use over the Membership year. I encourage you to have fun with this theme.

District 1-Milk Cow
District 2-Dog
District 3-Pig
District 4-Duck
District 5-Donkey
District 6-Sheep
District 7-Goat

District 8-Chicken
District 9-Highland Cow
District 10-Mice
District 11-Horse
District 12-Bunny
District 13-Cat

The first room of the barn I would like to focus on is the Tack Room. Every barn has a Tack Room and it represents the resources and tools to educate our members. A very important part of this Tack Room is your membership roster. I had my first of many Membership ZOOM meetings in early July. We shared the information on Facebook and at the Post DEC but to reach more members I decided to email the information to Unit Presidents and Unit Membership Chairs. I sent out 400 emails of which around 80 of them came back as undeliverable. That means I couldn't reach 20% of your Unit leadership.

Communication is one topic that National is really focusing on so your first challenge is a Tack Room Cleanup. Your unit membership chair should have your membership packet with your unit roster. Go through your roster and verify that all of their contact information is correct. That means address, email address and phone numbers. If you have an ALAMIS full user, you can change that contact information. If you don't, please send that information to Roxanne or me. If you need a roster, please let me know and as soon as ALAMIS is up and going again I can help you out with that. As you are reaching out to your members to update this information it is also a good time to collect membership dues. This doesn't have to be a one person job. Create a Membership Team, split up the roster, and divide and conquer. If your membership chair doesn't feel comfortable using ALAMIS this may be a way to get another member involved that is comfortable with computers.

2027 Membership can start being paid in July. Some of the first things as a Membership Chair you can do is mail out your lifetime membership cards. These are paid members already so get that out of the way early. Start collecting membership and get your transmittals sent in right away. These lifetime members should be on that first transmittal that is sent into the department. If you do your membership through ALAMIS please be patient. Hopefully, it is up soon and then you can get all your collected membership submitted.

As I said, communication is going to be a huge focus for this year. We had a ZOOM meeting in early July and I think it went well so I plan on having more. I think the next one will be in mid-September so keep a lookout for information on that.

In this newsletter there is a copy of all of the Department Awards and Challenges for the year. Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at jbirkel.ala@gmail.com or call/text 420-389-0537.



Families Accomplishing Rewarding Memories



Nebraska Department Membership Awards

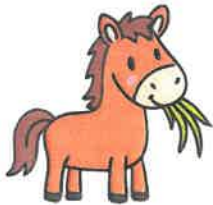


Barn Builder Award

*50% paid Membership by December 8, 2026
Grand Island Gift Shop Day



*Award given to Unit President and Membership Chair



Lofty Goals Award

*85% paid Membership by February 18, 2027
National Caregiver Day



*Award given to Unit President and Membership Chair



Nebraska Department Membership Challenges



Tack Room Cleanup Challenge

Contact your Members and verify and update contact information
Deadline 12/31/2026



"Out to Pasture" Challenge



Focus on members that you haven't seen for awhile or work on getting former members to rejoin. Let's work on bringing these members "Back to the Barn" and not leave them "Out to Pasture"
Deadline 6/1/2027



Barn Raiser Challenge

Have a membership event and include the entire Legion family

Deadline 6/1/2027



2026 DISTRICT FALL ROUNDUP SCHEDULE

Check with your District Presidents for Updates
(time shown is the meeting time)

District 1	Sun., Oct. 4	100 N Walnut St – Cody	1:00 pm MT
District 2	Sun., Oct 4	104 N 1 st St – Newman Grove	1:00 pm CT
District 3	Mon., Oct. 26	104 Ballpark Rd – Newcastle	11:00 am CT
District 4	Sat., Oct. 24	2300 Emerson St – Alliance	1:00 pm MT
District 5	Sat., Oct. 10	108 E 2 nd St – Hershey	1:00 pm CT
District 6	Sat., Oct. 17	1914 W Capital Ave – Grand Island	10:00 am CT
District 7	Sun., Oct, 11	461 4 th Road – Howells	2:00 pm CT
District 8	Sat., Oct. 10	13640 Pflug Rd – Springfield	9:00 am CT
District 9	Sun., Oct. 11	905 E 7 th St – McCook (College)	2:00 pm CT
District 10	Sat., Oct. 10	205 N Franklin St – Red Cloud	9:30 am CT
District 11	Sat., Sept. 19	136 Maple St – Friend	2:00 pm CT
District 12	Sat, Oct 17	8310 O St – Lincoln	9:30 am CT
District 13	Sat., Oct. 3	300 Main Street – Johnson	12:15 pm



DO YOU KNOW THE ALA PROGRAMS?

1. YRIAILUX REEMNCYEG FNDU _____
2. YOPPP _____
3. NDUETIAOC _____
4. ESMCAAIRNMI _____
5. IOUTADNCE _____
6. NELICRDH NDA UTOYH _____
7. CUBIPL TLEROIANS _____
8. ISLETLIEAVG _____
9. USICM _____
10. COUNMTMYI ESEIRVC _____
11. SRLGI TSATE _____
12. SEPIDHLARE _____
13. NIJOUR ITSICVEITA _____
14. MPSHEIBERM _____
15. EIVESCR TO RENSTEVA _____