



HOOSIER AUXILIARY NEWS



★ ★ ★ ★ Volume 97, No. 1 • November / December / January / February 2026 ★ ★ ★ ★

President Shepherd's Installation Speech

It is an honor to stand before you today as your 2025-2026 Department President. I am humbled by the trust you have placed in me and inspired by the legacy of dedicated service that defines this organization. As we begin a new chapter together, I am reminded of the strength that comes from unity, compassion, and a shared vision for making a difference.

Today, we gather not only to celebrate new beginnings but to reaffirm our commitment to the values that are the very heart of the Auxiliary: service, selflessness, and a steadfast devotion to our mission. With deep appreciation for the encouragement and support that have shaped my journey, I look forward to working alongside each of you to see what we will accomplish in the coming year—together, as one united American Legion family united in service.

I would first like to introduce my family. They have supported me throughout my ALA journey, and I cannot thank them enough. My husband, Tim, my daughter Brittany, my son-in-law Randy, their sons (my grandsons) Owen and Kade. My son, Justin, my daughter-in-law Alli, their sons (my grandsons) Micah, and Hayes. My sister Debbie and her husband Steve, my sister Paula and her husband Mike, my sister Cheryl and my nieces Lori, and Kim.

I also want to thank my Unit, Post, and SAL Squadron, Stewart-Norris 197 Shelburn and the Seventh District for their support throughout the years.

A special thank you to my advisors Lisa Liford, Shirley Firkins, Vickie Koutz, and my honorary advisor Sue Liford Freeman. I appreciate all your advice, guidance, and encouragement.

To the Past Department Presidents, thank you for your advice and words of wisdom. Just as Family is the cornerstone of our lives, so is the sense of unity that binds our Auxiliary together. To my District Auxiliary daughters, I am excited to see where we can take the Department of Indiana this year as we work together to make the Auxiliary strong, I will always be here for you. To all the



Tanna Shepherd
Department President
2025 - 2026

Department officers, chairman, and committee members, thank you so much for being a part of this new auxiliary year with me. I am inspired not only by the history we share, but also by the bright future we are shaping—one act of service, one kind word, and one compassionate gesture at a time.

Together, we are part of an organization built on patriotism, and unwavering commitment to our veterans, their families, and our communities. I am also filled with hope for what we can achieve together. Each of you brings unique talents, perspectives, and a spirit of service that fuels our mission. Let us remember, that every act—no matter how small—contributes to a larger purpose. Whether you are chairing a committee, welcoming a new member, or simply offering a listening ear, your efforts matter deeply. Let us make this a year to remember—one where we celebrate our accomplishments, learn from our challenges, and always put service first.

My theme this year is “HUGS” Hoosiers United Giving Service—to our Veterans, the Military, and their Families. I chose this in honor of my mom -Past Department President Bertha (Babe) Thompson. Mom served as Department President in 1993-1994. Her theme was Caring and Sharing our love for God and Country. And she used bears with her theme.

My President's projects for the year are Honor Flights of Indiana, and IVETS, which stands for Indiana Veterans Emergency Transition System. A key point to re-

member is that all the money that is collected for these programs will help Veterans in Indiana.

And now, it is an honor to introduce our special guests. I would now like to introduce the American Legion National Executive Committeeman Kenny Cooper. The American Legion Department of Indiana Commander Ron Patterson. It is also an honor to introduce the Sons of the American Legion Department of Indiana Detachment Commander Ken Corbeille. Last but certainly not least please welcome The American Legion Rider Director Shawn McCammack.

As you all know, membership is key to our success. Our Membership Chair along with her team are excited about this year. The membership team for 2025 -2026 has a passion for our mission and their dedication to growing our ranks will no doubt inspire us all. Please join me in welcoming our membership chair, Jenny Tracy. Thank you, Jenny and your team for your commitment, your energy, and your heart. I am sure you and your team are going to work hard at getting all of us excited about working membership this year.

Once again, I want to thank my family and friends for all your love and support. Thank you to the American Legion family for having faith in me. Let us reach out not only to our members, but also to our communities—bridging generations, embracing change, and carrying forward the proud traditions of our organization. I encourage each of you to find your own way to serve, to lead, and to inspire. Together, we can make an extraordinary impact—not only for our veterans and their families, but for each other.

Thank you for entrusting me with this privilege, and thank you for your continued dedication, passion, and love of service. Let us make “HUGS” more than a theme—let us make it a promise to one another and to the people we serve. I promise to do my very best to make you proud of me as your American Legion Auxiliary Department President.

Here's to a remarkable year ahead!

President's Message

It is such an honor to be serving as your American Legion Auxiliary Department of Indiana President for the 2025-2026 year. I have enjoyed working with the American Legion Department Commander Patterson, SAL Detachment Commander Corbeille, and Legion Riders Director McCammack and look forward to continuing our work together as a Legion Family.

I chose to use a bear as part of my theme in tribute of my mother (past Department President Bertha (Babe) Thompson 1993-1994). The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Indiana is giving “BEAR HUGS” this year as Hoosiers United Giving Service to Veterans, the Military, and their Families.

Our membership theme is “BEAR the Mission -Share the Care” which stands for Believe-Empower-Attract-Renew. We **believe** in the strength of our organization, we will **empower** each other to lead with confidence and kindness, we will **attract** new members through joyful service and genuine connections, and we will **renew** our purpose, our passion, and our promise to serve veterans, military families, and our communities. Under the Leadership of National American Legion Auxiliary President Pam Ray, we are **Mission Driven** and **Family Focused**.

We were honored to welcome ALA National President Pam Ray at our Fall Conference. During her visit, we toured HVAF, spent time at Department Headquarters, explored the Veterans Memorial Museum, and attended the POW/MIA Remembrance ceremony at the Indiana War Memorial. Now that Fall Conference has concluded, we are focused on launching our programs and beginning Department visitations to the districts.

Our dedication to service was evident throughout the conference, as members participated and learned from presentations focused on enhancing our

outreach and impact. We shared inspiring stories, exchanged valuable ideas, and reaffirmed our commitment to supporting veterans and their families in meaningful ways. If you were unable to join us for the Fall Conference, I encourage you to consider attending future conferences and conventions.

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, talents, and resources to ensure the success of our Fall Conference. Your enthusiasm, dedication, and teamwork made an impression on all who attended, and together, we demonstrated the true spirit of the American Legion Auxiliary. I am continually inspired by the compassion and commitment shown by our members as we strive to make a difference in the lives of veterans and their families across Indiana.

Members can access the Program Engagement Plans, as well as the related PowerPoint presentations, by visiting the Department website aladeptin.org. It is important that everyone takes the time to read the Program Engagement Plans (PEPs) for the year. By being informed about the latest updates and guidance, members can better support our initiatives and fulfill our mission. After reviewing the PEPs, please share the information with both Unit and District members to ensure everyone is equipped with the knowledge needed to actively participate in our activities and outreach efforts.

My President's Projects for this year are IVETS (Indiana Veterans Emergency Transition System) and Honor Flights of Indiana. During the Fall Conference, with extraordinary fund-raising efforts, we raised \$3,347.00 for IVETS and \$1,087.00 for Honor Flights of Indiana. This year, members were introduced to a new fundraising initiative, offering the opportunity to make a \$5.00 donation in exchange for wearing jeans at the Saturday con-

continued on page 4

INSIDE

In Every Issue / p2

Youth Activities / p5

Convention Highlights / p13

Fall Conference / p14

Historian



Tamra Everhart
Department Historian

As the season of giving arrives, there's no better time to reflect on President Tanna's inspiring theme - **HUGS: Hoosiers United Giving Service**. This message reminds us that the strength of the American Legion Auxiliary lies not only in what we do, but in *how* we do it - together, with compassion, gratitude, and unity. Just as a hug brings comfort and connection, HUGS symbolizes our collective embrace of veterans, their families, and our communities across Indiana.

Our symbol this year - a bear cradling the Auxiliary emblem and resting on a bed of poppies - beautifully captures this spirit. The bear represents warmth, strength, and care, while the poppies remind us of the sacrifice of those we serve. As we move through the holidays and into a new year, let's continue to weave this message of service, remembrance, and love into all that we do and in our History Books.

As your Department Historian, I encourage every Unit and District to continue documenting your stories. *The History Program* is more than a record - it's our collective memory, a testament to who we are and why we matter. Whether you're organizing a Veterans Day ceremony, hosting a community dinner, or delivering care packages, every act of service tells a story worth preserving.

Keep taking notes, collecting photos, and writing narratives throughout the year — not just at the end! A well-kept record reflects both our triumphs and our challenges. Remember to capture who, what, when, where, and why for each event. These details help future members learn from our experiences and strengthen our legacy of service.

When you sit down to write your Unit or District narrative, think about how your activities embody **HUGS**. Did your members unite to support a local veteran? Did you give your time to uplift your community? Did you encourage others to serve alongside you? These stories bring President Tanna's theme to life and ensure that our Auxiliary's history remains vibrant and heartfelt.

The holidays are also a perfect time to participate in the **Members Remember Project**, a special initiative that captures the memories of our members. Encourage your Unit to interview senior members about their experiences, challenges, and proudest moments with the Auxiliary. Their stories are treasures that deserve to be recorded, heard, and shared.

Looking ahead to March, if your unit needs inspiration, the National ALA's website offers a guide to celebrating Women's History Month and recording member stories. These resources help us connect generations within our organization and ensure that our legacy of service continues to grow.

And don't forget our Junior Members! Work with your **Junior Activities Chairmen** to promote the *History Patch* program for grades 9-12. This is a great way for young members to learn about documenting service, while developing leadership and communication skills. Encourage them to participate in the **Veterans History Project**, where they can in-

terview veterans and submit their stories to the **Library of Congress**. Imagine the pride they'll feel knowing their work contributes to a national archive honoring our heroes!

Help them to create their own History Book to remind and inspire future generations of Juniors. Let's make sure every young member knows that history isn't just about the past - it's about capturing the spirit of service today so it can inspire tomorrow.

Don't wait until the last minute! Organize your photos, captions, and notes now - your future self will thank you.

As 2025 draws to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to every historian, member, and volunteer who continues to serve with passion and purpose. The work you do - seen and unseen - touches countless lives. Whether you're organizing care drives, attending wreath-laying ceremonies, or supporting veterans' families, you embody the essence of HUGS every day. These stories and events need to be recorded and remembered.

This holiday season let's keep sharing that spirit. Extend a hand. Offer a kind word. Reach out to someone who might need a little extra warmth. Our community is strongest when we come together - united in giving and in service.

A hug can speak volumes without a word - it says, "*You matter.*"

That's exactly what we do as members of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through every act of service, big or small, we tell our veterans, our youth, and our communities: *You matter to us.*

Let's make this season, and the year ahead, full of HUGS - Hoosiers United Giving Service. I can't wait to read about your year in your History Book!



Chaplain's Corner



Vicky Stainbrook
Department Chaplain

Happy November, my friends,

I do hope that everyone has been blessed with good health since we last spoke.

I continue to receive reports of deceased members. While this saddens me, I do appreciate that you are sending them to me so that I may include them in memorial service at convention. Are you doing memorial services at funerals? Or draping the charter in your unit? Please take time to honor their membership. Every member is an important piece of the puzzle.

Speaking of pieces to the puzzle, we will celebrate the vital piece to our puzzle~ our veterans! I encourage you all to send cards or visit your local nursing home veterans. They often get forgotten about on this special day. Maybe you could call ahead and find a special treat you could take when you visit as a thank you. Remember to keep track of this for me as well, it will count as "heart of service" awards. How are those coming along? I was able to give out a few in the past weeks. I witnessed Amy Alyea doing so during the Legion Fall Conference. She made sure all the staff got a token of appreciation for all they do for us. It was good to see kindness being shown.

During a zoom call with National Chaplain Nancy Magginis, she reminded us that the most

important task of being Chaplain was being present. Of course, I love knowing that my chaplains are being compliant and doing paperwork but are we present? Do your members know who to call if they need something? Simply be there for them. Do not try to share scripture, don't explain that you know how they feel when you don't, just sit there and hold them, cry with them, pray with them ...**JUST BE THERE AND KNOW WHEN IT IS TIME TO LEAVE.**

I find the best rule of thumb is to simply rely upon what God says and claim that. "Be still, and know that I am God" Ps. 46:10 Best words of wisdom I can share with you that I borrowed from a wise man. Being visual and approachable are so important. Let His love show in you and everything will be just fine.

Thanksgiving is quickly coming up. Please use this opportunity to be the reason someone is thankful. Reach out to the Legion family and plan an activity that shows the community that The American Legion is a resource to reach out to. Don't forget your shut-in members and veterans. The weather is turning cold, and it may be time to give that member who mentored you but now can't come to meetings a "heart of service" warm up gift of a cozy blanket or a basket with tea and cookies. The veteran who can't come to the post fish fry might enjoy a special delivery.

I am looking forward to my travels and getting to see you all during our Department Visits. If you need me before you see me, always feel free to reach out.



From the Desk of the Secretary



Marti Drake
Department Secretary

We have been very busy here at Department HQ. Thank you to all the units that have been working diligently on membership. Our daily mail drops are proving just how hard you're all working. We do ask that you double check your math before sending in membership paperwork, we have

had a lot of miscalculations which cause more work on our end and the units as well. We also ask that you please list your members in alphabetical order, this makes it much easier to process all those payments in ALA MIS.

All online/phone dues payments have been paid out to units as of this news article. I appreciated your patience while I navigated this new to me process. If your unit has changed banks, please know, we need that information to get your unit properly credited for the unit's portion of dues.

I will be pulling our ALA MIS report soon to start billing units for the 2026 access to ALA MIS. If your unit no longer wishes to have access, please let us know immediately, so your unit doesn't get charged for it. If you are not currently using ALA MIS, I strongly recommend your unit look into getting access. This is

a great tool to use in your membership goals. Not only can you look at your unit's information, but you can also update your member's information as well as pay your dues with a unit credit or debit card. This makes processing membership much more efficient and faster for your members as well. The form to request access is available on the website under the forms tab.

Please remember all our most vulnerable citizens this time of year. Reach out to your neighbors and people in your communities and check on them. Donating to food banks this time of year is crucial; I encourage your units to get together and make a day of putting baskets of goodies together for your shut-ins.

Judy and I want to wish all our members a very safe and happy holiday season.

Hoosier Auxiliary News

Official publication owned and conducted exclusively by the Indiana Department of The American Legion Auxiliary. Three issues are published each year under supervision of the Indiana Department of the American Legion Auxiliary, 5440 Herbert Lord Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46216. Distribution is done via email and available on our website at www.aladeptin.org. Send information for publication to: Editor Marti Drake, 5440 Herbert Lord Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. Or by email at: mdrake@aladeptin.org. Deadline for news in each issue is the first of the month preceding publication.

Tanna Shepherd, Department President

The subscription of \$1.25 per year for each adult Auxiliary member is included in payment of the annual dues plus an annual assessment of 65 cents per member payable by each Unit. Annual subscriptions for persons who are not Auxiliary members are \$2.00 each. The name and email of the subscriber should be forwarded to:

Marti Drake, Secretary
5440 Herbert Lord Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216
mdrake@aladeptin.org

Membership



Jenny Tracy
Department Chair

Indiana BEARS the Mission – Nationally Noticed and Proudly Growing!

As we head into the heart of our membership year, Indiana's Auxiliary family is Believing, Empowering, Attracting, and Renewing—truly BEARING the Mission and Sharing the Care!

Across the nation, Indiana is being recognized for its positive momentum and creativity. As of October 13, we've already added 521 more members than this time last year, ranking in the top half of all Departments. With 806 new members and 12,808 renewals, our state shows both growth and engagement. **106 Units** launched right into the membership year and hit the 7% objective (August 1). In only 45 days, 92 Units kept pushing and reached the 25% objective (September 16), and all of this was accomplished before we gathered for the Fall Conference. As you know, we are focusing

on Junior membership, and I am proud to say that 163 Units have Juniors renewed—a promising trend for the future.

Our work began early this year, and it's paying off. From virtual rallies to active community events, Indiana members are leading the way in service, connection, and innovation. We hosted our first-ever statewide virtual Membership Rally, launched Monday Membership Moments on Facebook that are reaching hundreds weekly, and even qualified as a finalist in Purdue University's Military Family Research Institute Data Champion Program **(and it looks very likely that we will be selected to participate in this program)**.

We're also proud to have our first Junior Department Membership Chairman, Jenelle Jackson, who's inspiring youth across Indiana to join the mission. Her energy and creativity are helping us spark new Junior programs across the state. She personally (with her Mom's assistance) has secured 8 new members.

Each District has embraced its "Bear" identity—from Wish Bear's optimism in District 1 to Good Vibes Bear's enthusiasm in District 7—turning our theme into a joyful reminder of unity. When someone says "MISSION," our members raise their Bears proudly—a small gesture that's catching national attention!

Let's also celebrate some standout Units BEARING the Mis-

sion this year:

- Unit 54, Hobart (District 1) – Shows incredible determination—rising from **251st place at the start of the year to 10th place overall!** They have a total of 27 Juniors and 13 Seniors, bringing their percentage to 71.43%.
- Unit 68, Argos (District 3) – Continues its heartfelt work as a widow unit—proving that dedication to veterans and community doesn't fade even when circumstances change. Their commitment exemplifies the true spirit of "Service Not Self."
- Unit 204, Sellersburg (District 8) – 18 new members, including 3 Juniors, and submitted the first RECRUIT 2 form (way to go, Ginny Pattison).
- Unit 18, Bloomington (District 7) – Continues to lead the state in membership (securing 248 so far), and they are working very diligently to create a unified Legion Family approach to community efforts.
- Unit 200, Boonville (District 8) – Early membership drive brought them near 30%

and now they are sitting at 45.95%

- Unit 263, Cayuga (District 6) – hosted a Halloween-themed recruitment event, gaining 4 new Junior Auxiliary members and 1 new SAL member. Nice work, Autumn Jackson!
- Unit 168, Hammond (District 1), Unit 119, Greenfield (District 10), & Unit 510, Indianapolis (District 11) – **3 of our smallest Units** are powerful in purpose—Indiana's petite Units are pushing forward with pride, proving that size doesn't define strength. Every renewal is a victory that moves us all closer to 100%. Let's all encourage them to continue pushing for those renewals.

Indiana's focus remains on connection and communication. We're improving the accuracy of ALA MIS data, promoting our programs, and ensuring our members have an experience that keeps them volunteering, paying their membership dues, and honoring veterans. We are also handling our business so our members know that their data is protected to very best of our abilities, we are work-

ing on our governing documentation so that it reflects how we process new members within our Units (as we know it is important that our members understand how we handle membership and ensure that their voice matters), and we are working on our communication from the National level to the Unit level making sure our members know and understand their benefits as a member. If any of this sounds new to you or is causing you confusion as a Membership leader, I encourage you to reach out to the Membership Engagement Team for help. We are a team, and together we can bridge the gaps and support each other when we are confused or overwhelmed.

As we approach the holidays, let's remember that membership is a year-round gift. Renew, recruit, and reconnect—because every member matters, and every card represents a story of service.

Together, we're not just growing numbers—we're growing purpose. Indiana is BEARING the Mission—and the nation is taking notice.



As a reminder, here are the upcoming objective dates:

Target Date
November 7, 2025
January 2, 2026

Goal Percentage
60%
75% Birthday

In Honor Of
American Legion Auxiliary Birthday
American Legion Riders

Leadership



Cherril Threte
Department Chair

Thank you, President Tanna and the Department of Indiana, for the opportunity to serve as your Leadership chair. It was great seeing our members take a step toward leadership development by attending the Fall Conference. This provides the opportunity to become informed and aware. Leadership is not a trait that one is born with but an attribute that can be developed over time.

You can do this, as Past National President Trish Ward said, "Leadership is not for the faint of heart." When it comes to fear, we jump in, face it and find that concerns and challenges become easier to deal with over time. "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go but ought to be."

Rosalyn Carter.

We serve with a purpose. The Leadership Committee is to better equip members to serve in leadership positions with confidence and skill. Standing Rule 6 National Committee:

Key program statements:

- Raise awareness of ALA leadership development opportunities.

You have already started by attending Fall Conference and reviewing the Program Engagement Plan. You can continue by sharing what you learned during a brief presentation at your unit or district meeting.

- Promote participation in the ALA Academy.

National is coming out with a new self-paced individual leadership course. There's a variety of courses available. Topics include leadership, communications, conflict resolution, mission outreach etc. There are ALA Webinars and a course for Juniors. Let's keep our Juniors engaged and encouraged.

- To enhance knowledge about ALA history, programs, and organization.

Attend district and department training sessions. Have you signed up for National Mission Training? Mission Training will take place January 31st, in Indianapolis at the Marriott East 7202 E 21st. Register via the American Legion

Auxiliary National website alaforveterans.org. There is also a Mission Training session on February 7th in Atlanta, GA. Don't let the fact that you have attended Mission Training prevent you from participating in future Mission Training sessions. We can always learn something new, and learning is a continuous process. Bring your Juniors.

As we get ready to celebrate 250 years of American history and freedom in 2026, be a part of the celebration by "Honoring Our ALA Leaders." Feature inspiring leadership stories on the ALA Leadership Program Facebook Page. See the attached flyer.

There are great resources in our units and districts, and you have a wealth of knowledge among the membership. Become familiar with ALA reference materials available for download or purchase on alaforveterans.org such as the Unit Guide revised October 2024. Review Constitution and Bylaws (National, Department, District and Unit) parliamentary procedures and other ALA guides.

Do you have a member who is not currently nor has ever been in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president? You can nominate a unit member for Unit Member of the Year. Submit 1000 words or less to Cherril

continued on page 4

Legislative



Jennifer Pickering
Department Chair

The purpose of the Legislative Committee is to provide information and assistance to the American Legion Auxiliary members to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion. The Department of Indiana ALA Legislative program is a great opportunity for members to get out and start being Hoosiers United in Giving Service for our Veterans' well-being. Supporting The American Legion's legislative agenda by contacting our legislators to show we either endorse or do not endorse specific bills in question. Ways to do this is by sending letters, emails or making phone calls.

With the elections coming up, be sure to check on your election results or check online at www.in.gov, www.senate.gov, and

www.house.gov to find current contact information. Get to know your representatives for your respective areas.

Visit www.legion.org and search legislative to keep informed of the major issues that The American Legion is working on. National American Legion Legislative Facebook page is also filled with information. Get on Facebook and follow that page and be in the know of what is going on.

I know this can be a little overwhelming but there are resources to help you.

I highly recommend the ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide. It can be found on the ALA National website at www.legion-aux.org. Sign in to access the member portal and locate "Guides". Other resources are Legion.org/legislative; www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register; govtrack.us/congress/members/IN. This is the website for Indiana congressional legislators/map and bills information.

Please remember to document all emails, phone calls, letters, and visits throughout the year. We want your year-end reporting to be easy for you.

I look forward to a great legislative year advocating for our veterans and assisting you with our legislative agenda this year.

Community Service



Janice Mort
Department Chair

I hope you have all read your Program Engagement Plans (PEP). The information that is presented in them not only highlights the purpose but shares ways to support our communities and gives ideas on how to promote our Days of Service. The PEP is just a guide because there is so much more than can be done in the Community Service program. American Legion Auxiliary members have been "United in Service" in our communities since 1926. Always be vigilant about what might be needed to make a difference in your communities.

If you need ideas, there is so much information out there to help you. Both the Department

(ALADEPTIN.ORG) and National (ALAFORVETERANS.ORG) are great sources to use, along with unit, district, and chairman Facebook pages. When you plan your project, whether it is something you have always done or something new, be sure to be prepared. "Who" will your volunteers be? Always include members of your American Legion Family and don't forget your Juniors and young SAL members. Also include other community members, if possible, they could be potential members. "What" is our potential goal. "How" will we advertise?

Advertising is the best way to achieve a successful event. Newspapers, radio, Facebook or other social media platforms, posters and just talking to others. You are not only advertising your event, but you are also advertising "Who we are". Be sure to always wear your ALA brand when volunteering and be sure to THANK YOUR VOLUNTEERS. HAVE FUN!

Now it's time to let others know what you have done. We want to hear from you. Share your unit and members' accomplishments on all our ALA

Family Facebook pages. Be

sure you include the Department and National community service sites. You never know when your event might show up in the National newsletter or on the big screen at National Convention.

I would like to thank all the Districts, Units and members that shared their 9/11 and POW/MIA Programs and Services, Halloween events and your members being acknowledged in your communities on our ALA sites. If I catch any of you doing good, I will share it. So please include me and the ALA National Community Service Facebook page when posting your events.

Our Department President Tanna Shepherd has provided us with a perfect theme; HOOSIERS UNITED GIVING SERVICE (HUGS). There are so many ways we can serve our communities and there is something every Member and Unit can do to help make our communities a better place to live. We are ALA "Hoosiers", and we are "United Giving Service". VOLUNTEER WHENEVER YOU CAN.

Any questions, please contact me anytime.

Email: Janmort72@gmail.com

ALA Hoosier Girls State



Brenda "Sue" Wehr
Director

For most of our American Legion Auxiliary members, November is a time to count our Blessings with so much to be Thankful for. December is a time to celebrate the season and to give gifts. January is a time to reflect on the past year and to look forward to New Beginnings. February is a time for Love and pray that Spring is just around the corner!!

For those of us who are serving our Units as ALA Hoosier Girls State chairmen, these months mean working our chairmanship! During the month of November, the ALA HGS District and Unit Chairmen will be busy selling Calendar Raffle tickets as a fund raiser for our program. The tickets are \$30 each. A ticket will be pulled from a barrel every Tuesday during the 2026 calendar year. The winner will receive \$100, and their name goes back into the barrel to possibly be drawn again. In addition, the ALA HGS District chairmen have been reaching out to every high school in Indiana and mailing them tri-fold brochures telling the counselors about our amazing program. Beginning the first Monday in January 2026, the ALA HGS 2026 application will be available online! January and February will be busy accepting applications for both the Unit and District ALA HGS chairmen!

The 84th session of ALA HGS will be held the week of June 21, 2026, through June 27, 2026 on the beautiful campus of Trine University in Angola, Indiana. The delegate fee will remain at \$350 per delegate. This year the non-refundable \$50 fee will be paid online via a link emailed to the delegate along with her congratulatory delegate letter. Once again, the application will be available online the first Monday after the new year on our website at www.alahgs.org.

If you haven't already purchased a 2026 Calendar Raffle ticket, please reach out to your District Chairman. The tickets are just \$30 and only 500 tickets are being sold. I encourage every Unit, Post and Squadron to purchase a ticket...you just have to ask!

My wish for all of you is have a wonderful, safe and happy Holiday Season!

Education



Michelle L Woodburn
Department Chair

For those who were not at Fall Conference, I would like to welcome you to the 2025-2026 Indiana American Legion Auxiliary school. Our principal this year is Department President Tanna Shepherd, and our Superintendent is National President Pam Ray. Both were present at our fall conference and cannot wait to see what our entire school does this year. The program engagement plan is on our department website and can be found [HERE](#), and all scholarships, both Indiana and National Auxiliary, as well as ones from The Indiana American Legion can be found [HERE](#).

I would like to encourage you to reach out to the schools in your community as soon as possible. Reach out to the superintendents of your school systems, as well as the principals to teach them about all our American Legion Family programs available for youth including not only Educational Scholarships, but Americanism Flag Education and Essay, Girls/Boys State, Poppies, and more! What a great way to work as an American Legion Family!

Let's not forget youth who are homeschooled! They are just as interested in our programs as the traditional schools, and in some cases more as they have time to build it into their curriculum. You can find out about Indiana Home-school's [HERE](#). Please reach out and get these students involved as well!

Veterans Day is coming soon so please get your Veterans in the classroom. As you have events working on the program, please take pictures and send me a small paragraph so I can share your events on our Facebook page and in newsletters. You can access our Department Facebook page by searching for "American Legion Auxiliary Department of Indiana Education Program" or by clicking [HERE](#).

THANK YOU for all you do for our organization and the Education progra



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 1-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. Indianapolis will be hosting Mission Training on Saturday, January 31, 2026. To register click here... <https://cvent.me/A4MWzO>

President's Message
continued from page 1

ference. The effort was warmly received and enthusiastically supported by those in attendance.

The enthusiasm and generosity of our members was evident in every activity, making the Fall Conference a memorable and impactful event for everyone involved. The energy in the room reflected our shared dedication to service, and it was truly inspiring to witness so many coming together with one purpose—supporting those who have served our country. Additionally,

\$2,450.00 was raised simply by passing a bucket around the room, providing a strong start for the new Indiana AEF fund. The Veterans Shower initiative, which supports VA Hospitals and IVH, was another highlight—raising an impressive \$7,540.00. Altogether, our collective efforts during Fall Conference week-end resulted in a grand sum of \$14,424.00 raised to benefit veterans and their families.

As American Legion Auxiliary members we support the initiatives and programs of the American Legion by advocating for Veterans, active military, and their families with commitment

to the four founding principles of Justice, Freedom, Democracy, and Loyalty with service to God and Country.

Looking ahead, I encourage every member to stay engaged and involved as we continue our mission throughout the year. Whether it is volunteering at local events, reaching out to potential new members, or supporting our special projects, each act of service strengthens our organization and uplifts our Legion Family. Let us carry forward the momentum and make this year one of growth, unity, and heartfelt service for all.

"HUGS"

Leadership
continued from page 3

Threte cthrete@sbcglobal.net. Describe the nominee's accomplishments and activities, including the nominee's name and address, by May 15th.

We also have a Department Leadership Award: The Rosey Newman Award, presented to the Unit and District that submits the best report of thinking outside the box in teaching leadership

skills to their members for the year. Entries should be submitted to Rosey Newman.

Department Chairman Personal Award will be presented to the Unit Leadership Chairman submitting the best narrative for year-round reporting submit to Cherril Threte cthrete@sbcglobal.net. For National awards, visit alaveterans.org for criteria to apply and adhere to deadlines.

Auxiliary join President Tanna in Hoosiers United in Given Service through your positive

leadership and jump on board with National President Pam's theme "Mission Driven, Family Focused. Promote a culture of goodwill "The single biggest way to impact an organization is to focus on leadership development. There is almost no limit to the potential of an organization that recruits good people, raises them up as leaders and continually develops them." John Maxwell.

Creative Arts



Shanan Walker
Department Chair

Greetings from your American Legion Auxiliary Creative Arts Chair, Shanan Walker! I am so excited to be able to share the exciting year that I have planned for Creative Arts. I want to share an opportunity we have for supporting our Veterans and encouraging them to get their creative juices running with an amazing kit! This year The American Legion Auxiliary has partnered with the IU program, Creative Arts for Vets (CAV) and their instructors to promote the creative art kits that they have established and currently have available. These kits include the Creative Arts for Vets book and some art supplies. This small but mighty kit allows the Veteran to discover their creativity while being in the comfort of a location that they chose. The kit is given to any Veteran that is interested at no cost to them and that is where you come in! We as units can sponsor a kit for \$35 each. The CAV Team will keep track of these sponsorships at the District and Unit level. At the end of the year there will be a personal award for the Unit that sponsors the greatest number of kits! And as always, continue to keep track of donations you give to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival that will be held in Columbia, SC June 8-14 2026. Keep in mind that donations for both the CAV kits and the NV-CAF can come from your Poppy/Restricted Funds. If you have any questions related to The American Legion Auxiliary Creative Arts program, please reach out to me directly and I will be happy to help you!
Email: SMSMALL03@YAHOO.COM

Children and Youth



Jocelyn Curtis
Department Chair

The American Legion Auxiliary's **Children & Youth Program** is rooted in one simple but powerful belief: *every child deserves a strong foundation for a healthy, safe, and successful life.* Through this program, members across the country, and right here in Indiana, work to improve the quality of life for our youngest citizens.

A key part of this mission includes recognizing young people who are already making a difference in their communities. The **Youth Hero Award** honors children

and teens who display bravery in emergency situations, while the **Good Deed Award** acknowledges those who go above and beyond in their everyday lives to help others. Whether it's saving a life, standing up for a peer, or quietly serving their neighborhoods, these young heroes remind us that leadership starts early.

Equally vital is our support of the **American Legion Child Well-Being Foundation (CWF)**. The Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations that educate and advocate for the well-being of children, especially those facing physical, mental, or emotional challenges. Donations raised by Auxiliary units help fund programs that create lasting impact in the lives of children nationwide.

The Children & Youth Program is more than a set of awards or fundraisers, it's a heartfelt commitment to lifting up young people and ensuring they know their efforts are seen, valued, and celebrated.

Thank you for all you do!

Junior Activities



Stephanie Cutter
Department Chair

Our Juniors had a great start to the year with their first meeting at department fall conference. We had 14 Junior/SAL members in attendance on Saturday.

The Juniors started the day with a visit from National President Pam Ray. She spoke to them about her projects and took questions before presenting them with her pin.

Activities throughout the day focused on Americanism. Juniors/SAL were taught how to fold a flag, proper flag etiquette, and how to wear a flag lapel pin (many thanks to Americanism Chairman Sherri McGee for providing pins

for the Junior program).

The Juniors/SAL were provided with folders and handouts about this year's programs, the Junior merit sheet, and the new Spirit of Youth patch. All of this information has been sent to the District Junior Activities Chairmen. If this information was not passed on to you, please feel free to reach out to Department Junior Activities Chairman Stephanie Cutter at ssreich23@gmail.com.

Also, new for this year is a Junior member recruitment flyer (included in this newsletter). Please use this flyer at all of your activities where children are present. It details the many opportunities that are available for our Junior members and is a great tool to draw interest in our Junior program.

I encourage everyone with new or renewing Junior members to have programs and activities readily planned to keep the Juniors involved. Without activities available for them, it will be difficult to retain them as members. Let's not merely grow our Juniors for numbers and goals; let's grow the program and mentor them for our future!

Honorary Junior President



Maggie Hinshaw

My name is Maggie Hinshaw, and I am the Honorary Department of Indiana Junior President. I have been a Junior member basically since birth and I am eligible from my grandfather, Richard Oeffinger, who was in the United States Air Force. I was elected at our Junior Conference in June 2025, then later that day the Juniors went to go play and help with bingo with the veterans at IVH. I was then installed at our department convention in July 2025 along with the other Junior and department officers. I like being a Junior because it means I get to support and help and spread awareness for veterans and the military.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November – Education

- 5th 11th District Visitation, Wayne Post #64
- 8th 4th District Visitation, Bluffton #111
- 11th Veterans Day
- 11th Veterans Day Parade
- 12th 2nd District Visitation, Lafayette #11
- 19th Roubush Christmas Gift Wrap @ Brownsburg Post 331 @ 12:30 p.m.
- 27-28th Thanksgiving Holiday (Office Closed)
- 30th Deadline for all mandatory fees to Dept. Headquarters

December – Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

- 2nd Marion, IN VAMC Christmas Gift Wrap – 2 pm
- 13th Wreaths Across America - IVH
- 13th IVH Gift Wrap
- 16th & 17th IVH Christmas Parties
- 23rd -31st Christmas Holiday (Office Closed)

January – National Security

- 1st-2nd Office Closed
- 9-11th TAL Mid-Winter Conference, Marriott East Hotel, Indianapolis
- 19th Martin Luther King Jr. Day observed (Office Closed)

February – Americanism & Legislative

- 11th-12th Lincoln Pilgrimage
- 12th Lincoln's Birthday
- 16th President's Day (Office Closed)
- 28th-4th March Washington DC, NEC Trip

March – Community Service

- 1st-4th Washington DC, NEC Trip
- 15th 6th District Visitation Brownsburg #331
- 21st 5th District Visitation TBD
- 27th – 29th Joint Spring Conference, Marriott East

April – Children and Youth

- 3rd Good Friday Office Closed
- 11th 3rd District Visitation South Bend #357
- 14th 10th strict Visitation –Shelbyville, #70
- 15th Year End Reports due to District Chairs
- 27th Year End Reports due to Department Chairs

May – Poppy

- 5th Impact Reports due from Department Chairmen to Department President
- 6th 1st District Visitation – Crown Point #20
- 9th 7th District Visitation – Bloomington #18
- 15th Year End Reports due from Department Chairmen to National Chairmen
- 22nd National Poppy Day
- 25th Memorial Day (Office Closed)

June – ALA Hoosier Girls State & Junior Activities

- 1st Impact Report due to National from Department President
- 7th Legion Close of Books @ IVH
- 13th Honorary Jr. Department Meeting #500
- 14th Flag Day
- 21st-27th ALA Hoosier Girls State Trine University
- 30th ALA Department Close of Books

July – Department Convention

- 4th Independence Day (Office Closed)
- 9th -12th Department Convention, Marriott
- 18th - 25th Girls Nation – Washington, D.C.

August – National Convention

- 28th -3rd Sept National Convention - Louisville, KY

*All Meeting Times are Indianapolis time

American Legion Department of Indiana

Website: <http://www.aladeptin.org>

Facebook page: American Legion Department of Indiana



Evansville State Hospital

Cheryl Brady, Associate Representative

I have been visiting with the Veterans at the Evansville State Hospital almost every month. During those visits the Veterans enjoy a soda and Little Debbie cake and then we play Bingo for prizes. On the months that there is a Veteran who has a birthday, I bring them a present and we also have ice cream with our cake and soda. I am looking

forward to the annual Christmas Party, which usually includes a fried chicken dinner with all the trimmings and dessert! I will receive wish lists from each Veteran who resides there and will do my best to grant their wishes! Due to a new Activity Director and her interpretation of rules, a lot of things have been changed, but I am continuing to roll with the punches and keep visiting with these wonderful Veterans every month!

I would like to introduce my new Deputy! Her name is Norma Stetter, and she is an Auxiliary member at Ferdinand Unit 124. Norma is a new member of the ALA, but she has jumped in with both feet! I am looking forward to working with her!

Norma and I will also continue visiting the Evansville VA Clinic monthly. The 8th District has continued to support us in this endeavor through their generous donations! We visit the clinic for 4 hours every month, where we hand out snacks, coffee and water. It is always a very special time that we really enjoy and the benefits that we get talking to the Veterans and their support person(s) far outweighs the cost of the snacks we give to them!

Let's make this next year the best, as we serve the Veterans as "Hoosiers United Giving Service."

Richmond State Hospital

Sharon Baldwin, Representative

Richmond State Hospital is a public behavioral facility owned by the state and one of six psychiatric hospitals within Indiana. Richmond State Hospital's Mission is "To ensure that Indiana citizens have access to quality mental health and addiction services that promote individual, family and community resiliency and recovery."

This is truly accomplished with volunteers from different organizations helping the clients and Veterans at Richmond State Hospital. The American Legion Auxiliary is one of those organizations. We have seen improvement and recovery in Veterans where they get discharged from the facility. We see that we brighten the spirits of the clients who served our country and try to make them feel special and most importantly not forgotten. Also, during the time of fellowship with the Veterans they may

share stories and reminisce about their time in the military, and we are always ready to listen and learn about their experiences.

Some things that we do for the Veterans are gift each Veteran money for the Canteen and Thrift Store on campus and host picnics. We recognize them on Veterans Day, and other holidays with greeting cards. We also shop at Christmas and give gifts to the Veterans and pass out birthday cards each quarter of the year.

When each activity has ended each volunteer leaves feeling uplifted knowing how appreciative the Veterans are for us taking time out of our schedules for them. We are also thankful for them and their service so we may have our freedom here in America.

In closing let everyone remember all our Veterans in their prayers.



Louisville Robley Rex VA Medical Center

Jennifer Moulden, Assoc. Hospital Representative

Greetings to all!

It has been a challenging year for many of us and often, I had to ask myself 'What is my Why?' My "Why" is the passion I have had for our veterans long before I became a member of the American Legion Auxiliary; 22 yrs ago. Along with that passion came accountability as a member to be diligent in

supporting the work we do for our veterans. Single handed, we can't do this alone...it takes all of us to make a difference with our volunteer efforts and sometimes it may demand sacrifices in many forms.

Though the State and VA Hospital Representatives and Deputies are few in numbers (15), every member of the Auxiliary is our support pillar. It is through your efforts in raising funds and making contributions that allows us to meet physical and emotional needs of those veterans that we are privileged to engage with each month. I wish each of you could make a visit with us and see the smiles and often tears of gratitude from

our nation's heroes....it is priceless!

Deputy Rep, Ginny Pattison (Sellersburg Unit 204) and I introduce ourselves to the veterans as me, Jenny with a J and her, as Ginny with a G. One veteran said 'well I am John with a J; always getting a smile. One of our visits we were privileged to witness and participate in a Final Salute for a deceased veteran. He was covered with a donated patriotic blanket and then the American flag was draped over him as he was wheeled down the hall toward his family; TAPS was played and could be heard over the entire 6th floor. In my 34 years at that facility this was never done and the Charge Nurse said they started doing this about ten years ago. Ginny and I were both so moved and I was so proud of MY VA! Recently, I asked a 96 yr old veteran how he was doing and he said "I am looking for God." As I said PRICELESS!

Final notes: The new Medical Center is scheduled to open in 2026. While exciting for the veterans to have this state of the art facility, it is bittersweet for me. My deepest gratitude to all who donated to the Veterans Shower. HUGS to all of you!

Hines Hospital

Barbara J. Sales,
Associate Representative

The VAMC is located at W. Roosevelt Rd. & S. 5th Ave., Hines, IL. Visitation commences at 11:00 am, on the third Saturday each month when we visit.

The American Legion Family often goes to visit the veterans and their families really appreciate our visits and handouts when they see us at the hospital. During our visitations, we will contact on average between 300 to 350 veterans. There is one unit at the hospital that I was told by the residents that we are the only outside organization that takes time to visit their floor and how much they appreciate the 1st District of Indiana.

One of the favorite units at the hospital that Past Dept. President Denise Delaney-Wrolen and Phyllis DeFrance like to visit is the hospital's Spinal Care Unit. The majority of the Spinal Care Unit residents are well known to them as the patients are considered long term care patients. Phyllis has made patriotic door decorations for each veteran. Another unit at the hospital that Jim Grauvogl and other members of the Legion Family regularly visit is the nursing home area and many of the residents are known by name. These veterans look forward to the small "Comfort Packs" we bring and often have special requests knowing we will be back!

We continue to look for volunteers who are willing to take a few hours out of the month to go to Hines for a short visit. I can't begin to tell you just how much the veterans at Hines welcome our visits. Every quarter we attend a meeting with the hospital's staff and leadership and discuss upcoming events and any current or unresolved issues from previous meetings.

We usually schedule hospital visits from October through June. I want to highlight the upcoming scheduled Christmas Wrap event. If anyone wishes to volunteer, please contact the team below for more information about this event.

For more information about volunteering for these visits please contact either:
Dan Mills @ 219-742-3588,
Barbara Sales @ 219-793-3271 or
Jim Grauvogl @ 219-614-8925.



Is your unit participating in the USA 250 Challenge?

The American Legion Family is celebrating America turning 250 years old in 2026. They are having a yearlong initiative that promotes physical activity, mental health, and community service. This is a nationwide event, where we invite veterans, their families and your communities to participate. Some ideas may be to complete 250 Buddy Checks, doing a physical activity for 250 hours or maybe even 250 miles. You can do this as a group or even individually. Our Department Commander, Ron Patterson, is participating by walking 250 miles with a ruck sack on his back that will progressively get heavier throughout his journey. National President, Pam Ray, shares more information on this challenge here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdIxxqoo3mQ&list=PLHMR9MmnivfPY5IYd9cZ44d_cG-MkJGpa&index=6

If you'd like to join the challenge sign up here <https://www.legion.org/get-involved/community-programs>



Veterans Update

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation



Brittany Schofield
Department Chair

We Are - Hoosiers United Giving Service, Mission Driven, and Family Focused!

VA&R is part of who we are, what we do, and why we matter as an organization. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, more commonly referred to as VA&R, promotes our mission to enhance the lives of veterans, military, and their families.

Thank you to those that attended the Indiana American Legion Auxiliary Fall Conference and donated to the Veterans Shower! The Veteran's Shower has received donations of \$8,737 thus far with continued donations coming in. If you have not had a chance to donate yet, please send your contributions to Department Headquarters and earmark them for the Veterans Shower. All donations will be distributed to the VA hospitals and medical facilities. The hospitals and clinics

need volunteers and donations all year. Please reach out to the Hospital Representatives and find out what their needs are and how you can help. Our Hospital Reps and Deputies do an outstanding job and deserve our many thanks and recognition.

Our success in meeting our core mission is dependent upon our ability to ensure volunteer opportunities are created or passed on and have meaning to a variety of individuals - members and potential members. There are several suggested activities listed in the Program Engagement Plan for members, Units, and Districts to work on. One does not have to do them all but select one or a few to focus on for the year to give the proper attention and dedication that is deserved.

As we volunteer and support the VA Facilities, be sure to include all American Legion Family members in your VA events.

- Coordinate a supply drive by gathering items such as socks, underwear, toiletries, etc.
- Contact your local VA facility or ALA VA Hospital Representative for needed items.
- Consider implementing a modified version of the Give 10 to Education list to meet the needs of our Veterans! An example is located on the Department Website (www.aladeptin.org) under the Forms/Files/PEP tab -> Program Engagement Plans 2025-2026 -> VA&R Supplemental Files

Gift shops are held at the

VA medical centers each year. Through the gift shops, gifts are provided to the hospitalized veterans' immediate family members as gifts from the veteran. The units of the Auxiliary contribute these gifts and there is no cost to the veterans. The Gift Shops are staffed by Auxiliary volunteers. I highly encourage you to attend and volunteer if you have the chance!

- 11/12/25 12:30pm - Roubush Gift Wrap at Brownsburg Post 331
- 12/2/25 9:00 am - Marion Gift Wrap
- 12/4/25 9:00am (CST) - Danville Gift Wrap
- 12/13/25 2:00 pm - IVH Gift Wrap

Thank you to those Units already treating our VA Facilities! To celebrate the Navy's 250th birthday, Bloomington Unit 18 visited the Bloomington VA clinic to pass out snacks, treats, and gifts to our Veterans!

New this year, is a form that can be filled out electronically to assist in VA&R Tracking. Please take the time to complete this survey each time you provide a service/ enhance the lives of our veterans and their families. <https://forms.office.com/r/4WvL89yP2w>

Your willingness to serve, give of your time and of yourself to help our veterans, and help the American Legion Auxiliary meet its mission is greatly appreciated.

trips, haircuts, or shopping at the Pyle salon and the IVH Gift Shop. These gifts make IVH feel more like home. Such gifts create memorable moments and add warmth to their daily lives.

Ready to help? Please consider joining the State President and myself on December 13, at noon for Wreaths Across America and at 2 pm for the IVH Gift Wrap. Mark your calendar and bring some tape to make the event special.

To schedule Auxiliary events, email me and the Recreation Department at least two weeks in advance. This ensures space availability and in addition to both the Recreation Outlook calendar and the monthly Recreation Calendar for smooth coordination. The veterans also love to have visitors. If you have a little time to just sit and listen to their stories, it means so much more to them than any gift or money you could ever send. If you could spend time visiting or volunteering, you would not regret the time spent with them.

Email, text, or call me for more information, and remember to label all gifts with the resident's name and your identification. Do not send money inside gifts. Let me know about gifts so I can acknowledge them.

VA&R PROGRAM QRs

TYPE THE WEBSITE INTO YOUR BROWSER OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO LINK TO PROGRAM WEBSITES



www.facebook.com/groups/1771063857622714



www.aladeptin.org



www.honorflight.org



www.volunteer.va.gov



www.va.gov/homeless/



www.facebook.com/groups/ALAVAR



www.qovf.org



www.member.legion-aux.com/members/committees/var



www.member.legion-aux.org/members/online-training

President Tanna's Special Projects

HONOR FLIGHTS OF INDIANA

Honor Flights is a non-profit organization dedicated to transporting United States military veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit the memorials built in their honor. The program prioritizes veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, as well as terminally ill veterans from any era. Honor Flight Network, a national organization, coordinates these trips through local hubs

across the country. Your donations help our local veterans here in Indiana to be able to go on these Honor Flights.

IVETS - Indiana Veterans Emergency Transition System

The IVETS program is designed to assist veterans and minor children in the home during times of crisis by providing emergency financial aid and sup-

continued on page 9

Indiana Veterans' Home



Tracy Brown
Department Chair

The Indiana American Legion Auxiliary program at IVH is a special one. Sponsorships, events, visits, and the goody cart, to name a few, help enrich the lives of our Indiana Veterans and their spouses/widows who reside at IVH.

The donations for the goody cart are appreciated. Every Friday, seeing the excitement and smiles on the faces of IVH residents is indescribable. Picture the hallway filled with the sound of laughter and anticipation as residents eagerly await our arrival. Going through the units, it's clear that residents look forward to our visits and are grateful for the items donated and passed out.

If you or your unit would like to donate, all money goes to the ALA Department Headquarters, earmarked for the Goody Cart. Just imagine, a \$25 Goody Cart gift allows John to enjoy his cherished weekly root-beer float ritual, turning your contribution into a personal experience that brightens his day. You or your Unit may decide to donate items or money for the ALA GOODY CART. We are going back to the units. We are reaching more residents, and they are happy and thankful for the snacks. If you choose to donate items for the Goody Cart, please contact me before sending anything.

Sponsoring a veteran at IVH is a meaningful way to honor them. Begin by sending birthday and holiday cards. Your card may be the only mail they receive all month, reminding them they still belong to a caring community. Always label gifts with the resident's name and your identification. Let me know about gifts so I can acknowledge them. Please do not send money inside gifts, those funds can be sent to Department Headquarters if you'd like to give them money. Each resident has several sponsors, so \$20 to \$25— or less—works great. Residents can use donations for Wal-Mart

IVH Statistics (based on 10/7/2025 Census)

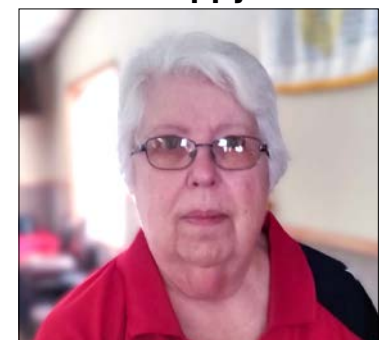
There are currently 109 residents, and we want to ensure that all the items we offer are fresh and meet their requests. (The census number changes frequently.) This number is effective 10/7/2025.

There are 97 veterans and 12 non-veterans, 92 are males and 17 are female. We currently have 5 female veterans. The average age of our residence is 77 years old. We currently have 47 Army Veterans, 21 Navy Veterans, 16 Air Force Veterans and 13 Marines.

Please reach out to me with any questions.

Tracy Brown
troyandtracy92@gmail.com
765-586-1808

Poppy



Bev Swaim
Department Chair

I hope everyone is getting ready for the holiday season.

I hope you all remember your poppy orders were due by October 31st.

If you do not order any poppies units will be required to pay \$.30 per capital tax.

Your poppy quotas are in the Department Unit Guidebook on pages 53-63.

At joint spring conference there will be a contest of best decorated Bear between the districts. The district that collects the most money will get a special prize from me. Money collected will go to President Tanna's project Honor Flight.



Risk & Compliance



Phyllis Banks
Department Chair

I am pleased to introduce our 2025-2026 Risk & Compliance team members: President-Elect Ms. Connie Banks, Unit 354, District 8, and Ms. Carol Dziegłowicz, Unit 369, District 1. If you have any questions or concerns regarding Risk & Compliance, please reach out to us. Our contact information is available in the Department of Indiana 2025-2026

Unit Guidebook, the Risk & Compliance Program Engagement Plan (PEP), or on the Department website at <https://www.aladeptin.org>.

Compliance is a critical component of the business health of the Department and our subsidiaries/entities (District and Units). It includes; (a) operating as a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation or association permitted to use the name and trademarks of the ALA; (b) meeting Federal requirements such as filing an annual IRS Form 990 Series and complying with any state and local regulations; and (c) taking proper steps to address IRS revocation of an ALA entity's tax-exempt status.

To clarify, the IRS Form 990 Series is an annual tax return required for nonprofit organizations to maintain their tax-exempt status. Form 1024 is used to apply for recognition of exemption, and an EIN (Employer Identification

Number) is a unique identifier required for your Unit's federal tax filings.

This year, our compliance focus centers on the business health of our Department, Districts, and Units. Our top priority is to improve overall compliance rates with applicable State and Federal regulations by 75%. We are especially focused on assisting Districts and Units that have had their Federal Tax Exemption revoked. To help achieve this goal, each District President or Risk & Compliance Chairman has received a modified Federal Tax Exemption status report from National Headquarters in their Chairman folder. They will use this information to connect with their respective Units.

Please remember that the fiscal year (close of books) for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Indiana and its entities ends on June 30, and the

Federal tax filing deadline is November 15, 2025 (six months after the close of books) for your 2024 taxes. If you have not filed the required IRS Form 990 Series with the IRS, you must take action to meet the deadline.

I want to thank all District Presidents and District Risk & Compliance Chairmen who have proactively contacted Units whose exemption has been automatically revoked, advising them of their status, necessary corrective actions, and the recommendation to contact the Department for support. We are currently assisting several Units with the information needed to file the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 1024, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(a) or Section 521 of the Internal Revenue Code. Please note that the IRS requires Form 1024 applications to be submitted online at Pay.gov, and the filing fee is \$600.

We are also helping Units that do not have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) by submitting an IRS Form SS-4 Application for Employer Identification Number.

Please review your Unit's current Federal tax exemption status as soon as possible. If you need assistance, contact your District President or the Department immediately so we can help you take corrective action before the deadline.

Our approach is thorough, outlining compliance priorities, deadlines, and available support resources. Continuing to provide detailed instructions and references to resources in future communications will help maintain clarity and ensure all Units receive the support they need.



National Security



Roxy Stoner
Department Chair

The National Security Program is one that promotes a strong National Defense by supporting and strengthening our service members and their families. Our military strives and sacrifices to serve and keep us safe.

The "Salute to Service Members Award" falls under National Security, and honors all enlisted personnel currently serving our country in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force and National Guard/Reserve. One enlisted service member from each will be recognized at the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. This form is available online at <https://www.legion-aux.org/Salute-to-Servicemembers-Award-Form> and must be submitted

online by June 1, 2026.

Support the emotional and social needs of our active, reserve and transitioning military and their families. Check to see if there are any families or businesses that should receive a Blue Star or Gold Star Banner in recognition of a service members service.

When a service member of family moves to a different location help them locate an ALA Unit in that area and help introduce them. Support your Legion family and posts to raise money for Operation Comfort Warriors to provide supplies to wounded service members.

Host a Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) These trainings help prepare members to be an emergency response resource in times of natural disasters such as floods, storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc. as well as man-made disasters. The Auxiliary's National Security program works with FEMA Individual and Community Division.

These are a few ideas to do, be creative on ideas of your own, and share them.

"Hoosiers United Giving Service"



Americanism



Sherri McGee
Department Chair

Celebrating Americanism
250th Birthday

The Americanism program will be celebrating the 250th Birthday of our country with 3 contests this year: Wave Our Flag Photo Contest, The Patriotic Bear Coloring Contest the Americanism Essay Contest.

WAVE OUR FLAG PHOTO CONTEST: To celebrate the 250th birthday of our country. The best photo submitted by a member or unit of an auxiliary member(s) in Auxiliary attire waving our US flag. I have received the first submission from West Lafayette. A wonderful video from an Indy Honor Flight.

All photos must be submitted to sherri.7604@gmail.com. Deadline for last photo submission is April 30, 2026. Winning Member or Unit receives \$20.

THE PATRIOTIC BEAR COLORING CONTEST: is for Grades 1 and 2. Winner for each grade will receive a \$20 monetary award and certificate. These can be found on the [aladeptin.org](https://www.aladeptin.org) page.

THE AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST topic: "Celebrating the 250th Birthday of our Country

and the Veterans who Fought for our Freedom".

The Essay Contest is Grades 3 – 12 as noted below:

Class	Grades	Word Count
I	3 – 4	150-250
II	5 – 6	250-300
III	7 – 8	350-400
IV	9 – 10	450-500
V	11 - 12	450-500

VI Special Needs Word count corresponds with grade level.

1st Prize will receive \$20 monetary award and certificate for each Class.

Deadlines for both contests are due to District by April 15, 2026 and to

Department (Sherri McGee) by April 28, 2026

COVER SHEETS ARE REQUIRED FOR ESSAY and COLORING CONTESTS

Hand out flag lapel pins and educate on how to wear them properly.



Louise Loyd – "The Sock Lady"

What can we say about Louise Loyd? She is the perfect example of our mission statement of "Service Not Self" Louise has worked tirelessly for years for Helping Veterans and their Families, that many of us know as HVAF. Louise helped spearhead this organization when it was founded in 1993 and has been on the Board of Directors. She is an Honorary Life Member of Unit 34 and is lovely known as "The Sock Lady" Louise has attended countless Stand Downs for our veterans and always has a table of socks that have been donated from all across Indiana. She is a Past Department President and a Past National Chaplain, you name it and she has done it. The Department of Indiana couldn't be prouder of Louise. Since turning 100 years old this past April, she has decided to finally retire this year and attended her last Stand Down only a few weeks ago, where her daughters and granddaughter joined her, along with 11th District President, Melissa Clawson. Louise, thank you for your many years of service to this organization and to our veterans! We love you and inspire to be more like you!!

Congratulations

Nancy Magginnis

FOR BEING ELECTED AS OUR

National Chaplain

AT THE

2025 National Convention



Constitution & Bylaws



Denise Delaney-Wroten
Department Chair

It's a new year and a great time to review your governing document, your Constitution & Bylaws. These are the rules of our organization at the Unit, District and National level. They are never a one-and-done document. The Constitution & Bylaws (C&B) are so important that they cannot be changed without prior notice sent out to all members. There have been many changes to the National Constitution & Bylaws

in the last few years, and every Unit and District needs to review and update their document to be in harmony with National.

The Constitution contains articles that are rarely changed. They are the backbone of your organization. The Bylaws are the governing regulations of your individual Unit or District. They should include how you govern your Unit or District and any fundamental rules voted on by your organization. Bylaws should only be amended every five to ten years as needed and supported by your Standing Rules. Standing Rules relate to the actual details of your Unit or District and can be adopted or changed the same way as any other act of your Unit or District. They provide details about the provisions in the Bylaws. Standing Rules can be amended as frequently as needed to keep your organization up to date.

To get started and ready to review your governing documents you need to appoint a committee of knowledgeable members who

have experience with your C&B and writing governing documents. No individual should review them by themselves. Be sure to have a final draft of proposed amendments ready to distribute in advance to members. Send out a notice to members announcing the meeting date for the reading of proposed amendments. They will then need to be voted on by the members at that meeting. Be sure to check your C&B to see if they need to be read two times before voting. After the vote, keep good records of when changes are implemented, and update the official document. This is a corporate record. All members, not just your leadership, are entitled to access your governing documents. Finally, remember to date the revision, and the President and or Secretary and Constitution & Bylaws Chairman must have their signature on the last page of the document.

At the National Convention in Tampa in August the National Constitution Article III-Eligibility was amended to change the title

from Eligibility to Membership. We will all need to amend our Unit, District, and Department Constitution to reflect this change to be in accordance with National's reminders.

If you have not reviewed and updated in the last few years, the following changes were made:

- Changed – “Great Wars” to “all Wars”
 - Removed – “World’s largest women’s patriotic organization” we are no longer a women’s organization
 - Changed - “wives” to “spouses” (they must be the spouse of a male or female veteran)
 - Removed - “great granddaughters” (can only be a two lineal descent from ancestor)
 - Removed - “Her”, “She”, “Committeewoman”, “Chairman” and Hostess
 - Wording must be inclusive and gender neutral
- Have a great year!

Special Projects continued from page 7

port services. This initiative aims to alleviate immediate hardships. This is for a one-time grant for up to \$500 to an eligible veterans and their family. You do not need to be a member to the Legion to apply for this emergency assistance.

To support President Tanna's Special Projects:

Make a donation by phone: 317-630-1303.

Mail a donation to: ALA Department of Indiana, 5440 Herbert Lord Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216



Auxiliary Emergency Fund



Nancy Schlatter
Department Chair

“Where every bear hug brings comfort, hope and help to ALA members in need.”

As we enter the holiday season, there is no better time to think of our ALA sisters and brothers. There have been numerous natural disasters and times are hard for many. While there are endless places money can be donated, giving to our fellow members is a worthwhile cause.

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides hardship and disaster emergency assistance to eligible members of the ALA up to \$3,000. It was created over fifty years ago with a legacy gift from Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wisconsin, to allow members to help fellow members after a time of natural disaster or crisis.

Disaster funds may be awarded by National for damage to the interior or exterior of the vital, living portion of the members primary living structure contents and for essential emergency expenses after the disaster based on proper documentation provided. Hardship funds may only be awarded for past due primary shelter ex-

penses, basic household utilities or loss of income based on proper documentation provided. Members of the ALA whose dues are current and who have maintained membership for three consecutive years (current year and two previous years) and have not been awarded an AEF grant (hardship or disaster) in the previous 12 months are eligible to apply for a grant.

The AEF funds come from our Units paying their District and Department of Indiana optional fees on the mandatory fee sheet, but also from individual members, memorial donations, outside sources and creative fundraising. Let's come together as a family of caring bears, each one lending a paw to hold up those who are going through hard times. I encourage you to discuss with your Unit creative ways to raise funds. Why not hold a teddy bear picnic with food, music, and games? Perhaps you could create a bear hug campaign that allows members to send a “Bear Hug” by donating in honor or in memory of someone on a cutout or small stuffed bear? Maybe hold a stuffed animal drive with a twist where collected new teddy bears are auctioned off with handwritten notes of encouragement?

There are several awards your Unit could be eligible for at Department and National levels. I am even giving away some special bear themed awards this year. Details, deadlines, and more information are available on the department website. If we all can give a little, it can add up to a lot of “HUGS”!



AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

Honoring Our ALA Leaders

We're getting ready to honor 250 years of American History and freedom in 2026, and we want YOU to be part of the celebration! We invite you to highlight stories of leadership on our Facebook page. Your input will help make our America 250 celebration meaningful, memorable, and full of ALA spirit. Let's come together to celebrate our history, honor our heroes, and look forward to the future! #America250 #CelebrateFreedom

In addition to posting your stories, we will celebrate our members daily! If you are someone you know would like to be celebrated, scan the QR provided or use the link <https://forms.gle/zc6j2jDtYYZcQVvb9> to nominate them.

Names will be posted daily, so be sure to check our ALA Leadership Program Facebook Group every day www.facebook.com/groups/568696586854841 if you are not already a member of the group you will have to ask to be a member and answer the questions for access.



First District



Denise Delaney-Wroten
President

Greetings from the First District! We have started out this new year of HUGS-Hoosiers United Giving Service, the same way we ended last year, First Place in Membership. Membership Chairman Rose Ann Dziegłowicz has been very busy corresponding with our Units, and the response has been amazing. Not only is First District in First Place, but we made the 7%, the 25%, and now the 25% (ahead of the date) Target Dates. Way to go TEAM!!!

Congratulations to the hard-working members in the First District. We are extremely proud of members serving the Department this year: Rose Ann Dziegłowicz serving as Vice Chairman of Finance, Maureen Weber serving as ALA Hoosier Girls State Board Member, Anne Gaddin serving as a Poppy Production Manager, Associate Representative Barbara Sales as Hines VA Medical Center, Amy Tarka as Northern Junior Chairman, and I am serving as Constitution & Bylaws Chairman.

My President's Project this year is to provide comfort items and snacks for the women veterans at the Adam Benjamin, Jr. VA Clinic in Crown Point, Indiana. We are donating gas and fast-food gift cards for those needing assistance to go back and forth for appointments.

We also plan to take items for their children and grandchildren who come with them to appointments. We will be preparing string backpacks filled with snacks, drink boxes, crayons, coloring books, puzzles and other items. Each month will be something special for them.

Hines Hospital VAMC Chairman Barb Sales continues to work together with The First District American Legion from October to May to plan our visits with our veterans one Sunday a month, except in the summer. Veterans receive comfort bags as well as other items as we stop by to say hello and bring them a cheery smile and check in with them.

As we move into the holiday season it can be a lonely time for those struggling with depression and loss of a loved one. Let's remember to check in with them to let them know someone cares. We need to remember our veterans and do a "Buddy Check" with them to make sure they are okay and help them in any way we can. Let us also remember our active service personnel and their families as they continue to keep peace

around the world. Their chair will be empty at the holiday dinner table, and they will be missed as their families celebrate the holidays without them. They continue to sacrifice so that we may live in a democratic society.

And as always, God Bless our Veterans and our Military and their families, and especially our great nation.

Happy Holidays

Mighty Third District



Diane Mott
President

Greetings from the Mighty Third!

As we begin a new Auxiliary year, everyone is visiting their PEP and focusing on future achievements to help make the 3rd District successful. Autumn has officially arrived! And as the leaves change colors and the cooler weather arrives, District 3 is mighty busy.

On October 11th, Lakeville 363 hosted a 3rd District Leadership Workshop, bringing Fall Conference to our local members. District Officers and Chairmen discussed their roles and expectations for the upcoming year with the event open to all. Our aim is to support the mission and keep our district informed. Effective communication and networking are crucial for success. We all share similar challenges, including membership, recruitment and engaging our members. We will work together as a team to assist one another.

Units including Walkerton 189, LaPorte 83, and South Bend 357 are organizing "Trunk n' Treat" events for Halloween to engage with our local communities. Chili cook-offs are also scheduled to take place throughout the region.

As we remember Veterans Day, Michigan City 451 and South Bend 357 will host luncheons for veterans, as will Walkerton 189, Kingsford Heights 434, LaPorte 83, and several other groups. In addition to their scheduled Veterans Day luncheon, Walkerton 189 is also planning a special program at their local Merry Manor Nursing Home.

The Kingsford Heights' schoolchildren will be decorating the Kingsford Post 434 with pictures and thank-you notes to our veterans.

Mishawaka 161 will be hosting a flag education class for their local 4th graders and should be a great event for all involve.

After the various Veterans' Day events across the District, LaPorte 83 will be hosting a Feather

Party on November 15th. And on December 6th, Walkerton 189 has an indoor garage sale featuring Christmas decorations and hand-made crafts scheduled on December 6th.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to every member who contributes—none of these events would be possible without your dedication and teamwork.

Fifth District



Suzie Burkhart
President

Supporting and Celebrating Our Units

Communication and highlighting the great work of our Units is the focus for this year. If we can accomplish that, we will consider the year a success. While not every Unit is able to attend District meetings, it's important that every one of them knows they are supported and appreciated. One of the best ways to show this support is by sharing and celebrating what our Units are doing in their communities for veterans and their families.

Across the Fifth District, we have 27 Units who all are doing exceptional work. These members are the heart of the American Legion Auxiliary — volunteering, organizing, and supporting those who have served. It's time to recognize their dedication. Here are just a few highlights since the last update of events conducted as well as those planned for the future:

Huntington Unit 7 has a full calendar. On October 18, they hosted their Early Bird meal and drawing. Then on October 25, they participated in "Make a Difference Day" by cleaning up local parks. Hamburgers, hot dogs, apple cider, and candy made Halloween a very fun event for all attendees.

Frankton Unit 469 featured a live band performance on October 25th. They will host a Veterans Day meal on November 11, and ring in the New Year with another band on December 31st.

Kirklin Unit 310 hosted the band "Bell & The Bad Wolf" on September 20th and charged a \$5 cover. Hometown Pizza from Sheridan was available for \$2 per slice. Their next community effort will be a canned food drive.

Fairmount Unit 313 has a busy fall planned. On Saturday, October 11th they held their annual fundraiser, which includes a motorcycle ride and cornhole tournament. During the town's Halloween block party. The Auxiliary and Junior members handed

out glow bracelets, bubbles, and candy. On Sunday, October 26th, they hosted a Trunk-or-Treat in the Post parking lot with a prize for the best-decorated trunk. On Veterans Day at 11 a.m., they will serve a homemade lunch with soups, sandwiches, and desserts, with delivery available. In December, they are planning a gift-wrapping fundraiser effort to help support future Auxiliary projects.

Kokomo Unit 6 hosted a bake sale and fish fry with the Legion on October 17th. November 5th is the Delgado Poppy Day luncheon and there will be a Veterans celebration on November 11th at 11 a.m... On November 13th, they plan to hold a stand-down event to distribute gift bags to veterans.

Frankfort Unit 12 assisted with the annual Post Fall Countdown on October 18th, by serving meals and providing desserts. They hosted a kids' Halloween costume party on October 25th which was open to all Legion family members. There were games, candy, crafts, a costume contest and plenty of fun. Friday night fundraisers are also scheduled to begin in November.

Wabash Unit 15 will participate in the annual Veterans Day memorial at City Hall.

This is just a sample of the amazing work happening across Fifth District. Let's continue to lift each other up as every effort, big or small, makes a difference.

Sixth District



Karen Lowe
President

Greetings from the 6th District. I am honored to serve as District President this year. It has been 48 years since I last served. Times have certainly changed, and I will do my best to carry out our mission. Thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to being one of "Tanna's daughters".

We are so proud of our newly elected District Historian, Tamra Everhart of Terre Haute 104. We know she will be an excellent Historian, and we wish her the best as she climbs the chairs. "She will do our District proud".

We just returned from National Convention in Tampa, Florida. It was hot and it rained every day, but it was a very informative convention. We were honored and proud to have the Woman of the Year, Eloise Passwater of Brownsville #331 present.

Fall Conference was fun and informative and our District pledges to work with President Tanna as she reaches her goals for her Department Projects – Honor Flights

of Indiana and IVETS. Hoosiers United Giving Service (HUGS) is her theme, and it should be a fun year working with her "bear". In the Spirit of Service, Not Self, we continue to honor the sacrifice of those who have and continue to serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military and their families.

Seventh District



Phyllis Banks
President

October 2025 District 7 Officer & Chairman Workshop: On October 18, 2025, District 7 hosted a District Officer & Chairman Workshop at the Burton Woolery Post 18 in Bloomington. The primary focus of this event was to enhance leadership skills and clarify the responsibilities and expectations for each officer and chairman for the current year. Key Areas of Focus: (1) Leadership Development: Emphasis was placed on cultivating leadership abilities among officers and chairmen. (2) Roles and Responsibilities: The workshop outlined the duties and expectations associated with each leadership position. (3) Communication: Effective communication with our Units was highlighted as a foundational element of success. (4) Reporting: The importance of preparing and submitting Unit and District program annual reports was discussed. (5) Financial Management: Attendees were reminded of the value of having a detailed budget and a system for financial accountability. (6) Fundraising Initiatives: Strategies for successful fundraising were explored. (7) Resources and Training: Members were encouraged to utilize ALA websites, the ALA Academy, and other training sources to further their knowledge and skills. Mentorship and Experience: District 7 is privileged to have members with considerable knowledge and expertise who are dedicated to fostering growth in others assuming leadership roles. These experienced individuals willingly offer their insights and guidance, serving as a valuable resource for our organization as we strive to strengthen our leadership team.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the following leadership mentors for their significant contributions. Their efforts in preparing training guides, submitting reference documents and guidance, and presenting key topics during the workshop have been instrumental in supporting our of-

continued on page 11

ficers and chairmen. Thank you to Sherri McGee, Sharon Regnier, Brittany Schofield, Jenny Tracy, and Janice Wampler for your commitment and support.

Wreaths Across America: District 7 has six Units , Bloomington Unit 18, Coal City Unit 141; Edinburgh Unit 233, Lyons Unit 479, Martinsville Unit 230, and Mooresville Unit 103 that they are very busy with their Wreaths Across America fundraisers promoting sponsorship of wreaths for veterans in their local community cemeteries. Some examples of the fundraising events are Unit 18 conducted a fundraiser at Texas Roadhouse Dine and Donate, Unit 479 hosted a Wine Canvas event and Mooresville Unit 103 has held several events, one being a community haircut event, Edinburgh conducted a golf raffle for eight rounds of golf, two dozen golf balls and two gift cards. If interested in making a donation to District 7 WAA initiatives you can **scan the QR code below** or make a donation online by visiting www.wreathsafteramerica.org/IN0207P



Eleventh District



Melissa Clawson
President

It is a true honor to serve in District 11, Department of Indiana, within our incredible American Legion Family. I am deeply proud to be part of the only District and Department in the world that can proudly claim to be home to both the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters. What a legacy, and what a privilege!

For the second consecutive year, District 11 Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders leadership are on a mission—to strengthen our Legion Family bonds and proudly demonstrate who we are and why we matter as a District. I’m thrilled to share that you can now read more about my personal initiative in an article featured on the **ALA National Headquarters blog**. To further support our mission of unity and visibility, the District Legion website has been expanded to include dedicated pages for both the District ALA and SAL, along with

a comprehensive District-wide calendar that makes it easier than ever for all members to stay connected and support one another.

I’m proud to introduce the “President’s Challenge Awards,” a series of engaging activities designed to inspire participation and pride across our Units and Post families. These challenges include everything from recruiting members to attending District meetings, creating 9/11 and Veterans Day appreciation videos, completing courses in the ALA Academy, and more. I’m truly looking forward to watching their continued accomplishments unfold throughout the rest of the 2025–2026 term.

My personal mission has always been supporting our veterans with PTSD, and as a Unit President for the past seven years, I’ve proudly stood alongside HVAF of Indiana Counseling Services in that fight. This year, I was heartbroken to learn that HVAF lost its \$25,000 annual funding from the Colts’ “Stop the Stigma” program—a vital source that helped sustain the services of Therapist Kascha, who is on the front lines providing life-saving mental health care to our veterans. Without this funding, HVAF is struggling to continue offering this essential support. That’s why my District President’s Project for 2025–2026 is focused on raising \$10,000 to help fill this critical gap. We are also blessed with strong community partnerships. The Knights of Columbus Council #3433 have generously stepped up and will be hosting a fundraising event in support of this mission. Together, we’re making a real difference standing up for those who stood for us.

Our District 11 Executive Committee is proud to sponsor and host Louise Loyd’s Annual HVAF Holiday Dinner—by serving approximately 40 of our HVAF veterans. Louise began this event over 20 years ago, and when we learned the original hosting Post could no longer continue, we knew we had to step up to keep her legacy alive. We are incredibly grateful to Leo Welch Post 495 for providing the venue to ensure this important event goes on. Second, we’ll be spreading holiday cheer by assembling and delivering Thanksgiving dinner baskets to five single-parent veteran families currently receiving services through HVAF. It’s a small gesture with a big impact—one that reflects the heart of our Legion Family mission.

In closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my fellow District 11 leaders—our dedicated ALA Officers and Program Chairs, District TAL Commander Christina Owens, SAL Commander William Barnett, and ALR Director Doug White. And last but certainly not least, sincere thanks to Department President Tanna Sheperd and the entire Department of Indiana leadership team for their continued support and guidance. Together, we are changing lives!

MEMBERSHIP

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

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

Word Bank			
1. deadline	2. award	3. unit	4. dues
5. hgs	6. senior	7. junior	8. pufl
9. veterans	10. payment	11. transfer	12. data
13. president	14. renew	15. alamis	16. district
17. history	18. auxiliary	19. membership	20. join
21. branch	22. transmittal	23. rejoin	24. department

The Indiana Veterans Home Advisory Group recently shared important information regarding resources available to staff. There is a Staff Food Pantry on site, which is accessible to all staff members. This includes not only regular employees, but also agency and contracted staff. The availability of this pantry ensures that everyone working at the Indiana Veterans Home can receive support as needed. The pantry was created to provide essential food items to team members who may be experiencing financial hardship or food insecurity, especially during this government shutdown. They want to foster a culture of care and community, to ensure that no one on their team goes without the necessities. They rely on generous donations – here is how you can help: Donate shelf-stable food items, hygiene supplies, gift cards or funds to purchase supplies. Donations

can be dropped off at the Pyle Administration building, you can contact Tom Smith, or our IVH Chairman Tracy Brown.

List of Items
Hamburger helper, Tuna helper, Chicken helper
Chuckysoups, Condensed soup
Boxes of cereal, pop tarts, or other breakfast bars
Boxes of mac and cheese, scalloped potatoes, etc.
Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo)
Dry pasta and canned sauce
Canned fruits and vegetables
Peanut butter and jelly
Loaves of bread
Diapers (all sizes) formula, baby food
Sanitary pads, tampons, toilet paper

GIFT WRAP DATES

Danville VA - December 2 & 4

Marion VA - December 2

Roudebush - November 19th @ Post 331

IVH - December 13th

9:00 am (IL time)

9:00 am

12:30 pm

2:00 pm

Note: Please contact the hospital representative or chair if you will be unable to send items by November 1st. She/he needs to know before purchasing additional items. Thank you.

PRESIDENT TANNA'S INSTALLATION



President Tanna being escorted by her husband, Tim



Past Department President, Shirley Firkins, pinning Tanna with her pin



Past Department President, Lisa Liford, presenting Tanna with her gavel



2025-2026 District Presidents



Good luck to our 2025 - 2026 Department Officers



Molly Fletcher presenting a beautiful flag ceremony



President Tanna's family came to support her on this special day



Installation of the 2025 -2026 Honorary Junior Officers

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



FALL CONFERENCE



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS PRESIDENT TANNA?



Department Chairs Workshop



Annual Popcorn Festival in Valparaiso



Tanna with Department Leadership



Phyllis Banks presenting Tanna with her mother's pin



Waiting to speak at The American Legion Fall Conference with PDC Jim Koutz



Visit with National President Pam Ray



National Convention Installation



Department Visitation with 8th District President Martie Smithler



Photo with Past Department Presidents



Department Visitation with 9th District President Donna Asbell-Mills



National President's Homecoming - largest rocking chair in the world



National President's Homecoming - Rubbing Abe's nose for good luck



National President's Homecoming Dinner Reception with members of Indiana Legion Family