

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA

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NEWS TO USE

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is AMPED UP!

As of March 14, 2025, Georgia is at 84.08% of National Goal, 8th in the Southern Division and 35th Nationally. **Where oh where will we be on Monday 3/17 when the final 85% goal list is released?**

SPRING CONFERENCE

March 21-23, 2025: The DEC meets 3/20. Conference begins at 9am on the 22nd and 23rd; the banquet is on the 22nd.

The Memorial Service and Poppy Anchor Dedication Program is on the 23rd at 8:30 am. Register [HERE](#). Agenda is [HERE](#).

OBLIGATIONS

Tick Tock! April 1 is just two weeks away.

All units are **required** to submit annual obligations to be eligible for delegate representation at the June Department Convention.

The form is top right: <https://www.aladepgta.com/forms-1>

LEADERSHIP

The National ALA Academy has more content! See page 4 & 21. **Are you ready to jump in to Department Leadership? See page 21** for information on how to submit as a candidate.

THE LATEST GENERATION

April is the Month of the Military Child. Is your unit ready?

See information about youth programs on pages 13-15.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is Women's History Month celebrating the achievements women have made in U.S. history.

REPORTING

It is worth repeating REPORTING MATTERS! See pages 9 and 10 for tips and tricks. Get moving and AMP UP Unit reporting! Don't forget History, Prayer, and Scrap Books!

LEGISLATIVE

The Washington Conference was a success in promoting The American Legion's Legislative Agenda See info on pages 19-20.

GOVERNANCE: GET READY

Is your unit or district ready for its annual meeting? Wait, what? Yes, it does take a bit of planning to get ready. See page 18.

FUNDRAISING & DONATIONS See pages 23-24!

AND MORE

Keep your hands inside the ride! Read on and EVOLVE!

2024-2025 LEADERSHIP

President..... Cheryl Waybright
 1st Vice President Gail Ramey
 2nd Vice President..... Pam Eckler
 Historian..... Debbie Hoopingarner
 Chaplain Gloria Chambers
 Secretary/Treasurer Patty Hawkins
 NEC Susan Hall
 NEC Alternate Pat Morgan

Sergeants at Arms
 Captain.....Melanie Eckler
 Cricket Agee, Melinda Gaskins
 Lindsey Coats, Melissa Patten

Page/Parliamentary Advisor Thea Fultz

MISSION COMMITTEES

Veterans Affairs Mirima Stein
 National Security..... Laura Miller
 Americanism Kris Ann Alexander
 Children & Youth..... Gabriele Barnett
 Community Service Sharon Wilson
 Education Dr. Cindy Swartz
 Girls State..... Deedy Harrell
 Junior Activities..... Kalyn Slagle
 Legislative Vacant (Cheryl Waybright)
 Poppy Cathy Hedges

SUPPORT COMMITTEES

AEF Vacant (Cheryl Waybright)
 Awards & Recognition... Linda Brock
 Convention..... 9th District
 C&Bs..... Vacant (Cheryl Waybright)
 Credentials..... Phyllis Jones &
 Sabrina Brown Putney, Co-Chairs
 Finance..... Susan Hall, Chair
 Ruth Ann Shelby & Sarah Zingarelli
 Human Resources Sheila Tinsley, Chair
 Gabriele Barnett & Pam Eckler
 Leadership/Yearbook Gail Ramey
 Membership..... Pam Eckler
 Past President Parley & Member of the Year
 Cheryl Jackson-Sinkler
 Poppy Anchor..... 11th District
 Launching..... Unit 184 (1st District)
 Orders Patty Hawkins
 Public Relations..... Courtney Waybright
 Resolutions Dr. Joann Meadows
 Risk & Compliance Kathy Merritt, Chair
 Anita Owens & Lisa Marie Papp
 Scrapbook Melinda Gaskins
 Unit Development & Revitalization
 Gail Ramey & Pam Eckler, Jennie Chandler



Cheryl Waybright
 President 2024-2025



#AMPUPMISSION

Here we are –a week into Daylight Savings time.
 More adjustments on top of an already busy time! **OH MY!**

Spring conference is coming up fast and the National President will be visiting Georgia May 1-3. This month is Women’s History Month and next month is the Month of the Military Child. Then it’s Poppy Proclamations, Distribution and National Poppy Day. Whew! **Can it get any busier?**

Sure, it can... Americanism Essays are due 3/25, Unit Obligations are due 4/1, Girls State Payments are due 4/20, and **REPORTS ARE DUE MAY 1.** Legislative letters can be written at any time. And don’t forget the Americanism National Contest – recordings due in a few days! **OH! AND!** Election boards should be going up and nominating committees should be getting busy... May elections will come right after submitting reports. And unit budgets... don’t forget the **BASICS!**

I am tired after writing all that! It is clear, we do a lot in the American Legion Auxiliary. I know it can be overwhelming!

I thank every single member and leader who is AMPING UP MISSION and “doing” mission centric activities, writing reports, processing memberships, and turning in paperwork to keep this organization running. We can only serve our veterans, active duty, their families, and our community when we are all pulling together, taking care of our own health and well-being, and being deliberate about having fun together as “PEOPLE” – not just members! **It is our human connection that will keep this organization thriving.**

It was a delight to represent Georgia at the National Washington Conference in late February. A lot of work went into preparing for advocacy and conducting meetings with our legislators. The networking was awesome and building deeper relationships with our entire Georgia family was exceptionally rewarding.

If you are interested in running for a Department Officer position in 2025-2026, please reach out and let’s get you certified! Chaplain, Historian, and 2nd Vice President of Membership all need nominees!

Cheryl Waybright
 404-625-6708 ★ Cheryl@ALAGeorgia.com

KEY DATES

FIRST OF EVERY MONTH IS **BE THE ONE** DAY!

EVERY FRIDAY IS **RED** Shirt Friday

Remembering **Everyone** Deployed-Wear Red!

March 2025

Women's History Month

- 15.....American Legion Birthday (1919)
- 17.....St. Patrick's Day
- 19.....Iraqi Freedom began (2003)
- 21.....Rosie the Riveter Day
- 25.....National Medal of Honor Day
- 25..... **Americanism Essays due to Department**
- 29.....National Vietnam War Veterans Day

April 2025

Month of the Military Child: 4/15 is Purple Up Day!

Military Saves Month

- 1.....April Fool's Day
- 1..... **GA Secretary of State Registration Due**
- 5.....Gold Star Spouses Day
- 9.....National Former POW Recognition Day
- 13.....Palm Sunday
- 14.....Air Force Reserve Birthday (1916/1948)
National Pan American Day
- 15.....Purple Up Day (2011)
- 18.....Good Friday
- 20.....Easter Sunday
Volunteer Recognition Day
- 22.....Earth Day
- 23.....U.S. Army Reserve Birthday (1908)
- 26.....American Legion Family Day
- 30.....National Military Brats Day

May 2025

MAY 1 – Reports & Books & Posters are Due!

- National Military Appreciation Month
- Month of the Military Caregiver
- Military Spouse Appreciation Month
- National Mental Health Awareness Month
- 1.....Silver Star Service Banner Day (2010)
Loyalty Day (1958)
- 2.....National Day of Prayer
- 4-10.....Public Service Recognition Week
National Correctional Officers Week
- 6.....National Nurses Day
- 8.....Victory in Europe (VE) Day (1945)
- 9.....Military Spouse Appreciation Day (1984)
- 11.....Mother's Day
- 12-17.....Armed Forces Week
- 13.....Children of Fallen Patriots Day
- 15.....U.S. Peace Officers Memorial Day (1962)
- 17.....Armed Forces Day (1950)
- 22.....National Maritime Day (1933 U.S.)
- 23.....National Poppy Day
- 26.....Memorial Day

SECRETARY/ TREASURER

Patty Hawkins



March has arrived and time is flying by fast.

2025 Spring Conference is March 21-23. The Georgia Girls State Board will meet at 6pm on Thursday, March 20 and the ALA GA DEC meeting be ~ 6:30pm.

OBLIGATIONS: The 2024-2025 April 1 due date is fast approaching.

The Department asks that units submit both mandatory and voluntary obligations as soon as possible. This helps the department distribute funds accordingly. **For the Units who have not paid, Let's Get it done!**

I hope everyone is keeping track of all the excellent work their Units have done for the 2024-2025 year. May 1 is the due date for reports! Let's report all the incredible action GEORGIA is taking!

Membership is going well – KEEP SPREADING THE WORD about all the excellent work we do serving our Veterans through our members. Membership is what keeps us going. Recruit members at your unit Poppy fundraising drives. We cannot wait to see Units out having poppy drives to help our Veterans programs.

Our Poppy Anchor Dedication will be at the Spring Conference Memorial Service on Sunday March 23. The 11th District will present the Anchor. Please try to attend this service that starts at 8:30 am.

Below is a TO DO LIST. Also check out the list of forms that must be turned in before the Department Convention. See Page 18.

The poem In Flanders Fields speaks "the duty of the living to carry on the fight and honor the sacrifice of those who gave their lives."

Thank you, unit leaders and members, for all you do!

Patty Hawkins

678-289-8446 ★ secamlegaux@bellsouth.net

UNIT TO DO LIST

- Membership Dues:** 2025 Dues should be paid by now!
- Obligations: Deadline is April 1, 2025.**
- Plans** for Children & Youth Activities (April)
- Reporting Plans** – confirm who is doing what! **DUE MAY 1.**
- Advocate!** (see pages 19-20.)
- Volunteer Hours:** RECORD & REPORT!!! PLEASE!
- Compliance Items:** Has your unit filed your 990 form? Check your fiscal year and stay (or get into) Compliance.
- Did your unit send a copy of your IRS 990 form to the State of GA revenue division? YEP! That's a State Law!**
- Have you updated your filing with the Georgia Secretary of State to include your new officers?
- Have you renewed with the Georgia Secretary of State for this year? The renewal must be done before April 1.

LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

March 29 Unit 135 Savannah
 Register: <https://forms.gle/2Rbcaxm7LuuERT1R8>

April 12 Unit 30, Albany

ALL SESSIONS: Registration begins at 9:30 am, the program starts at 10:00 am.

All the Leadership Workshop topics were woven into the agenda of the Fall Conference and may be included in the Spring Conference. Do not miss the change to network and learn!

ALA ACADEMY



<https://member.legion-aux.org/member/online-training>

Useful information is available at the **NATIONAL ALA ACADEMY**. Have questions? Review one of the sessions on the subject you are interested in.

Timely sessions include:

- Navigating ALA National Scholarships
- Celebrating the Month of the Military Child
- Youth Hero and Good Deed Awards
- Celebrating Women of Service
- **ALA Leadership Series: So, You're a Department Chair. Now What?**
- Tax-Exempt Status: Revocation and Reinstatement
- ALA Compliance Matters
- National Poppy Day

First Vice President – LEADERSHIP

Gail Ramey



Hello Everyone,

We had a successful Leadership Workshop at Warner Robins, Unit 172, on March 8. The attendance was great with a lot of participation from all who attended. We are in Loganville today and will be in Savannah on the 29th. See the list of remaining workshops to the left. Every workshop is open to **ANYONE** who wants to attend no matter where you live and even if you are not interested in becoming a leader. We offer valuable information that benefits every member.

All units should actively be recruiting girls to attend Georgia Girls State. The sooner this happens the better chance you will get young ladies before their summer schedule is already full.

Do not forget about the free ALA Academy training. Log into the National website, click on EVENTS, the ALA ACADEMY. There is a training session coming up on March 13th Wreaths Across America. Several Units have asked about fundraising. There is a course about Fundraising. It does not provide detailed ideas, but it does provide great steps to take to get a fundraiser organized.

I hope lots of you have registered for Spring Conference. Georgia Girls State Board will meet at 6:00 pm and the Department DEC will meet at 6:30 PM on Thursday, March 20. The Conference begins at 9:00 am on Friday, March 21st at 9:00 AM. (RED FRIDAY) and Saturday the joint session begins at 8:30 am. **Be The One** training will start at 3:15 on Friday and ALAMIS training will be at 3:15 on Saturday, March 22. The Poppy Anchor dedication and Memorial Service will be on Sunday, March 23. At 8:30 AM

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. If you call and I don't answer, please leave a message

Gail Ramey

770-262-2524 ★ leadership@ALAGeorgia.com





Second Vice President – MEMBERSHIP Pam Eckler



Thank you to everyone who has worked hard on Unit memberships this year. Our Department needs 55 renewed or new members to achieve the 85% goal by 9am March 17th. I have no doubt this goal can be achieved as I have witnessed what all of you are doing for our Department. A simple thank you does not seem to be quite enough, but for now, Thank You!

TRANSFERS! I want to explain about transfers to your units. If someone transfers to your unit and had already paid 2025 dues in their old unit, their name will show up on your roster, but the number will not show up on the membership report until the new membership year. It is the National ALA policy to count the member in the Unit the member paid their dues until the new membership year. Some of you have had transfers this year, and expected to see the unit membership number increase, but that does not happen immediately. You will see the number increase in the new membership year.

Also, when members are renewed online, or via full access at the unit level, you will see the member added to your roster immediately. However, the ALAMIS database updates at midnight every night, so please do not expect to see your membership number increase until the next day. There has been a lot of confusion about this as the Department's membership report does not exactly match what you see in ALAMIS. As an example, you enter a member (new or renewal) on Thursday, and the Department's membership report comes out on Thursday; you will not see that additional member in the Department's report. Krista is working hard to come as close as possible to what is seen in ALAMIS, but it will never be exact as Krista does not have the time in her workday to check all the Unit's in ALAMIS, daily. If there ever comes a time when all units begin using ALAMIS full access, then we will begin to match what you see in ALAMIS.

ALAMIS FULL ACCESS: The largest unit in the Department, Unit 29 Marietta, joined the full access user "club." ALAMIS full access saves the unit money for stamps, paper, and envelopes, it also saves time for the person completing your memberships. Since we are all volunteers, our time is important to us. The more time we save doing ALA business, the more time we must spend with our families, and doing fun, personal stuff.

Fearing technology is understandable. Some of you do not like change. If you replace 'change' with **improvement** it might help you think differently. Technology is not going away! I believe there will be a time when all units will use ALAMIS full access, so why not do it now? I have spoken with many full access users and all of them will tell you it is not that difficult; they note the time savings are worth the improvement. I have asked many of the current ALAMIS full access users if they would be willing to mentor those new to 'improving to' full access and they said yes! I have a list of full access users willing to come to your unit and show you how easy it is. Feel free to contact me and I will connect you to a mentor and ensure you receive all the guidance you need to make an informed decision. ALAMIS full access is the way to go! Jump on board the ALAMIS train!

Again, thank you for all you have done and continue to do to grow our membership in Georgia. I hope to see all of you at our March conference.

We will have ALAMIS training at the March Conference on Saturday afternoon (March Please monitor the March agenda for potential scheduling of ALAMIS full access training.

Until then, remember, *"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of hard work, learning from failure, perseverance, and never giving up."*

Pam Eckler

670-780-8622 ★ membership@ALAGeorgia.com



STAY CONNECTED

DEPARTMENT WEBSITE:

<https://www.aladdeptga.com/>

- Need a form?
<https://www.aladdeptga.com/forms-1>
- Need to find a department leader?
https://www.aladdeptga.com/about_us
- Or a department committee chair?
<https://www.aladdeptga.com/committee-chairpersons>
- ...or Department Governing Documents?
<https://www.aladdeptga.com/governing-documents>

GEORGIA GIRLS STATE

www.georgiagirlsstate.org/

DEPARTMENT PUBLIC FACEBOOK PAGES

Follow both!

<https://www.facebook.com/ALADeptofGA>

<https://www.facebook.com/ALAGeorgiaPresident/>

DEPARTMENT PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUP

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/alaga>

In this group you can ask questions and post information about your unit and districts.

DEPARTMENT EMAILS

Secretary/Treas.: secamlegaux@bellsouth.net

Membership Clerk: amlegaux@bellsouth.net

President: Cheryl@ALAGeorgia.com

Leadership: Leadership@ALAGeorgia.com

Membership: Membership@ALAGeorgia.com

Historian: Historian@ALAGeorgia.com

Chaplain: Chaplain@ALAGeorgia.com

PR: PublicRelations@ALAGeorgia.com

Newsletter: Department@ALAGeorgia.com

NATIONAL ALA TOOLS

American Legion Auxiliary National Website

<https://www.legion-aux.org/home>

ALA MEMBER Website

<https://member.legion-aux.org/>

ALA BLOG <https://www.legion-aux.org/blog>

Serving the ALA Mission through Our

Programs – Program Engagement Plans:

[https://member.legion-](https://member.legion-aux.org/member/program-engagement-plans)

[aux.org/member/program-engagement-plans](https://member.legion-aux.org/member/program-engagement-plans)

HISTORIAN

Debbie Hoopingarner



Since we are attending the Department of Georgia Spring Conference this month and the 2025 Convention is in June, here is information about our 1st Department of Georgia Convention.

The American Legion Department of Georgia held its first Convention from July 4 – July 6, 1921, in Columbus, Georgia. It was here The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Georgia was formed on July 5, 1921.

The women that were part of the organizing committee attended the opening session of The American Legion Department of Georgia Convention on the morning of July 4. The meeting was called to order by Department Commander A. L. Henson and National Commander John G. Emery made the principal address. There was a parade that afternoon with representatives from Posts and Units throughout the Department of Georgia, Confederate Veterans, WWI Veterans, Boy Scouts, County and City Officials, Civic and Fraternal Organizations and Military Units from Fort Benning. There was a reviewing stand for Department officials and several thousand people. Following the parade the Auxiliary members met with National Commander Emory who outlined how the Auxiliary could best aid the Legion. The closing event on July 4 was held aboard a steamer at the city wharf. It was there that the Charles S Harrison Post 35 performed the “H. M. S. Pinafore”.

On the morning of July 5, ALA Units met along with a committee of Legionnaires to organize the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Georgia. Mrs. Lucius Chapell, a member of the local unit, and Miss Moina Michael of Athens, the Poppy Lady, addressed the assembly. Two committees were formed, a nominating committee and a committee to draft a constitution and bylaws. After lunch, the afternoon entertainment was a mock military battle at Fort Benning which included planes, tanks, artillery, smoke screens, observation balloons, machine guns, etc.

At five o'clock the meeting reconvened. The slate of officers for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Georgia was presented by the nominating committee. The officers were all unanimously elected. Our first Department President was Mrs. Frank E Fleming. If you want to know more, please see me at the Spring Conference. I will bring the book

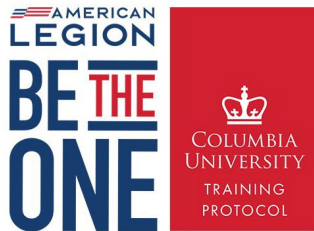
I have received some reports! This is early and welcome. I hope to receive many more reports from all of our like to hear what all of the Units and Districts have been doing since May 1, 2024 thru April 30, 2025. If you have any questions, please reach out to me. You can contact me any time.

Debbie Hoopingarner

317-753-3394 Historian@alageorgia.com

BE THE ONE

Get ready to share what your unit and district are doing to support this critical mission of The American Legion. **Georgia has two awards for Be The One Suicide Prevention Recognition. Please see page 47 of the Department Rules and Regulations for awarding department plaques.** Go to the top of [THIS PAGE](#) on the Department website. (Resources – Forms) Submit reports to VA&R Chair Miriam Stein.



<https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one>

As part of The American Legion Be the One mission to end veteran suicide, the Legion has joined forces with Columbia University to develop training for those who want to learn more about interacting and responding with veterans who may be in crisis. After the training, participants will be able to:

- Use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to determine at-risk individuals.
- Identify risk factors and warning signs
- Outline the types of suicidal ideation and four behaviors that indicate imminent risk.
- Communicate effectively with an individual who may be at risk of hurting themselves.
- Members of The American Legion Family are encouraged to take part in this training and share the training with their communities. Check back to this page or subscribe to **The American Legion Online Update newsletter** to receive information about new training opportunities as they become available.

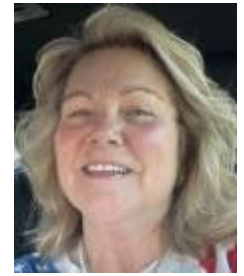
Register to attend an online session at this link: <https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/be-the-one-training>

IMPORTANT NOTE: All attendees will be asked to complete an online survey before the class and upon completion. These surveys help track the effectiveness of the training and allow us to plan for future development.

See leadership video [HERE](#)

CHAPLAIN

Gloria V. Chambers



Allow me to hop right into March.....

The calendar is full of awesome activities. It is Women's History Month... Yay! We ladies are being celebrated.

While scanning the many activities of March 2025, I wished I had time to do them all!

The week I penned this article was National Invest in Veteran's Week. My unit gathered necessity items and placed them in "blessing bags" to distribute to those veteran's we encounter in our daily lives. Actually, I believe we are the recipients of the blessing ourselves. Mardi Gras, and who would love a chance to HUG a G.I. Day!!(March 4th), Ash Wednesday, Seabee's birthday, AND THAT DREADED SPRING AHEAD or DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME! Our awesome American Legion birthday (1919) the 15th of March. And the festivities continue through the end of the month. So where should we begin?

Well... **Spring is time of renewal and hope for what is to come.** What circumstances and treasures will this new season bring? Ask yourselves, "how can I appreciate the blessing of this time while also looking forward to the future days ahead?" We find ourselves drowning in busyness. We desire the quiet moments, the little treasures along the day(a brilliant cardinal glistening in the sunshine, a small rosebud beginning to open, a young child enjoying the playground) a "coincidence" reminding me God is at work in the details of my life. His presence and involvement is encouragement and help to me. Looking for these blessings increase my JOY and changes my perspective , in turn enabling me to TRUST that His plans for me are good, giving Hope for the journey ahead of me...

I pray that you ALL will find the treasures God places in your life and see His work in ALL your circumstances. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR EVERYTHING THE LORD HAS PREPARED FOR YOU. Sprout those wings of Renewal, Water yourselves in His presence, Bloom where you are planted.

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord.

Psalm 89:15

Bountiful blessings!

Gloria Chambers

912-390-2488 ★ chaplain@ALAGeorgia.com



MEDAL OF HONOR DAY

The U.S. Congress designated March 25 as the official Medal of Honor Day in 1991 "to serve as an opportunity for Americans to recognize and express gratitude to those who have demonstrated extraordinary heroism and selflessness in service to their country."

This date was chosen because it was on 25 March 1863 that the first Medal of Honor was presented to Private Jacob Parrott of Ohio. Parrott's distinction was one of six Medals of Honor presented that day to the Andrew Raiders, a group who showed the values of courage, commitment, sacrifice, integrity, commitment, and patriotism, during a raid on Confederate-held territories in Georgia."



The U.S. congress established the Medal of Honor "during the American Civil War by Senator James Grimes and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles to inspire sailors to valorous service." President Abraham Lincoln signed into law a bill on December 21, 1861 authorizing the creation of a Navy Medal of Valor. This "evolved into the Medal of Honor and Legislation authorizing a similar medal for soldiers in the U.S. Army followed in 1862."

Sourced from [HERE](#). Read more at <https://www.cmohs.org/>

25 MAR
1863

Secretary of War Edwin Stanton presents the first Medals of Honor to six of the surviving members of the Andrews' Raiders, a group of Army men who attempted to hobble a railroad supply line in Georgia. Private **Jacob Parrott** is first person to ever receive the Medal of Honor.

NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY

Source: <https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/about/national-vietnam-war-veterans-day/>

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is March 29. Americans unite to thank and honor Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. The Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 was signed into law by U.S. President Donald J. Trump, designating every March 29 as *National Vietnam War Veterans Day*.

This special day joins six other military-centric annual observances codified in Title 4 of the United States Code §6, among them Memorial Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day.

29 March is a fitting choice for a day honoring Vietnam veterans. It was chosen to be observed in perpetuity as March 29, 1973 was the day United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam was disestablished and the day the last U.S. combat troops departed Vietnam. In addition, on and around this same day Hanoi released the last of its acknowledged prisoners of war.

The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration honors all veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time from November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location, and their families.

November 1, 1955 was selected to coincide with the official designation of Military Assistance Advisory Group-Vietnam (MAAG-V); **May 15, 1975** marks the end of the battle precipitated by the seizure of the SS Mayaguez.

The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that today there are between **6 and 7 million U.S. Vietnam veterans living in America and abroad**, along with **millions of families of those who served** during this timeframe.

We make no distinction between veterans who served in-country, in-theater, or who were stationed elsewhere during the Vietnam War period. All were called to serve, and no one could self-determine where they would serve.



IMPACT & COMMITTEE REPORTS

It starts with YOU – the MEMBERS! Thank you for REPORTING on your VALUABLE SERVICE and helping us TELL OTHERS about our INCREDIBLE IMPACT! **Department Committee Chairs need each unit to submit by May 1st** so they can prepare and submit the

Department report to National by May 15th and enter units, individuals, and the department to National for awards. Help them by sharing YOUR awesomeness that occurs between May 1 2024 to April 30, 2025. Check with your District – usually the same reports are submitted to District Chairs the same time units submit reports to the Department Chairpersons. Copy the Department Historian and Department President on your reports to be included in the Department History Book and the annual report to National. Be included. Great resources for Committee Chairs can be found in the [Committee Chair Presentation](#) and [Committee Chair Resources](#). **ALL Committee Chairs are encouraged to review this material.**



IMPACT ALA!

Reporting: Tips & Tricks Let's shift our thinking about reporting.

If the "task" of reporting is viewed less as a chore but instead, embodied as a guiding light to success throughout the entire year, imagine what you, your unit, your district, and our department can do!

Shifting from a mindset of resenting "having to report" to leveraging the report process as an initiative-taking measurement of "what do we need to do" at the beginning of our administrative year is key to keeping the momentum going of (or restarting) a quality program.

If each unit, district, and department committee chairperson begin the year with the end in mind – "WHAT ARE WE DOING OR WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO" – the report form is that LIST OF THINGS to be done in our quest to achieve the ALA vision and mission.

And then, reporting becomes less of a task and more of a "DID WE DO IT? And DID WE DO IT WELL? Recognizing and reporting, on the things that did not go well is just as important of capturing the WINS and ACHIEVEMENTS.

Why and How? <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Impact-Report>

Service on the monthly tracking form. Both a printable form and an automated spreadsheet are available online.

Typically in April, transfer the yearly totals to the "Member Year-End Impact Numbers Report." Give that report to your unit president, who will download a "Unit Year-End Impact Numbers Report" and will transfer the unit's total numbers to this form.

Your department may require you to submit your unit form to your district/county/council or directly to the department headquarters. Ultimately, the department takes the report totals and submits them electronically to National Headquarters by June 1. National Headquarters then provides a summary of hours served and dollars donated in service to our mission to national committee chairs, as well as to The American Legion for its annual Congressional report.

Reporting tips

To make the reporting process easier, it has been simplified and the form has been condensed to essential information. If you are unsure about your numbers, even giving an estimate is better than not reporting at all. Also, all service for all veterans/military — whether active duty, retired, or reserve — is now combined in one section. Each section has better defined examples of the service that should be reported. Taking the time to report your valuable service to veterans helps us show others about our incredible impact!

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ALA IMPACT REPORTS

Every hour and every dollar ALA members invest in our mission of helping veterans adds up. It not only gives each member a sense of pride in belonging to the organization, but it allows us to demonstrate our mission service and effectiveness to our donors and to the world.

Why do we have them?

Impact reports are a record of the time and money each member gives in service to veterans, military, and their families. Each small sum of numbers is added to the collective data called impact numbers, which proclaim our mission outreach and help make membership in the ALA even more meaningful.

How does the process work?

Members report numbers to the unit; units sometimes report to a

district/county/council or directly to the department, which then combines the numbers and reports them to the national organization. National Headquarters compiles, analyzes, and reports these numbers to The American Legion, which includes them in its annual report to Congress. With nearly 550,000 ALA members, that's a lot of data to compile!

When to record your impact numbers

Waiting until the end of the year to recall service hours and amounts donated and spent during the year is a challenge — try to start early! Each month, members should track their service for 1) veterans and all military, 2) military families, 3) children and youth including ALA Girls State, and 4) Community

A PERSPECTIVE

It is through reporting – written committee reports in addition to impact reports - that individuals, units, districts, and the department capture the effort, action, accomplishments, and lessons learned. The more reports submitted across all MISSION OUTREACH and MEMBER & ORGANIZATION SUPPORT committees, the better the ALA Department of Georgia (and the National organization) can measure the IMPACT of our members and effectiveness of our Department in delivering on the mission and vision of the ALA.

PERSPECTIVE: *If the “task” of reporting is viewed less as a chore but instead, embodied as a guiding light to success throughout the year, imagine what you, your unit, your district, and our department can do!* Shifting from the drudgery of “we have to report at the end of the year” to a proactive mindset of, “what do we need to do” at the beginning of each year is key to keeping the momentum going of a quality program.

With this perspective, the Department’s **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION** program serves primarily as the quality management tool for the Department. Trust that your Department Officers and Committee Chairpersons WANT to hear from you, WANT to receive reports from every unit, WANT to recognize the excellent things happening in Georgia, and WANT to identify opportunities for improvement and perhaps change – all in the spirit of SERVICE NOT SELF as we serve our veterans, active duty and their families, deliver the good word of Americanism and serve our children in youth. Check out the guide [HERE](#). All details can be found at <https://www.aladdeptga.com/forms-1>

UNIT & DISTRICT MERIT RECOGNITION

[The Unit Merit Recognition](#) focuses on celebrating units that strive for and achieve membership, operational, and management excellence. A focus on the business of the unit not only drives volunteer engagement and allegiance, but it also drives delivery on our mission and cultivates respect in the community. A well run unit validates the legitimacy of the ALA for both members and non-members.



[The DISTRICT Merit Recognition](#) focuses on celebrating districts that strive for and achieve membership, operational, and management excellence. A focus on the business of the district not only drives volunteer engagement and allegiance, but it also drives delivery on our mission and cultivates respect in the community. A well run district validates the legitimacy of the ALA for both members and non-members

*(*Units or District on IRS suspension are not eligible – confirm with the department president if you are unsure.)*



PROMOTE YOUR IMPACT!

Units are doing some amazing things in the spirit of service not self, *but we aren't hearing about it!* We want you to share it on our Department Facebook Group. If you aren't a member, please join.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/alaga>. And, share tidbits and photos for our newsletter - due on the 5th of each month to PublicRelations@ALAGeorgia.com to be included. Also share your great deeds to the appropriate national committee’s Facebook page.

CHANGE THE NARRATIVE

“American Legion National Commander James A. LaCoursiere Jr., called on Congress to “change the narrative” and improve the transition process for veterans as he delivered The American Legion legislative agenda to a joint hearing of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs on February 26, 2025.” This was during his testimony before a joint session of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans’ Affairs.



Sourced from this site - read the full article: <https://www.legion.org/Information-Center/News/Commander/2025/february/commander-to-congress-change-the-narrative>

The link to the video – *all members are encouraged to watch* – is here: https://youtu.be/s7Hz94aM_NA

GEORGIA SERVICE ACADEMY DAY

If you are a high school student in Georgia, this year's Service Academy Day hosted by U.S. Senator Ossoff's office, and Georgia's Congressional delegation, will be taking place on **Saturday, April 26, 2025 at Dobbins Air Reserve Base** from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon ET. The deadline to RSVP for this event is Friday, April 11, 2025. No RSVPs will be accepted after this date. <https://www.ossoff.senate.gov/academyday/>

All Georgia high school students and their families are encouraged to attend this important event to learn more about the application and congressional nominating process for our nation's five U.S. Service Academies — the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, the U.S. Military Academy, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

MEMBERSHIP: EVOLVE YOUR UNIT

The E's of Membership - December was **ELIGIBILITY**, January **EXPIRATION**, February **ENGAGEMENT** and this month let's talk about how to **EVOLVE** as a unit. *By now your unit has renewed and recruited members and others have rejoined. And, your unit has created an environment that engages all members and their individual desire to volunteer where they “fit.” WELL!* Those are huge building blocks in **EVOLVING** the unit to one that is higher performing with focus on delivering on the mission and living our motto “Service Not Self.” **To evolve means to develop or make gradual changes over time.** Here are some things to consider to really **EVOLVE**:

- Break volunteer opportunities into small chunks of time (*people will commit for a bit...*)
- INVITE and Communicate – full transparency is critical (*what is expected by when will draw more volunteers*)
- Provide guidance and training (*leverage the ALA online academy and provide mentors*)
- Be Flexible (*this is hard, yet the rewards are multifold when unit leaders are perceived as flexible*)
- Provide Opportunity for Growth (*that new member may be a future unit president, let people try new things*).
- THANK THEM!!! (*this is easy yest sometimes forgotten – excitement returns when gratitude is shown*).

HAVE FUN! Yes, just like last month – EVOLVE and conduct a FUN event where members can just **BE**. Remember, a volunteer hour has value - currently, one hour of volunteer time is valued at an estimated \$31.80 (nationwide average) and that figure continues to grow. How exciting is THAT?

TIPS TO THRIVE IN 2025

ENGENDER: defined as “to cause or give rise to or to originate” (a feeling, situation, or condition).

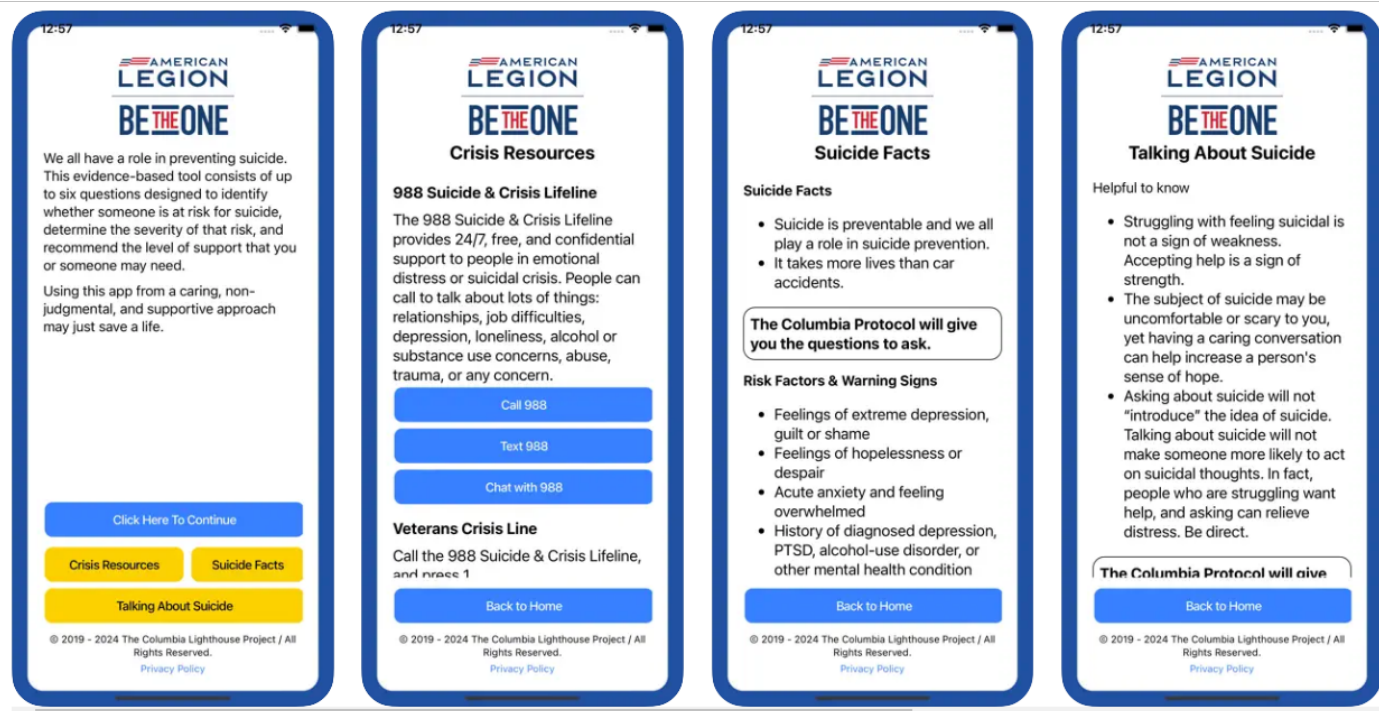
This word fits right in with our ALA GA theme this year: AMP UP MISSION! Let’s think on this for a minute. ALA leaders must prioritize their well-being and that of the unit. When our members first focus on their well-being, they can position themselves to give their time and talent to the ALA and the veterans and the active duty soldiers we serve. This boosts engagement in the unit and leads to AMPing UP Mission! Next in line is consistency. There’s a reason most of our governing document state the frequency and schedule of our meetings – people count on consistency in their calendaring and in their SERVICE NOT SELF. Consistency builds trust, accountability grows and unit performance sky rockets.

Healthy and consistent – some good priorities for units to grow and thrive. One thing a unit can do when working on their reports over the next month or two is to begin talking about the next administrative year. Perhaps conducting fewer events that are focused on deepening the relationships with members, veterans, active duty, their families, and the community will bring more engagement, and the activities will be more rewarding to all involved. Wow! Reporting and planning all in the same paragraph!

CALL TO ACTION: 1) Look at the unit calendar and log into the ALA Member Portal – read about one of the mission programs and determine how you can engender EVOLVE the programming in your unit!
2) Report and Plan while prioritizing the wellbeing of all in the unit.

BE THE ONE APP

“The Be the One app, developed by Columbia University and tailored to The American Legion’s [Be the One](#) veteran suicide prevention mission, is available via both Apple and Google. The app used the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), the most evidence-supported tool of its kind. It asks a simple series of questions that anyone can use anywhere to help prevent suicide.” Sourced from this site - read the full article: <https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/be-the-one/2025/february/be-the-one-app-now-available-to-assist-veterans-in-crisis-those-around-them>



CHALLENGES FOR OUR LATEST GENERATION

Embracing the latest generation requires our units to step up and promote our youth programs. Here are the 2024-2025 challenges from our National organization. Stretch your goal and do more than one!

- Submit one Youth Hero Award.
- Submit one Youth Good Deed Award.

Resources: <https://www.legion-aux.org/Youth-Hero-Good-Deed-Awards>

Training on ALA Academy about the awards: <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/online-training>

- Recruit at least one Americanism Essay participant. Due 3/25/25.
- Recruit at least one Poppy Poster contestant. Due 5/1/25
- Recruit girls to attend Georgia Girls State in June 2025. Funds due 4/20/25.
- Recruit one or more Junior members to attend an upcoming Department Conference or Convention.
- Send at least one Junior member to Junior Summer Camp.

We would love to see the summary by each unit on the annual report to the Department President and Historian so the information can be rolled up in the annual Department report to National.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING...



THE MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD IS APRIL 2025.

Wear purple April 15 in honor of Purple Up! Day for Military Kids. To plan the month of activities at local schools and with local military families, check out resources on the ALA Engagement page for great ideas at <https://member.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/Children-and-Youth/Get-Involved-Children-Youth> and at <https://militarychild.org/resource/momc-toolkit/month-of-the-military-child-resources/#top-content>. For more information, reach out to Department Children & Youth Chair Gabriele Barnett at barnettgabriele@hotmail.com.

Americanism Essay Contest: The 2024-2025 topic is "What Does America the Beautiful Mean to Me?" Regarding veterans and our military. Visit <https://member.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/Americanism/Get-Involved-Americanism> or <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/americanism> for more information. **Essay entries are due to the Department Americanism Chair no later than March 25, 2025.** Send to Krisann Alexander at either 1391 Sims Kidd Rd., Comer, GA 30629, or email: Krisann@windstream.net

Georgia Girls State! Online portal opened on March 1. Details at <https://www.georgiagirlsstate.org/>. **DUE DATE: APRIL 20, 2025 for Units to send the fee of \$350.00 per girl** payable to Georgia Girls State to ALA GA HQ at 3035 Mt. Zion Road, Stockbridge, GA 30281. Contact Director Deedy Harrell at georgiagirlsstate@gmail.com.

Oratorical Contest: The Georgia competition is **March 30, 2025** in Forsyth. <http://departmentofgeorgiaoratorical.weebly.com/>.

Scholarships: See the policy for scholarships at <https://www.aladeptga.com/governing-documents> for information.

Juniors.... Check in with the Juniors Member Activities Chair, Kayln Slagle at kalyntslagle@yahoo.com for more information on Juniors. **Juniors Camp** hosted by the Georgia Detachment of the Sons of the American Legion is May 31 – June 5, 2025. Check in with Cliff Hall at cliff.hall@salgeorgia.org for more information and the Georgia ALA website.

The Poppy Poster Contest: **Poster entries are due to the Department Poppy Chair no later than May 1, 2025.** See the Poppy Article on page 16. Contact Cathy Hedges cathy4hedges@gmail.com.



American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Georgia
GEORGIA GIRLS STATE BULLETIN
MARCH 2025



Georgia Girls State will be held in Valdosta, Georgia at Valdosta State University June 8 13, 2025

We will be in Georgia Hall again this year. No visitors except for the Inauguration and Graduation.

QUALIFICATIONS: Interest in government, leadership, citizenship, honesty, scholarship, character, and completion of their junior year in high school. We are an organization whose belief is For God and Country. We are absolutely not obligated to sponsor girls who disagree with pledging the flag. Just because the school recommends a girl does not make her entitled to attend unless the Unit approves using our criteria. Please make sure your unit approves the girls.

ORIENTATION: Orientation should be a part of your Girls State plan so that the girls and their parents understand in advance what to expect upon arrival. Staff members or former Girls State Citizens can be helpful when getting students prepared for the session.

FEE: Checks must be made out to Georgia Girls State and mailed to the Department Headquarters. **Send the fee of \$350.00 per girl to the American Legion Auxiliary Department Headquarters, 3035 Mt. Zion Road, Stockbridge, GA 30281 before April 20, 2025** to assure space for your girls. Call the director for late payments of fees. Please do not hold the fees to make sure the girl plans to attend. **Send the fees early so that we will have an estimate of how many girls to expect.** There are many plans and decisions that must be made so having the fees on time is imperative. If your girl backs out at the last minute, there are other worthy girls that the money can cover. It can also be a donation to the program to help cover other costs. We have expenses to pay before the session begins, so please do not hold the fees. Parents or family members should not pay the fee for the girl.

APPLICATIONS: The 2025 pre-application is available on the website. The instructions were sent out in an email to members who have worked with Girls State on the unit level in the past. Please let me know if you didn't receive the email. This year, all the unit is responsible for is the preapplication. Make sure it's complete and submitted to the technical staff. There are two pages to be completed before you submit. If you need help with any aspect of the program, please call or text me at 770-337-7997 or email me at georgiagirlsstate@gmail.com. After the online application is completed, the girl and the school will receive an email with a link to the forms packet. It's on the website and can be printed at any time by the girls.

WEBSITE: www.georgiagirlsstate.org On the website you will be able to get pre-applications and all documents necessary for girls' packets. The Samsung Scholarship link is on our website.

EMAIL: Georgia Girls State email: georgiagirlsstate@gmail.com for the director, Deedy Harrell **PHONE number: Deedy 770-337-7997 Call or text** Or the Assistant Director, Gabriele Barnett: Cell 706-951-3906 or email: barnettgabriele@hotmail.com
Application/Technical help: Cynthia Orms: 478- 232-4831.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **APRIL 20, 2025 Checks for \$350.00 per girl due to the Department Headquarters**
- **May 1, 2025 Completed applications.**
- **May 25, 2025 Application Deadline**
- **June 8, 2025 Arrival at Girls State between 1:00 and 3:00 PM**
- **June 13, 2025 Graduation at 8:45 AM and departure by 12:00 PM.**
- **Arrangements should be made for the girls to be picked up by 12:00 noon on Friday, June 13.**

IMPORTANT REMINDERS: Delays cause your girls to have difficulty in getting prepared for the program. If you find out that a girl is not coming after having sent in her application, please let us know. We make phone calls to all no shows, and it will help us if we can limit the number of calls necessary. Let us know even up through the last day. Please join the Girls State Booster Club!! Donations are accepted to help sponsor girls. If units can't afford to pay for a girl, send any amount and we can put it together with other donations so that girls can attend. Thanks to those units I can always call to help with girls who contact me to participate. Please contact me if you need any assistance. I will help you in any way possible.

GEORGIA AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY JUNIOR LEADERSHIP CAMP POST 82: ELLIJAY ★ 5/31 – 6/6, 2025

For the 12 past years The Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Georgia has conducted “Junior Camp” for the Sons members 8-17 years old. In 2021 the camp included Junior Members from the American Legion Auxiliary. The camp is known as the **Georgia American Legion Family - Junior Leadership Camp** and includes SAL and ALA Junior members 8-17 years old.

The camp is conducted at a different American Legion Posts around the state and members of the Legion, SAL and ALA serve as counselors, Instructors, and staff.

The Campers receive instruction in the proper retirement of the American Flag, folding the Flag properly and attend classes in Americanism, parliamentary procedure, leadership, and Legion Family History.

The SAL and The ALA juniors also conduct their annual convention and installation of officers while at camp. The SAL Commander and ALA President have pledged to attend.

Campers are given time to fish, play games, and interact with each other, all under the supervision of the staff. The staff must undergo background checks and take a class in Risk assessment and awareness of child abuse symptoms.

Several of the past campers have gone on to Post/Unit, District and Department positions

Applications to attend as a “camper” or as a staff member are available on the SAL Georgia website at this link: <https://www.salgeorgia.org/> (bottom right).

At one camp, several Juniors, (SAL and ALA) performed the Flag retirement so well they were commended by our National SAL Vice Commander who was visiting. It is rumored that a post was conducting a flag retirement ceremony, and the Juniors spoke up and told them they were not doing it right. The Juniors were told “ok if you can do better go ahead.” So, the Juniors took over and conducted the entire ceremony from memory. **That** is what we are trying to instill in youth. **We must protect and nurture this nation’s greatest natural resource; Our Children.**



Please promote this camp to all your members and, recruit a few new members while you are at it.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Message from National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chair, Coral May Grout

March, 2025

Have you begun organizing your information for reporting? I hope you’ve been collecting your data and photographs in preparation for reporting.

Many Departments begin their reporting process at the end of March. Here are a few brief reminders about reporting. **Please report what you do.** Congress reviews our reports and the members make decisions, often based upon what they’ve read. Be sure to take quality pictures. Pictures from Facebook, as I’ve said before, cannot be used on the National stage or in ALA publications. If you need specific information about picture quality, please contact the ALA Communications Department.



Coral

Log In to your membership portal and check out these resources:
<https://member.legion-aux.org/member/program-engagement-plans>

MISSION POPPY GROWTH

Cathy Hedges

Poppy Chair, Department of Georgia



Many Units are working already to have poppy posters created by youth groups in their communities. Some Districts have governing documents that allow for judging at that level. Check with your District officers to determine their requirements. **The deadline for receipt of submissions to our Department of Georgia is May 1st** to enable a team of judges to meet, to review, and select the best in each Class. Our Department of Georgia members wish to share the excellence our youth has exhibited. The finalists of each class will then be mailed by May 15th to the Southern Division Chairperson for review and judging. Rules for the Poppy Poster Contest are on the ALA Department website. Contact me for any questions/concerns you may have.

Units have expressed interest in the “Little Miss Poppy” Contest. Guidelines are on the National ALA website.

<https://member.legion-aux.org/Member/Awards/Little-Miss-Poppy-Contest>

May a significant month for the poppy program – it is **NATIONAL POPPY MONTH** and the Friday before Memorial Day, May 23rd, is commemorated as **NATIONAL POPPY DAY**. The Department of Georgia Poppy Anchor created by District 11 will be released into the waters off the coast of Tybee Island on Memorial Day, May 26th to honor lives lost at sea. The tradition was introduced by our benefactor, Moira Michael.

Suggested Ideas to AMP UP National Poppy Month :

1. Plan and take time now to order any needed poppy supplies from “Emblem Sales.”
2. Organize and Discuss Poppy Proclamations with your local governments.
3. Plan Poppy Distribution at community events and with local businesses.
4. Encourage members to join together to celebrate the poppy and enjoy fellowship with events such as “Paint and Sip Parties,” poppy card crafting, Poppy Trivia with your American Legion Family, print and distribute poppy bookmarks, poppy decor, and jewelry, and wear poppy themed clothing with pride.
5. Organize a visit with your local schools, libraries, and assisted living facilities to read “The Poppy Lady.” Copy and share poppy coloring sheets with these same facilities .
6. Junior members may enjoy opportunities to make and bake poppy cookies and finger paint cards for veterans.
7. Poppy Selfie Frames have provided smiles at our Department of Georgia Conferences
8. Create a Poppy Yard Decoration to honor disabled veterans.
9. Invite local dignitaries to lay a wreath containing poppies at a community memorial.
10. Arrange to speak at local civic meetings to share the story in your community and distribute poppies.
11. Wear a poppy everywhere and share the history and significance with those around you.
12. Invite students to plant poppy seeds on the school grounds and in the community (obtain permission).
13. Create large poppies to decorate your fences.
14. Present poppies to coworkers.
15. Attend the Poppy Festival in Good Hope, Georgia on May 17th.

We are approaching year end reports. Please remember to send copies of your Annual Poppy Report and Poppy Financial Report required by the Department of Georgia. Also, please include a narrative of how your unit members promoted the poppy.

Many of these ideas came from our National ALA website. It is a great resource. <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/poppy>

Cathy Hedges , Department of Georgia Poppy Chair
cathy4hedges@gmail.com | 770-597-866

**NATIONAL POPPY
DAY IS MAY 23, 2025**



**THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY
NATIONAL POPPY DAY***

Poppy Day Planning
Start Now for a Successful Poppy Day

Supplies are available at <https://emblem.legion.org/>

COMPLIANCE RESOURCES

NOT SO FUN FACT: About half of Georgia's units and districts have lost IRS tax-exempt status. In 2024-2025 the National ALA asks that we to increase our level of compliance.

All Unit and District officers are encouraged to seek information and ask questions:

- Does the Unit/District comply with the IRS?
- Is the person designated as the **IRS RESPONSIBLE PARTY** for the Unit/District alive? ... active in the unit? ... able to continue to represent the unit?
- Does the Unit/District have an annual checklist and transition plan for compliance and all things financial?

Resources:

Revocation & Reinstatement Webinar PowerPoint

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:8ca7502c-2dcb-4cd3-b11b-2104c45c3d65>

ALA IRS "Cliff Notes"

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:b23585e1-db8f-4eca-a7b4-6996755ab2bf>

Important Compliance Information

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:f4f0b4d2-87bb-461a-867c-c4f256360d31>

Important Compliance Resources

- <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/Audit/Important-Compliance-Information>
- <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:67c7e057-56fa-4ade-86cb-62ca9ac78a02>

Supplemental Instructions

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:f30bf595-1181-47d3-9890-49a4f35e20b1>

There are two ALA ACADEMY COURSES

available for all members to take to be able to ask more questions and help get back into compliance. FREE! Just a bit of time to review and learn.

- COMPLIANCE MATTERS
- TAX-EXEMPT STATUS: REVOCATION & REINSTATEMENT

GO TO THIS LINK: <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/online-training>



OBLIGATIONS

Each UNIT is required according to the Department of Georgia Bylaw Article VII Section 5, to submit **MANDATORY OBLIGATIONS** each year to the Department.

For a unit to be eligible to vote at the Department of Georgia Convention, the mandatory obligations must be received at Department Headquarters on or **before April 1, 2025**.

Unit membership may vote to increase the order or donate additional funds for each mandatory item – enter the amounts on the lines provided.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS may be included in the unit payment for Mandatory Obligations.

★ Make **one check** for OBLIGATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS Payable to ALA Department of Georgia ★

★ **DO NOT** include membership or other funds in the check for OBLIGATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS. ★

The **Hostess Party** obligation is waived if proof of hosting a party is provided (Date, Location, & Details). *Ask your VAVS rep about Hostess Parties.*

Units distribute **Poppies** at least twice per year in May and November. Units are **required** to submit 25% of net proceeds to Department by Dec. 15 and June 15 each year. Units may use this obligation form for each order of poppies. Units are required to submit the separate **Poppy Financial Report** and payment in both June and December.

To be eligible for the 2024-2025 Department of Georgia President's Special Unit and District Merit Award, a unit must contribute to the four items with an asterisk*. No minimum except for more than \$0.

ABOUT: *Georgia On My Mind* is a monthly publication presented by the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Georgia on or about the 15th of each month. Did you find a mistake in the newsletter? Or do you want to submit information for next month (due on the 5th of each month)? If yes, send your request and information to Department@alageorgia.com or to PublicRelations@ALAGeorgia.com.



DISCLAIMER: *Every attempt has been made to ensure accuracy of information and links shared in this edition. Many individuals contribute to this newsletter and sometimes there may be an OOPS! Kindly send an email to one of the addresses above and let our team know of any mistake you find. If more than two months have passed since the issue date of this edition, no guarantee is provided that the links in this edition are accurate. All efforts were made at the time of publication to ensure accurate links.*

GOVERNANCE: GET READY

It is the time of year for all units and districts to look at their Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules and **MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER FOR THE UNIT AND DISTRICT CONVENTIONS OR ANNUAL MEETINGS** which generally take place in May. Nominations, elections, ballots, changes to governing documents, changes to dues, and much more can occur at these meetings and leaders should plan ahead.



Some governing documents require election boards to be displayed before the annual meeting. The President may also appoint a nominating committee to be approved by members, often in March. This committee typically fills officer positions and identifies suitable committee chairs, and sometimes assists with elections, including ballot preparation.

Units elect new officers and delegates for District Conventions in May and the Department Convention in June. The Unit President typically leads the delegation to the Department convention following a formula of two delegates per Unit plus one additional delegate per twenty-five members in good standing. Department Officers, Committee Chairs, District Presidents, PDPs, and VAVS Reps must be listed on the unit's CREDENTIALS form due June 7 to the Department. District procedures may vary; consult your district's governing documents.

Districts will vote on officer positions and delegates from Georgia to the National Convention. Each District must submit the form with officers and nominees for Delegate and Alternate Delegate by June 10.

About National Convention Delegates: Nominees to represent Georgia at the National Convention should understand the position's requirements ([policy](#)) and costs **before** being placed on the ballot. The department covers the national convention registration fee and reimburses eligible Delegates \$275. Nominees **MUST** cover all other expenses such as transportation, lodging, meals, parking, banquets, and other incidentals.

NOW IS THE TIME TO GATHER EVERYTHING AND GET READY FOR YOUR UNIT & DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETINGS!

REQUIRED UNIT FORMS: *These forms are due to the Department each year as noted below. For a unit to be considered in good standing with the Department of Georgia all forms must be submitted on time.*

- [Unit Obligation & Contribution Form 2024-2025 \(Due April 1 2025\)](#)
- [Unit Officers Yearly Form 2025-2026 \(Due June 3 - after Unit elections\)](#)
- [Unit Data Form 2026 \(for Unit membership cards\) \(Due June 3\)](#)
- [Poppy Financial Report \(Due June 15 & Dec 15\)](#)
- [Unit Dues Rate Change Form 2026 \(Due May 1, 2025\).](#)

REQUIRED DISTRICT FORM: *This form is due to the Department by June 10. The outgoing and incoming District President should collaborate and make sure the LEGIBLE form is submitted on time.*

[District Officers Yearly Form 2025 - 2026 \(Due June 10 or immediately following district elections\)](#)

ALA CHALLENGE DECK

They are still available! [Learn more about the ALA Challenge Deck here and get yours today!](#) When you (or your unit) donate \$35 or more to the **Veteran Projects Fund**, you will receive the 46-card deck. Learn more about the ALA Challenge Deck at <https://www.legion-aux.org/ALA-Challenge-Deck>. Donate online at <https://donate.legion-aux.org/CSiDonate/Give.aspx/S9FGOOG7#c> Please indicate in the memo line of the check that the gift is for the cards. If you have any questions, please contact Development Director Carley Schutz at cschutz@ALAforVeterans.org.

LEGISLATIVE: IT IS A BIG DEAL

THE AMERICAN LEGION IS THE VOICE OF U.S. MILITARY VETERANS AND SERVICEMEMBERS.

The American Legion Family stormed Washington D.C. and Capitol Hill February 23 – 26, 2025. Members of the Georgia delegation visited our senators, congressional representatives, and their staff and discussed with them the importance of The American Legion's legislative priorities. Legionnaires, SAL and ALA members divided into four groups on Monday and attended informative meetings as delegates to the Legislative Commission, the National Security Commission, the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, and the Veterans Employment & Education Commission. Each ALA group was led by a National ALA Chairperson and Past National President. Each session included guest speakers and incredible information.

Our united voice makes a difference in D.C. and our members were honored to be part of the annual Hill visits. On Monday the entire group attended an afternoon Commander's Call and on Tuesday morning before *storming the Hill* everyone attended the Commander's Rally to AMP UP the excitement and raise awareness of key methods of advocacy.

Following the Washington Conference, The American Legion Legislative Division jumped back into attending meetings and working group sessions and meeting with House Veterans Affairs Committee staff members from the DAMA and EO Subcommittees among others – all to develop future testimony opportunities. More can be learned by joining the ALA Legislative Facebook group and following along with updates and prompts. Join at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALALegislative>

IT DOESN'T STOP HERE.

Given today's climate in Washington, every single member of The Legion Family is called upon to exercise their voice and ADVOCATE in support of The American Legion's Legislative Priorities for the 119th Congress, 1st Session. The materials at <https://www.legion.org/advocacy/legislative/legislative-agenda-point-papers> break it down and clarify the ASK. These are the materials our members took with them to meetings on Capitol Hill when they met with their elected officials. The many Senate and Congress buildings on the Hill were PAPERED by over 300 members of the Legion Family. Not it is time for you to do the same. Every member has a duty to advocate. See the websites below and tips on the next page.

Websites with Legislative Planning Information:

1. *The American Legion Auxiliary Legislative Website*- <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/legislative>
2. *American Legion Legislative Action Center*
<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home>
3. *Legislative Advocacy Guide*- https://member.legion-aux.org/cmsdesk/ALA/media/PDF/Guides/Legislative_Advocacy_Guide.pdf
4. *The American Legion Dispatch*- <https://www.legion.org/dispatch>
5. *How to Host a Meet the Candidates Night*- <https://member.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/Legislative/How-to-Host-a-Meet-the-Candidate-Night>



LEGISLATIVE CONTINUED

THE GRASSROOTS ACTION CENTER

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home> is up and running with the Legion's agenda for the 119th US Congress. <https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/legislative/2025/january/the-legions-agenda-for-congress>

The Major Richard Star Act is a new focus which is legislation that if approved will allow some 53,000 combat retired veterans to collect both their military retirement and VA disability concurrently, without an offset. Read more [HERE](#) and at <https://www.majorrichardstaract.org/>

If you know who your representative is but you are unable to contact them using their contact form, the Clerk of the House maintains addresses and phone numbers of all House members and Committees, or you may call 🇺🇸 (202) 224-3121 for the U.S. House switchboard operator. 📞 [#alalegislation](#)

When learning about the Legislative program please remember "Our Impact" from the home page of www.alaforveterans.org *Our Impact: We are one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military, and their families. We help to advance the mission of The American Legion. From helping to draft the GI Bill in 1944 to advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the nonpartisan American Legion Family is instrumental in advancing legislation that improves the quality of life for our nation's veterans and servicemembers.*



ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

The National Legislative Committee Challenge aims to increase participation in corresponding with our legislators through the Action Alerts is still going on! Members need to engage with the Legion's Action Alert. Get counted and record the hours you "SERVE" while surfing the internet and TAKING ACTION! Utilizing The American Legion's Grassroots Action Center at www.votervoices.net/AmericanLegion/home to obtain information on legislative priorities, call for immediate action, and connect with representatives to advocate for our veterans, active duty, and their families allows an avenue to accomplish this engagement, whether in person or through correspondence.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

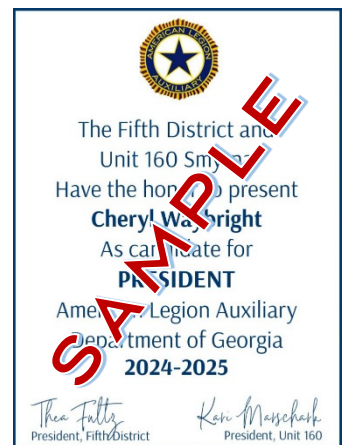
GRASSROOTS ACTION CENTER

CHALLENGE



YES YOU!

You can run for Department Office! The ALA Department of Georgia's Standing Rule 15 states: "All candidates for Department Office shall file with the Department Headquarters their intention on running for office no later than April 1st. This will be published in the April Newsletter and sent by E-Blast to all members and posted on the Department web site. The Department will certify that candidates are eligible to run for office, i.e., dues current, etc., and let the candidate know." You will need to provide a "card" with endorsements from your unit and/or district. See the example for this year's President to the right to help get yours in order. Please send your candidate notice to Secretary Patty Hawkins at secamlegaux@bellsouth.net. While this is a rule, nominations from the floor during the convention are allowed.



ALA ACADEMY REMINDERS

The ALA Academy The American Legion Auxiliary is providing all members with the tools they need to help grow the organization as a team. The Academy courses are designed to help members learn online and at no cost to them.

The ALA Academy offers two options:

Self-paced courses: Participate from any device. These are designed for you to take whenever you have time with no need to pre-register. <https://www.legion-aux.org/ala-academy> (Must be logged in to the member portal.)

Live virtual webinars: These courses are free but are offered live and you will need to register in advance. The next live webinar is March 20 – the link to register is below.



LEADERSHIP WEBINAR SERIES:

LEADING THE WAY
THROUGH
MENTORING

Date: March 20
Time: Noon ET

Click this link to register:
https://alaforveterans-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3ZXMzYEiQo6elRnNgwVj1Q#/registration

FISHER HOUSE FOUNDATION

By Kristen Hensley, Central Division VA&R Chair

Fisher House has served countless military and veteran families, giving them a place to stay near VA Medical Facilities, while their soldier or veteran received needed medical treatment or services. What is less known is how this much needed foundation began, and what sparked a builder to fill this need for our nation's hero's families lodging obstacles.

In the mid-1970's, Pauline Trost was doing a clinic visit at the National Naval medical Center in Bethesda and saw a helicopter land at the center's heliport. A sailor, with his wife and kids disembarked with their belongings. Pauline pondered where this family was going to stay, as most lodgings were expensive, and not something easily afforded on a sailor's salary alone. This haunted her for years.

Pauline's husband became the Chief of Naval Operations in 1986, and this sparked the ambition in pursuing her dream of providing affordable temporary housing for families of those being treated at the Bethesda VA Medical Facility. She reached out to the President of the Washington Area Naval Officers Wives clubbed to begin exploring how the group would feel about taking on this project to fill this need. They even considered finding unused buildings to convert to temporary shelters to house these families.

Pauline's husband received a phone call from Zachary Fisher, a local builder in 1990, who had previously provided generous assistance for families of service personnel that came about due to tragedy. He was reaching out, expressing a desire to expand his support and asked Pauline's husband for ideas on projects he could take on or contribute to, that would benefit personnel of all military services. Pauline's husband gave Mr. Fisher some ideas, one of them being Pauline's dream.

Zachary Fisher was intrigued by Pauline's dream and decided to discuss it further. To quote Mr. Fisher, he stated "I'm a builder, I have my own architect, we can do this." In another interview, he stated, "I'm a builder. This is what I do for a living. I can do this." This sparked the dream, and things moved quickly, navigating bureaucratic hurdles, identifying a site, and the time to design and build the facility. In 1991, the first Fisher House opened with President and Mrs. Bush joining Mr. & Mrs. Fisher and Admiral & Mrs. Trost at the dedication ceremony, thereby fulfilling this almost 2-decade old dream.

Since opening the first home in 1991, Fisher House Foundation has opened 98 more homes near VA Facilities bringing their total to 99 homes currently in operation. Military, veterans, and families stay free of charge, with private rooms, bathrooms, community kitchen and common areas. This foundation gives people a home away from home while their loved ones are receiving treatment, and other services in facilities far from where they live. They have so far served 534,000 families, providing 12.5 million plus days of lodging, and have saved these families over \$650 million dollars just in lodging expenses. Currently there are 3 more houses under construction: Arkansas (1), Illinois (1), and Michigan (1). There are 16 future homes that are currently being planned, one in each of the following: AL, AZ, CA, GA, Germany, IA, LA, MD, NY, NC, ND, OK, PR, PA, VT, and WI.

To find out ways you can help and get involved, please visit: <https://www.fisherhouse.org/get-involved/>



CONFERENCE/CONVENTION SILENT AUCTION

PDP Miriam Stein has agreed to run raffles and a silent auction to support the 2024-2025 fundraising efforts at the Spring Conferences and at the June Convention. There will be a Silent Auction on Friday and Saturday until noon on Saturday at the Spring Conference.



To ALL District Presidents: Please work with your units to help with this – it is not “just the DP” who should contribute. We hope each District will donate at least one quality item. It is important for this to be a success because a portion of the proceeds go to your VA&R Program. Make sure if you are donating a basket, provide a list of all the items in the basket the winner will receive. Make sure the gifts are nice. Remember Red, White, and Blue Patriotic items are sought after and raise the most funds!

Remember for God and Country,
Miriam Stein, Chair, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
miriam363rs@gmail.com



RAFFLE – PATRIOTIC AFGHAN

Historian Debbie Hoopingarner has graciously agreed to crochet this American Flag Afghan for a fundraiser.

Tickets: \$3 each or 4 for \$10



RAFFLE CORNHOLE GAME BOARD

A terrific addition to a home or unit for fun times and socializing with a little bit of competition. 2’ x 4’ includes case and eight bean bags.

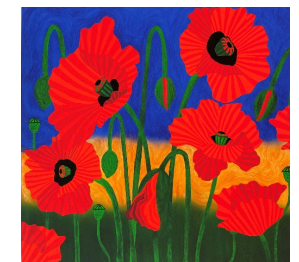
Tickets: \$5 each or 5 for \$20



RAFFLE – GICLEE POPPY PRINTS (Right)

Three prints are available – there will be three tickets drawn. Each print is 8” x 8” and in a white 12” square frame. These are custom made by Elizabeth Catalan a family member of Unit 160. A certificate of authenticity accompanies each print.

Tickets: \$3 each or 4 for \$10 *Each ticket has three chances to win!*



SALE: MOINA MICHAEL USPS STAMP PINS

ALMOST SOLD OUT. These are in high demand. More may be available at the Convention in June – pre-pay at the spring conference to reserve yours. **\$12 each.**

DONATE TO SUPPORT MISSION PROGRAMS

AND FOR A CHANCE TO WIN!

Susan Hall along with Deedy Harrell and Miriam Stein are spearheading the effort to collect items donated by members and units to support Girls State and VA&R. Register through these links to ensure the correct quantity of items is gathered. Bring all items to the Spring Conference to receive your raffle tickets. Drawing will be held before the conference adjourns on Saturday afternoon.

DONATE!
TO SUPPORT GIRLS STATE

Each year, the Georgia Girls State Program uses a LOT of supplies!

Sign up at the link to select the items you or your unit are donating and bring to the Spring Conference and you will be entered in a chance to win a \$25 Gift Card. The value of your donations are tax deductible.

Girls State:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090449A9A823A20-55594167-georgia>

VA&R: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090449A9A823A20-55595369-georgia>

DONATE!
TO SUPPORT VA&R

Our VAVS Representative need to restock their supplies to care for our veterans. Your donations are critical to their success!

Sign up at the link to select the items you or your unit are donating and bring to the Spring Conference and you will be entered in a chance to win a \$25 Gift Card. The value of your donations are tax deductible.

SPRING CONFERENCE

March 21-23, 2025

Early Bird Registration closed on March 14, 2025. Onsite registration will be available beginning before the 6pm meetings on Thursday 3/20 and before the sessions on Friday and Saturday. It is likely that wristbands will be provided to verify registration.

To make hotel reservations, call the local number 770-923-1775 for the Sonesta Gwinnett Place Hotel and use the group code 03202025THEA or use this link:

<https://be.synxis.com/?Hotel=58939&Chain=5157&anive=2025-03-20&depart=2025-03-23&adult=1&clrid=O&grou1r:03202025THEA>

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA
SPRING CONFERENCE
MARCH 20-23, 2025
BLOCK AGENDA

All Meetings are at the Sonesta Gwinnett Place Atlanta: Duluth, Georgia
Please join us for fellowship, fun, business, and learning best practices to #AmpUpMission.

Please register before March 14, 2025.
<https://georgialegion.org/events/not-working-se-below/>

Please make your own hotel reservations as outlined on the Registration Form.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025
6:00 PM Georgia Girls State Board MeetingIndependence Ballroom
6:30 PM Department Executive Committee (DEC) Meeting.....Independence Ballroom

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2025RED FRIDAY
9:00 AM Independence BallroomConference Day 1
11:45 AM Lunch Break..... Legion Family Lunch
1:15 PM ReconveneIndependence Ballroom
3:00 PM Recess Conference
3:15 PM BE THE ONE Training Legion Family - Georgia Ballroom
3:15 PM VA Rep/VAVS MeetingIndependence Ballroom

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 2025PATRIOTIC SATURDAY
8:30 AM Department of Georgia Joint Session Georgia Ballroom
All members should attend this session for Keynote Addresses
10:30 AM Independence BallroomConference Day 2
Noon Lunch Break.....(Lunch on your own)
1:15 PM ReconveneIndependence Ballroom
3:30 PM Adjourn Conference
3:45 PM ALAMIS TrainingIndependence Ballroom
6:00 PM Banquet..... Georgia Ballroom

SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025
8:30 AM Legion Family Memorial Service & Poppy Anchor Dedication
.....Independence Ballroom

All members are welcome to all sessions, including the DEC meeting to listen and learn. A detailed agenda will be provided on the department website and in the private Facebook group as we get closer to the event. Be prepared to get to know members and leaders from across the Department and to learn from Department Committee Chairs about mission programs and from District Presidents about what is happening around the Department. **Please wear RED (Remember Everyone Deployed) on Friday and be patriotic on Saturday.** Please note the schedule is subject to change or be altered due to Legion Family last minute changes.