



American Legion
Auxiliary

The Auxiliary News Hub

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

Mission Statement

In the spirit of *Service, Not Self*, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

Vision Statement

The vision of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion while becoming the premier service organization and foundation of every community providing support for our veterans, our military, and their families by shaping a positive future in an atmosphere of fellowship, patriotism, peace and security.

Purposes

In fulfillment of our mission, the American Legion Auxiliary adheres to the following purposes:

- To support and advocate for veterans, military, and their families
- To support the initiatives and programs of The American Legion
- To foster patriotism and responsible citizenship
- To award scholarships and promote quality education and literacy
- To provide educational and leadership opportunities that uphold the ideals of freedom and democracy and encourage good citizenship and patriotism in government
- To increase our capacity to deliver our mission by providing volunteer opportunities within our communities
- To empower our membership to achieve personal fulfillment through *Service, Not Self*

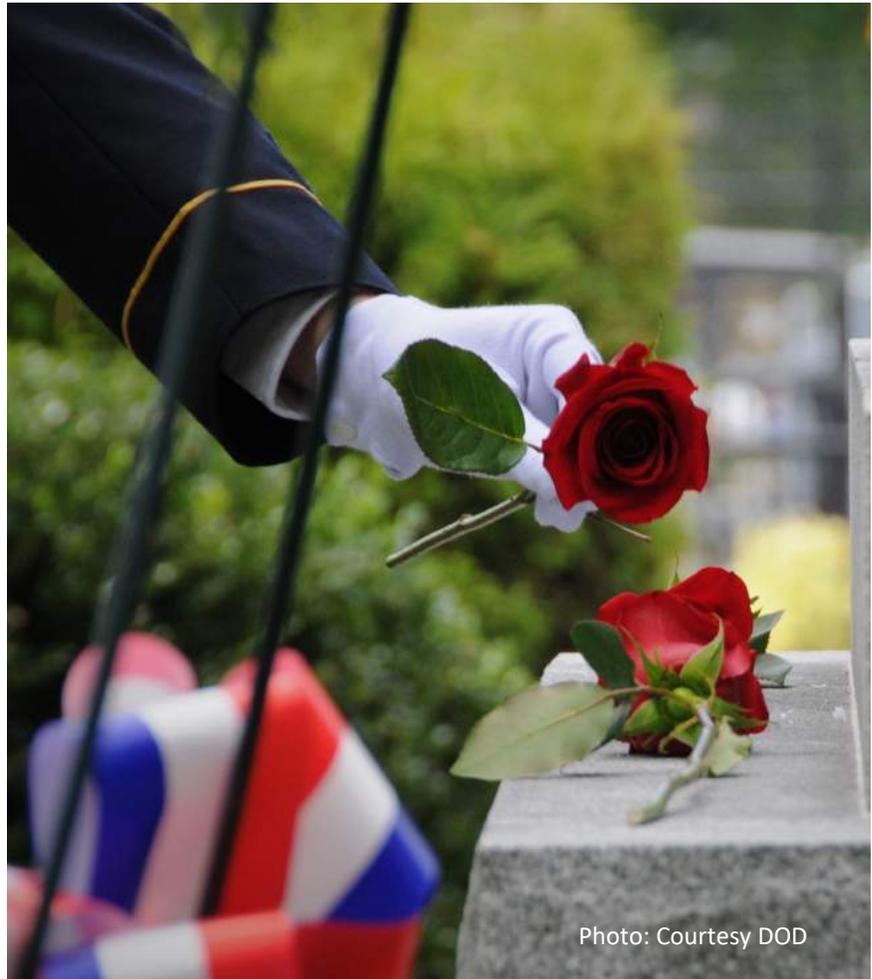


Photo: Courtesy DOD

MEMORIAL DAY

“Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.”

2022-2023 Officers

- President Gloria Williams
- Vice President Glenda Schultz
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- Treasurer Susie Tozier
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- Aux. Emergency Marion Rocha
- Children & Youth Susan Baker
- Community Service Sharon Moore
- Constitution/Bylaws Glenda Schultz
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- Elections Donna Scott
- Girls State Advisor Nancy Brown-Park
- Girls State Chairman Allyn Kau
- Girls State Director Valerie Hardy
- Girls S. Asst. Director Shery Core
- Girls State 3 Year Leslie Vondra
- Girls State 2 Year Noella Passarelli
- Girls State 1 Year Kimberly MacKinney
- Girls State Nurse Elizabeth Tomlin
- Girls State Pres. Alt. Patricia Patrick
- Girls State VP Alt. Jean McGinnis
- GS Chief Counsel Kimberly MacKinney
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- Junior Conf. Director Stacey Jones
- Junior Conf. 2 Year Deloris Artis
- Junior Conf. 1 Year Lela Dooley
- Junior Conf. Nurse Ann Sanchez
- Leadership Robin Falkenberg
- Legislative Dee Ann Graham
- Membership Maureen O'Brien-Sacco
- Music Yve Evans-Hanna
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- Past Presidents Parley Joan Cannon
- Poppy Martha Romano
- Public Relations Donna Smith
- Resolutions Linda Fercho
- Rules Linda Diebel
- Veterans Affairs Linda Hayes
- Ways and Means Mahala Beery
- Ways and Means Com. Marsha Munroe
- Webmaster Rebecca Glenn

President's Message

Gloria Williams



President Gloria encourages all juniors to participate

Let's Support our Juniors!

Junior Conference is April 22, 2023, at American Legion Post 26 in Bakersfield. Fun, friendship, and learning activities are on the schedule. Elections of junior officers will also be held.

Contact Stacy Smith onyxbear61@yahoo.com for more details on the conference.

Remember you can download the ALA Junior Activities Handbook from the Junior Member Activities page when you log in to the Members Only section at ALAforVeterans.org. It has information on eligibility, ceremonies for initiations, installations and graduations, contests, meetings and programs.

It has been said many times but bears repeating **"Juniors are our future!"** If you have daughters or granddaughters, please encourage them to join!

Gloria

"Our life is a constant journey, from birth to death. The landscape changes, the people change, our needs change, but the train keeps moving. Life is the train, not the station."

Paulo Coelho

The Auxiliary News Hub is the official publication of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of California. Deadline for the June / July issue is May 23.

Editor reserves the right to edit any submission for the purpose of publication. Please email all articles, photos, suggestions and (gentle) criticisms to

Editor Nancy Heinisch editor@calegionaux.org



Proper Parliamentary Procedures and Practices



Department Parliamentarian Anita Biggs helps answer your most perplexing questions

I know the Auxiliary is a 501(c)19. Is it possible to apply for a grant earmarked for a 501(c)3 organization? And, if so, how do you go about doing it?

Our ALA National Foundation is a 501(c)3. If contacted, they can make arrangements to receive the donation and sub-grant back to the unit/district/department.

"American Legion Auxiliary units, districts/counties, or departments that have identified a source for grant funding from a foundation or corporation that requires the recipient to be a 501(c)3 can have the ALA Foundation serve as the recipient. The ALA Foundation will then, in turn, sub-grant the full amount to the unit, district/county, or department according to the terms and conditions of the grantor."

Contact the ALA Foundation for more information and directions.

Seeking Vintage Girls State Articles

American Legion Auxiliary California Girls State will celebrate our 80th session this year from June 26 — July 1. We are in search of photos, especially from our early days.

If you have photos from the 1940's-1990's, we would love to have copies of them. Comparing the attire from our past to today shows how much our program has changed over the years.

From crinolines, gloves, and hats to jeans and tee shirts, our program has grown to include young leaders from all walks of life. Our first citizens slept on cots in a junior high gym. Now they sleep in university residence halls - we've come a long way!



Vintage 50's California Girls State American Legion Auxiliary T-shirt (EBAY)

What hasn't changed over the years is the mission of our program. Each citizen of ALA California Girls State expands their understanding of civic responsibility, love of country, and service to their community. They gain confidence as they try new things. They build a circle of friendship that includes all the ALA California Girls State citizens who came before them. They are empowered to be their best selves.



1950's Inauguration

For this, and a million other reasons, we celebrate our 80 sessions of changing lives.

Are **YOU** from Girls State?

Valerie Hardy, Girls State Director

A new course is coming soon in the ALA Academy! ALA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was created to help members recognize biased language and performance bias and implement strategies to overcome them, identify and properly use interrupters to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all, and demonstrate the ability to coach others on the importance of inclusion and equity within ALA. Watch for updates on when the course is ready.

Junior Kristina Steward Earns National Good Deed Award

Every year the American Legion Auxiliary recognizes heroism and helpfulness of junior members by presenting the Good Deed Award. To be eligible for this prestigious award the junior member must demonstrate an act of valor, donate their time and/or money for a worthy cause, and serve as an inspirational role model for the organization.

Kristina Steward, a Junior member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 377, met this criteria in several ways:

- She led a campaign to change one of her school’s policies to restore **feminine hygiene products in restrooms within the high school**. For the proposed policy change to be considered, Kristina had to write a business proposal and collect over 1700 signatures. She succeeded.
- Kristina initiated the **Operation Gratitude Program** at American Legion Post 377 in Tujunga. Operation Gratitude offers the American people a way to express gratitude for our Military. Since 2003 Operation Gratitude has distributed over 3.5 million Care Packages to military members around the world. These packages contain items such as beanie babies to boost the morale and resilience of our service members and give them warm reminders of home. The project ran for three months and Kristina collected over 2,000 beanie babies.
- With the success of the above project, Kristina began another project under **Operation Gratitude – Jot-A-Note**. Every Operation Gratitude Care Package includes a note thanking our troops, veterans, new recruits or wounded heroes for their service to our country. Kristina set up a Jot-A-Note station at Post 377 which included a mailbox, blank note cards, paper, index cards, pens and pencils, colored markers and envelopes. For the period of October 2022 to February 2023, Kristina collected over 1,000 notes which were sent to Operation Gratitude to be included in their care packages.



Kristina and ALA National President Vicki Koutz

Congratulations to Kristina!

Regina Clark

Girl Scouts Deliver!

San Mateo College Park Girl Scouts Troop 61740 continues their four-year partnership with the Auxiliary.

Unit 105 Redwood City delivered the Troops' 30 Valentine's Day gift bags to veteran residents at our adopted VA-Menlo Park Building 331.

The bags included puzzles, pen/note pads, sweet and savory snacks, hand sanitizer and handmade flowers. Troop 61740 has donated handmade holiday gift bags since 2019.

Peggy Toye, District 26 President



Apply today to serve on the ALA Foundation Board of Directors



The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board of Directors is a group of talented and driven volunteers who work hard to support veterans, military, and their families.

The board is currently seeking passionate individuals for three-year elected board positions. The

board member’s primary responsibility is to connect with supporters and to raise funds to support the programs and services of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The nominating committee for the ALA Foundation Board is looking for applicants with a passion for the mission of the American Legion

Auxiliary who are eager to build, promote, and sustain the ALA Foundation.

The application can be found at alafoundation.org/board-application/.



National Security is very important to all of us. Find the information to successfully navigate and prepare for your expected type of disaster.

READY (www.ready.gov) is a government sponsored website of information on what to do to prepare you and your family in the event of an emergency.

Launched in February 2003, **READY** is a National public service campaign designed to educate and empower the American people to prepare for, respond to and mitigate emergencies and disasters.

There are four key areas in the **READY** Program:

- * Stay informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses
- * Make a family emergency plan
- * Build an emergency supply kit
- * Get involved in your community by taking action to prepare for emergencies

The website also has information on how to download the newly updated FEMA App to get preparedness strategies and real-time weather and emergency alerts.

Stay safe!

*Joyce McLeod
Department National Security Chair*

New District Facebook Page Announced on TV

American Legion Auxiliary District 2 is excited to announce the creation of our Facebook page: American Legion Auxiliary District 2 California. We announced this new service live on the evening KRCR News: [The American Legion Auxiliary District 2 California launches new Facebook page | KRCR \(krcrtv.com\)](https://www.krcrtv.com).

This new District Facebook page will help keep members updated on unit events, district meetings and support ALA Programming. It will also allow the public to connect with our district and stay informed on American Legion Auxiliary activities, resources and membership opportunities. All with keeping the ALA goal of supporting our veterans, military members and their families.

Please take a moment and visit and like our new District 2 Facebook page.

*Anne Marie Fuller
District 2 Public Relations Chair*

Auxiliary Honors Vets on St. Patrick's Day

Palisades Auxiliary Unit 283 hosted Veterans from the West Los Angeles and Sepulveda VA facilities for a festive lunch in honor of St. Patrick's Day.

The Veterans enjoyed an Irish themed lunch of corned beef and cabbage with all the fixings. They were entertained by members of the local Palisades High School Marching Band plus a solo bagpiper performance by award winning Bill Walker, a Post 283 SAL member.

This annual event is a highlight of Unit 283. The unit members greet the arriving guests, serve the meals, and provide great hospitality to our local heroes!

Nancy Niles, Unit 283 Treasurer



ALA TRIVIA

by Elizabeth Estavillo

1. Who wrote the Pledge of Allegiance?
 - A. Francis Scott Key
 - B. Francis Bellany
 - C. Francis L. Spruce

2. In what year was the American Legion and Auxiliary National Headquarters dedication?
 - A. 1910
 - B. 1923
 - C. 1925

3. In the first year of the ALA, how many states had members?
 - A. 45
 - B. 22
 - C. 12

Answers on last page

Celebrating Our Dual Members:



Michele Steinmetz is a proud dual member of American Legion Post 238. She is also the Member Engagement Coordinator of the Western Region at the American Legion National Headquarters.

Will you be Watching King Charles III's Coronation?

Look for the English Remembrance Poppy

The following is a brief history from Wikipedia:

A remembrance poppy is an artificial flower worn in some countries to commemorate their military personnel who died in war. Remembrance poppies are produced by veterans' associations who exchange the poppies for charitable donations used to give financial, social and emotional support to members and veterans of the armed forces.

Inspired by the war poem "In Flanders Fields" and promoted by Moina Michael, they were first used near the end of World War I to commemorate British Empire and United States military casualties of the war. Madame Guérin established the first "Poppy Days" to raise funds for veterans, widows, orphans, liberty bonds, and charities such as the Red Cross.



At its conference in 1920, the National American Legion adopted the poppy as their official symbol of remembrance.

Frenchwoman Madame Guérin was invited to address American Legion delegates at their 1920 Cleveland Convention about 'Inter-Allied Poppy Day.'

After the convention, the American Legion adopted the poppy as its memorial flower and committed to support Madame Guérin in her planned U.S. Poppy Day.

Following this event the American Legion christened Madame Guérin as "The Poppy Lady from France." Madame Guérin successfully organized the U.S.'s first nationwide Poppy Day during the week before Memorial Day in May 1921.

Ann Philcox, Unit 520 President



ALA Unit 585 donated \$1000 to **K9s for Warriors**, service dogs for disabled veterans with PTSD, TBI, & MST.

Peggy Toye, District 26 President

The American Legion National Legislative Conference of 118th Congress

For more information on National Commander Vincent Troiola's address to the 118th Congress, visit www.Legion.org/washingtonconference.

The following is a brief summary of the Legion's priorities now in Congress.

*Linda Hayes
Department VA&R Chair*

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

The leading issue facing the veteran community is suicide.

VA Healthcare Modernization

The future of VA healthcare is as a hybrid system consisting of Veterans Health Administration-provided inpatient and outpatient care, telehealth and community care. Modernizing electronic health records, veteran-centric access standards, and a transparent online scheduling system for VHA-provided care and community care alike are all essential to ensuring veterans receive the care they deserve.

PACT Act: Implementation and Oversight

Passage of the SFC Health Robinson Pact Act in the 117th Congress ensured millions of toxic-exposed veterans will now have access to healthcare and compensation they rightfully deserve. VA estimates that there will be up to 7 million new disability claims filed due to eligibility expansion that the claims backlog will increase to 450,000 by October 2023.

Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors

America's veterans are targeted by predatory actors that seek to profit from an array of benefits that have been rightfully earned by those who have served our nation. From claim companies that charge exorbitant fees (for services provided free by veterans service organizations) to lawyers vying for billions of dollars set aside for victims of diseases associated with contaminants, veterans and their families are met by promises of large payouts if they agree to surrender substantial portions of their benefits.

Current Receipt

Currently, 42,000 military retirees with combat-related injuries qualify for DoD retirement pay as well as VA disability compensation. However, for retired veterans with disability ratings less than 50%, the VA compensation is deducted from their retirement pay.

Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parody

From protecting borders and delivering pandemic aid, our National Guard and Reserve troops have responded to new challenges like never before. Often, they leave both their families and civilian employers for a sizeable amount of time, sometimes taking a significant pay cut with them. Yet despite all we ask of them, too often they are left without access to the GI Bill. According to current law, they only accrue GI Bill entitlement when called to active duty under federal orders, not under state orders.

GI Bill for Honorable Service

To receive most VA benefits, a veteran's characterization of discharge from service must be "under honorable conditions." However, education

assistance benefits within the GI Bill, require that service members receive an "honorable discharge." If the characterization of service is "general under honorable conditions," the GI Bill remains out of reach for these veterans.

Support our Afghan Allies

In the U.S. military, there is a code: "no one left behind." For two decades, members of the U.S. Armed Forces fought shoulder to shoulder with brave Afghan allies who served with and protected Americans. The United States must honor its promises and provide genuine, lasting protection for the Afghans who have made it safely to the United States, and for those who were left behind.

Amend the U.S. Flag Code

Appropriate care and respect for the American flag has been a leading mission of the American Legion since its inception. TAL helped Congress write the U.S. Flag Code into law in 1942. Amended several times in the past decades since its adoption, the Code serves as a guide with no penalties built in for violations. Practices and customs have been modified in the last few years regarding certain display procedures, but the Flag Code has not been updated to reflect current acceptable patriotic practices.



Jim Vaas: Breaking the Gender Barrier



For the first time in American Legion Auxiliary District 21 history, District 21 President Ellen Fedorowski broke the leadership gender barrier by appointing MSgt Jim Vass, USAF, Retired, as the district’s Secretary in July of 2022.

Jim is a member of the Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons. He is the Adjutant of Post 574 and the Secretary of Unit 574 in Moreno Valley, California. As an active participant in the organization, he volunteers his time and energy to support his District, his Post, his Unit, and more importantly veterans and their families.

Vass’s appointment as an officer represents a significant milestone for American Legion Auxiliary District 21. While men have been allowed to join the organization, many have not held leadership positions until now. Vass's appointment as an officer reflects the changing demographics of the American Legion Auxiliary and the broader veteran community.

In recent years, the American Legion Auxiliary has seen an increase in the number of male members who have joined to support their spouses, sisters, daughters, and nieces who have served.

He and his wife, MSgt Pamela Vass, USAF (Ret.) emphasized the importance of supporting all veterans and their families, regardless of gender. Jim said that he would work to ensure that the organization remained inclusive and welcoming to all who wish to serve.

The progress that the American Legion Auxiliary will make in the coming years will better reflect the diversity and inclusivity of the veteran community. Congratulations to President Ellen Fedorowski and Jim Vass on the historic achievement.

*Regina Mendoza
Unit 574 President*

Remember to Just Ask

The American Legion held a Veterans Awareness and Membership Information Campaign in Merced on February 17, 18 and 19. Accredited American Legion service offers were available during the event to assist veterans and their families with VA claims and other questions related to benefits. ALA Vice President Glenda Schultz and NEC Joan Cannon were featured speakers at the event.

ALA District 12 Parliamentarian Ann Kelley and ALA District 12 President Elizabeth Estavillo volunteered their time to welcome participants, speakers, and guests.

“We made sure to check with the veterans to see if they had any relatives who might be potential Auxiliary members,” said Kelley. “All you have to do to take the first step in gaining new members is to just ask.”

Ann Kelley, District 12 Parliamentarian



Ann Kelley and Elizabeth Estavillo at the reception table

It's Time to Purple Up!

April 15 is the day to "Purple Up for Military Kids."

No matter your age, you are encouraged to wear purple on April 15 to show support for our military children.

Why purple? It is the combination of Army green, Coast Guard blue, Air Force blue, Marines red, Navy blue and Space Force blue.

*Susan Baker
Department Children and Youth Chair*

Juniors Promote Love



Elmer C. Jertberg American Legion Auxiliary Unit 299 Juniors raised \$385 for their Valentine's Day fundraiser pictured above.

They received support from the Legion, Riders and SONS. They even received support from other Auxiliary units, post, SONS and Riders.

Congratulations to Junior Rebeka Avila-Hernandez for a job well done. Thank you to all who support and encourage the Juniors fundraising efforts.

Cotton Receives Community Service Award

For decades, Palm Springs American Legion Post 519 has been a welcoming venue for our service members, their families, and others. Thanks to Bettye Cotton, Unit 519 member, they don't have to go far into the building to feel welcome.

Bettye is usually found behind the podium on Friday nights, where she greets people and checks their Legion membership cards. She also takes dinner reservations by phone during the week. You can find her on the dance floor as well — just listen for her laughter and look for her smile, which has been brightening up the room for the past 20 years.



"After my husband passed, it gave me a wonderful way to have a social life," she said of her volunteer efforts at the Legion. "They treat me so nicely, they can't get rid of me." Bettye also is the best joke teller and loves to hear new jokes. Bettye has also been volunteering at the McCormick Auto Auction since the 1960s.

She has reached out to and positively impacted — through her kindness, grace, humor and love — active-duty military members and veterans.

On February 15, 2023, Bettye was one of six individuals recognized with a Community Service Award by Palm Springs Human Rights Commission.

Danielle Pantanella, Unit 519 President

Juniors are Our Future

Here are just a few of our Juniors' accomplishments:

- Unit 262 Juniors held a Valentine's Day fundraiser.
- Unit 790 Juniors participated and led the Pledge of Allegiance when ALA National President Vicki Koutz visited.
- Unit 180 Juniors sponsored a lemonade stand, shown left.



*Erika Hernandez
Unit 299 Secretary
Junior Auxiliary Program Chair*

Winning Ticket(s)



Remember to bring your address labels to place on the back of your raffle tickets at Convention!

Sock Hop for Socks



ALA Unit 817 held a 50's sock hop dance. They collected socks and then dropped them off at the local VA.

Barbara Garrison, Unit 817 President



A Few Tips from National

If you want to learn more about using social media, check out the recorded webinar in the **ALA Academy: Using Social Media to your Unit's Advantage**. You can find the course in the MyAuxiliary portion of www.alaforveterans.org.

DO

- Include a visual
- Keep your social accounts active
- Have multiple administrators
- Remember to have fun
- Use a descriptive name
- Create a content calendar
- Use proper branding
- Keep things positive
- Post regularly
- Respond promptly to messages and comments

DON'T

- Post political content
- Post gossip or air dirty laundry
- Post items unrelated to the ALA or our mission
- Respond negatively to messages and comments

BEFORE YOU POST THINK: WILL IT . . .

- Draw interest?
- Motivate people to take action?
- Teach something new?
- Reflect the ALA and our mission in a positive way?

Remember to have FUN!

*Donna L. Smith
Department Public Relations Chair*

Celebrating Children and Youth Month

During the month of April American Legion Auxiliary members celebrate and honor America’s children and youth, with a focus on the children of veterans and military. Unit members work with the American Legion Family to plan and host youth events and activities that honor children in their communities.



Photo Erika Hernandez

A unique way to honor the sacrifices endured by military children is **The Military Child’s Table Setting Ceremony**. This simple tribute can be performed at any time using Junior members and younger Sons of The American Legion, Senior members, or a combination of all three if an adequate number of youngsters is not available.

Inspired by the POW/MIA remembrance table ceremony, this ceremony consists of a nontraditional place setting that includes a **potted flowering plant** which symbolizes that the child flowers and flourishes wherever planted.

A **hand spade** recognizes that the child may be transplanted to a new place in the world at a moment’s notice.

The **birthday cake and unlit candles** along with a **baseball mitt, glove, and ballet slippers** all represent the fact that sometimes special occasions are missed by one or both military parents.

A **family photo** depicting the child with their uniformed parent represents the strength of our country, and lastly, the American flag reminds us all that families are united in commitment to national service, at home or away.

The ceremony, while always touching, is much more poignant when presented during Children and Youth Month.

*Susan Baker
Department Children and Youth Chair*

Bags of Love Distributed to Homeless

Stacey King coined the phrase “Big things come in small packages.”

That’s what Unit 291 Newport Harbor member Sharon Morgan (pictured right) thought too. Sharon is our Chaplain and Community Service Chairman. Four years ago she started *Bags of Love*: a quart size zip lock bag containing toiletries, small snacks, socks and a note with a 1-800 number to the VA hot line. Legion family members and the community donate most of the items and Sharon shops for the rest. Sharon enlists 15 to 20 Auxiliary members to assemble the approximately 120 bags. Sharon takes the assembled bags to three local law enforcement agencies. In turn they pass them out to the homeless.



Sharon had a very serious medical issue in the beginning of this year. After surgery and four weeks of recovery, she was ready to jump back into her special project. What a way to embody “Service, Not Self.”

*Cynthia Edes
President ALA Unit 291 Newport Harbor*



Photo: Judy Evridge



Photo: Judy Evridge

Help Wanted

ALA California Girls State is in need of City Liaisons.

Application and information is at www.cagirlsstate.org.

Mother’s Day is May 14

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 383 First Bunco Fundraiser a Success

On a rainy Sunday afternoon in February, 23 American Legion Auxiliary players and seven volunteers gathered at VFW Post 6158, Fair Oaks, for Unit 383's first Bunco fundraiser to continue to help veterans and their families.

What began as a routine event took on a life of its own and ended up as one of the most fun and rewarding projects taken on by the unit. A first time Bunco afternoon fundraiser can be a challenge until participants get the hang of the game. It is fast moving and requires a bit of math. But it all worked out thanks to the hard work and tenacity of Ways and Means Chair Judy Long and Unit President Sandy Rice.

Bunco newbies and others with various levels of experience arrived from 383 and other units responding to publicity in Pot Shot, Facebook, flyers and word of mouth. Old friends and soon-to-be new friends arrived to fill the six tables, ready to play.

One nice surprise was the three men who showed up with their table partners including the First Vice Commander Mark Rice. He had his eye on a chocolate fountain among the door prizes and you should have seen the expression on his face when he actually won it — priceless!

What started as a routine fundraiser became much more. President Rice has a knack for creating wonderful baskets from all different kinds of donated items. She created 16 beautifully assembled baskets with enough donated items to create more baskets for the next fundraiser: the annual BBQ and Boots Fundraiser.

Following the games, competition and excitement grew as attendees, impressed with these different themes and unique styles of gift baskets, listened intently as the winning tickets were drawn. Themes included two patriotic baskets, wine, a vintage Hello Kitty Pez lunch box, Mary Kay, an apple basket, a knitting basket and a purse filled with small surprises.

Another favorite of the evening was the 'pre-game' buffet with a salad bar, delectable homemade desserts, and drinks. A special treat was Long's special homemade chocolatey cookies.

Throughout the afternoon there were smiles, laughter and a warmth inside, despite the rain outside. And there were small miracles! New friends with knowledge of the game offered their services answering players' questions. The winner of a full cosmetic basket was in tears saying, "You have no idea how much I need this. I have sensitive skin. I couldn't buy it myself. I knew I was supposed to come (tonight)."

When it came time to clean up volunteers seemed to come out of the woodwork to make the task happen quickly and easily.

Happy her goal was met, Long said that she had just wanted everyone who attended to enjoy themselves whether they played or not. "It felt good to see all having such a good time" at their first fundraiser together. She thanked all the attendees and helpers and ended with the hope that everyone would return for the next Bunco fundraiser.

After Long expressed her gratitude, Vice Commander Rice addressed the gathering, thanking all for supporting their common cause.



Elise Spleiss

Elizabeth Estavillo's Word Search

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | G | I | R | L | S | D | N | A | R | G |
| S | M | A | L | E | X | Y | V | N | E | E |
| T | R | E | T | H | G | U | A | D | H | D |
| A | F | S | R | S | D | P | R | P | T | U |
| T | E | U | Q | I | P | A | S | A | O | C |
| E | M | O | U | S | C | P | L | L | M | A |
| O | A | P | I | T | D | A | P | A | F | T |
| O | L | S | X | E | F | D | N | M | L | I |
| L | E | Z | Z | R | P | O | P | I | E | O |
| C | H | I | L | D | R | E | N | M | S | N |
| P | O | P | P | Y | Y | O | U | T | H | M |

Donations to Department

- Americanism
- Children Youth
- Education
- PPP
- VAR
- Poppy
- CDF
- Girls State

ALA Membership Eligibility Relationship

- Male (Spouse)
- Female (Spouse)
- Daughter
- Granddaughter
- Mother
- Grandmother
- Sister
- Self



Photo Judy Evridge

National President Visits California



American Legion Auxiliary National President Vicki Koutz was treated to a whirlwind tour of California. She began her journey after arriving at the Hollywood Burbank Airport where she was met by Department Membership Chair Maureen O'Brien-Sacco, National Community Service Chair Melanie Taylor, California Department Vice President Glenda Schultz, and California Distinguished Guest Chair Linda Workman.

Highlights (counterclockwise from top left) of her trip included Culver City Post 46, Camarillo Post 741, Mission Basilica in Ventura, Fort Irwin Training Base in the western Mojave Desert, and West Covina Post 790.

President Vicki was most appreciative of her time in California and thanked all the units for their hospitality, particularly those units hosting a national officer for the first time.

Kudos to Maureen for organizing the itinerary for the entire trip.

See all of President Vicki's California adventure on her Facebook page: [alanationalpresident](#).



Getting Close to 100% Membership before Convention

The membership fire crew has been adding fuel to the engine to move the Department Friendship Train down the tracks to 100% membership for California's Department President Gloria. We are striving to get our membership to over 100% before Department Convention. We hit our goal of 85%. By all our members' hard work the Department will receive \$85 from National for hitting this goal.

Our next goal of 95% to receive \$95 is National Poppy Day May 26. We currently are at 90.95% - this is very manageable. Please reach out to any

members that have yet to renew. The goals after 95% are us hitting 100% by July 4 and 102% by July 29 (30 days before National Convention). We can do this!

- **WHEN** we hit 100% before July 4 Department receives \$500!
- **WHEN** we hit 102% before July 29 Department receives \$500!

We are so very proud of all of you that are putting yourselves out there to share what this organization **IS** and **WHAT** we can all make it. The membership team

looks forward to hitting our upcoming goals and showing everyone how great the Department of California is!

Don't forget to send in your 10 plus three, as in 10 new senior members and three new juniors.

The forms are due to National by June 5. We know several of you are eligible to happily accept this award.

Thank you for all you do and your support.

*Maureen O'Brien-Sacco
Department Membership Chairman*

Military Spouse Appreciation Day

“God chose the strongest, the bravest, and the most courageous... and He made them military spouses.”

the military wife and mom (Facebook)



Military Spouse Appreciation Day is a day set aside for us to pause to recognize the military spouses around us who have the greatest impact on our lives and our military communities.

The Friday in May before Mother's Day, this special day was first recognized by President Ronald Reagan in 1984. The sitting president typically issues a proclamation in recognition of the holiday, while

celebrations are held on and near U.S. military bases around the world.

Remember to thank any military spouses you know. Use #MilitarySpouseAppreciationDay to post on social media.

Military Spouse Appreciation Day this year is May 12.

Military.com

Save the Date

April

Children & Youth

- April 01: April Fool's Day
- April 05: Gold Star Spouse's Day
- April 05: First Day of Passover
- April 09: Easter
- April 13: Last Day of Passover
- April 14: End-of-Year Unit Reports Due
- April 14: Air Force Reserve Birthday
- April 15: Purple Up Day**
- April 20: Ramadan Ends

May

Poppies

- May 01: National Loyalty Day
- May 01: Silver Star Service Banner Day
- May 01: End-of-Year District Reports Due
- May 04: National Day of Prayer
- May 05: Cinco de Mayo
- May 06—09: Department Leadership National Conference
- May 12: Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- May 13: Children of Fallen Patriots Day
- May 14: Mother's Day
- May 20: Armed Forces Day
- May 26: National Poppy Day
- May 29: Memorial Day

What's the last day of the year in numbers?

123123

Trivia Answers:

1. B
2. C
3. A

In Memoriam

LuAnn Capazzi

Past Department President

2008-2009

February 27, 2023

