

SUNFLOWERETTE

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023



Wow! December already! This year has flown by! I hope everyone had a very good Thanksgiving and enjoyed their families and the turkey. Chief and I hosted Thanksgiving at our home post for anyone who had no place to go. Chief cooked 3 turkeys and 2 hams with all the fixings to go with it. It has been a busy month for our team and me. We started November off going to mission training in Cincinnati, OH. Vice President Tracy, Chaplain Kristen, and Parliamentarian Jeanne had a great road trip traveling to training, making several stops along the way. Department



Junior Activities Chair Anndi Bownes also brought 6 juniors to the training! Our Very own National Vice President Trish Ward along with National Poppy Chairman Norma Tramm and National Americanism Chairman Sallie Rossman presented the session which included Be the One, VA & R, the impact of membership, ALA branding, community, and youth programs. It was very informative and interesting. I am sure that everyone of us participated in some kind of Veterans Day program this year.

My unit presented a POW-MIA program and set up a permanent table for our post as well as honoring our local veterans. I was incredibly impressed with the Big Red Turkey run this year. What an impressive turnout! The American Legion Riders did a fantastic job and 547 families were able to have everything they needed to have Thanksgiving dinner. A big thank you to them as well as all the members that showed up to help. Operation North Pole will be on December 9th, and I am looking forward to seeing Santa and all his helpers there this year. If your unit would like to donate cookies get with Tracy Kinnick, Kristen Hensley, Jenelle Sanneman, and me or anyone else that you know is going to help deliver the cookies. We need a lot of them, they go fast!! I am wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. It is not about what is under the tree but who is around it. This is a time of year that you want to focus on Be the One, many veterans spend the holiday seasons alone, so lets ensure that we are focusing on our mission to Be the One to save one during this time of year.

Here's to wishing our soldiers, veterans, and families the best year to come. God Bless.
Cheryl Eastep, President

Marching to the Beat of Membership

Tracy Kinnick – Department VP



Membership as you know is key to the success of our organization. Without our members helping to advocate for our veterans, where would they be? Where would their families be? We are needed more than ever in this crazy world that appears to have gone mad. It is up to us to make changes for our veterans and their families. The easiest way to do that is to grow our membership, the more members we have the louder our voice with Congress.

Last month there was a quiz in the Sunflower about membership, here are the answers to the questions that were posted. Thank you to those who participated in the quiz, each of you will receive a Cheryl buck for your participation.

1. **False** Now that males are allowed into the ALA, my brother, whose sister is allowed to join my unit. **Only spouses of eligible Legion members are allowed to join the ALA, male or female spouses, must be married to a Legionnaire to join.**
2. **True** A female veteran may join the ALA under her own right and does not need to be related to a legionnaire, nor does she have to be a legionnaire herself. **This is true a female veteran or active military may join the ALA under herself, she do NOT need to belong to the Legion, nor does she have to have a relative in the Legion to be a member of the ALA.**
3. **False** A unit secretary can sign the membership application stating post officer. **A Post officer for the Legion must sign the ALA membership application.**
4. **True** Is a letter related to the veteran's military service valid proof of military service? **If the joining member has an official letterhead from the military to the veteran's service, that may be used in place of a DD214 for proof of service.**
5. **False:** The potential ALA member may join the ALA under a living eligible relative who does not belong to the Legion. **If the potential ALA member is joining under a living relative, the relative must belong to a legion. For example, if a granddaughter is trying to join, if her grandfather is living, he must belong to a legion. However, keep in mind that the legion he belongs to does not have to be in the state of Kansas, the relative just needs to belong to any Legion.**
6. **True:** Transmittals must be filled out in alphabetical order. **By filling out your unit transmittals in alphabetical order, you are helping the office director to easily do her job without having to bounce back and forth between screens. This allows for fewer mistakes and easier input for our membership.**
7. **False:** When signing up a new member, units should send in their original application to the department with their transmittal. **Units are now responsible for their membership applications. When signing up a new member, units need to send a copy of the application with payment to the department office. Membership applications are to be held the entire time the member is living.**
8. **False:** Great-granddaughters are eligible for the ALA. **The IRS sets the membership rule of Two Degrees of Consanguinity for the ALA. Definition of Two Degrees of Consanguinity Two degrees of relation from whom the member is seeking eligibility. Furthest allowable relationship is grandmother or granddaughter. Great or great-great-granddaughters cannot join the Auxiliary. Current members whose eligibility relationship is great-granddaughter, great great-granddaughter or direct descendent can continue being a member, as long as their dues are kept current. If a member whose eligibility relationship is great-granddaughter, great-great-granddaughter or direct descendent becomes delinquent, they may reinstate their membership only by payment of back dues for all years of delinquency or by establishing new eligibility.**

9. **True:** There are 2 circumstances where a person could join the ALA without having a current member of the American Legion. There are two circumstances when a woman can become a member without having a relative as a current member of The American Legion. The first circumstance would be when the woman has served in the military during the requisite dates. She may join the ALA without being a member of the Legion. The second circumstance is when membership is based on a deceased veteran who was not a member of The American Legion; however, the American Legion Auxiliary Department Operations Guide Chapter 8: Membership Page 17 prospective member will be required to provide verifying documentation of the deceased relative's service dates to prove ALA eligibility.

Bringing Light into the Darkness

By Kristen Hensley - Department of Kansas Chaplain



For many, the month of December can bring about feelings of coziness, merriment, and togetherness. This is not true for many across our Nation as the feeling of depression and loneliness can descend during the time of Holiday's and reduced sunlight available. This can be a very hard time of year for many.

December marks many Holidays' of celebration of bringing light into the darkness across many cultures. Here are some of the Holiday's celebrated this month:

- December 7th-15th – Hanukkah (Judaism) – The festival of lights. This 8 day celebration celebrates the miraculous 8 days that the lamp oil lasted when Jews returned to their Temple.
- December 8th – Bodhi Day (Buddhism) – Celebration of the day Gautama Buddha received enlightenment.
- December 21 – Yule/Winter Solstice (Pagan) – This is celebrating the turning point where light starts overcoming the darkness.
- December 25 – Christmas (Christian) – Celebrating the birth of Jesus. This was the human embodiment of God sending his light into the world of darkness to save us from ourselves.
- December 26th -Jan 1st – Kwanzaa (African/Spiritual) – Celebration of celebrating each of the seven principles of Kwanzaa by lighting a candle every day.

As you can see, so many Holidays across many different theological belief systems celebrate the light overcoming the darkness.

My encouragement, to you, as we come into the long days of darkness, and the feeling of warmth during the Holiday season is to reach out to others that may be affected by loneliness and possibly depression due to the lack of sunlight and bring them into your fold. Shower them with a reason to be thankful this year and let them know they are loved, cherished, and important. Celebrate the season of 'Light overcoming the Darkness' by being the light to another person during their time of darkness.

Prayer: Father God, we reach out to you to ask that you wrap your arms around those that may be suffering with depression or loneliness that are so prevalent during this time of year. Let them come into our path so that we can be the embodiment of your light here on Earth. We pray that we can all touch just one soul and give them inspiration that better days are coming. In your Holy Name we pray. AMEN.





NATIONAL SECURITY CHAIRMAN

The National Security Committee met in a Zoom meeting on October 19, 2023, to discuss what we need to focus on for our Active-Duty personnel. Ann Rehbein, the National Security Chairman called the meeting to order. Central Division National Security Committee Chairman Sue Hembrook from Wisconsin was present also and conducted the Division breakout session for the Central Division.

We were encouraged to seriously consider who to nominate for Service Member of the year from our individual Departments. So, I would encourage our Units to think about who they would like to nominate for Serviceman of the Year from their Unit. The judging will be done by the Department Committee and submitted to the National Chairman. It would be great if Kansas had a nominee and a winner at the National Convention next year. District Chairmen, please encourage the Units to submit a servicemember.

The Salute to Servicemembers Award is available on the National website at [Salute to Servicemembers Award Form \(legion-aux.org\)](https://www.legion-aux.org). It is a fillable on-line form, so please check it out. The absolute deadline is June 1, 2024.

As Commander Dan Seehafer, President Lisa Williamson and Commander Jr. Hall's theme for this year is "Be The One" to end Veteran suicide we were encouraged to promote that to destigmatize mental health issues and for our Veterans to feel safe in speaking about their mental health and that they may not "be okay" mentally.

Since there seems to always be some confusion as to what hours to report National Security under, if we remember that National Security concerns our Active Duty Servicemembers and the Veterans Assistance and Rehabilitation (V A & R) concerns what we do for our Veterans.

Remember to submit the pictures you take of your events for National Security to Ann Rehbein at amrehbein@msn.com. This could include your pictures of your Trunk or Treat you participate in or active-duty personnel, the Big Red 1 Turkey Run, Operation North Pole, or any other events you participate in.

Also, on Facebook if you do not already follow the National Security Committee, do so to stay up to date on the National Security Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as the National Security Committee Chairman for the Department of Kansas.

Marcia Cottrell

Greetings chairmen,

Kristy is working to ensure that reporting goes smoothly for the membership and you this year. To be able to make that happen she needs information from you to put on the Kansas website.

Please send to her ASAP The following information:

- Program information to be placed on your section of the website.
- Your report forms to be used and don't forget to include your deadline.
- What email address do you want the reports to be sent to? If you are not checking your department, email you are not going to get the reports, so we are asking you what email she should have on your page to ensure that you receive the reports that our members work hard to put together for you.

Submit all forms via Word document or PDF to klehart07@gmail.com

If you need help or have questions let us know, we are more than happy to help you.

Also, as chairmen you CAN write up something on your program to include in Sunflower, I know there are many new and exciting things out there with your programs, so let's share the good news with our members articles may be sent to Kristy at klehart07@gmail.com.

Thanks,
Tracy

UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN OUR

CHRISTMAS ONLINE BINGO FUNDRAISER

12/04/2023

JOIN IN ON THE FUN AND EXCITING ONLINE BINGO EVENT STARTING 12/4
AT 6:00 PM CENTRAL TIME.
FOR A DONATION OF \$10.00 PER CARD YOU CAN JOIN IN THE FUN WITH NO
NEED TO BE PRESENT.

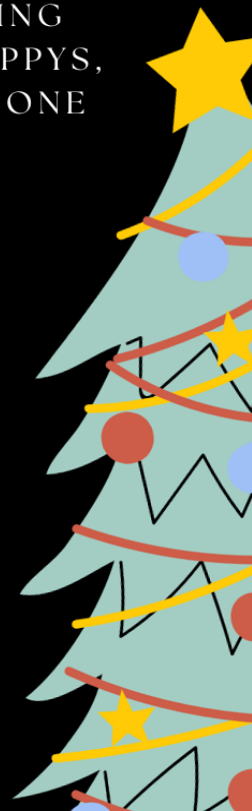
SEND IN YOUR \$10.00 DONATION PER CARD VIA:
PAY PAL: TBW_KSAUX@YAHOO.COM
VENMO TO @PATRICIA-WARD-25
OR SEND CHECK MADE OUT TO
TRISH WARD LEADERSHIP FUND
TO:

TRACY KINNICK, 1614 TIMBERLINE DRIVE, ROSE HILL, KS 67133.

IN THE MEMO SECTION OF PAYPAL, VENMO OR YOUR CHECK BE SURE TO
INCLUDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND FOR BINGO! THIS IS HOW YOU WILL
RECEIVE YOUR BINGO CARD TO PLAY.

STARTING ON MONDAY 12/4 AT 6:00PM CENTRAL TIME, WE WILL POST 5
NUMBERS ON THE KANSAS FOR TRISH WARD ALA NATIONAL PRESIDENT
CANDIDATE FACE BOOK PAGE. WE WILL POST 5 NUMBERS EACH NIGHT
AT 6:00PM CENTRAL TIME UNTIL SOMEONE SHOUTS BINGO IN THE
COMMENT SECTION. (EACH CARD WILL BE VERIFIED BEFORE YOU ARE
OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED A WINNER.)

2 WINNERS WILL RECEIVE THIS AMAZING
BACKPACK WITH SUNFLOWERS AND POPPYS,
TRISH WARD, KANSAS AND ALA ALL IN ONE
BAG!



Operation North Pole

Sat Dec 9th 9:00am - 1:00pm (CST)

Fort Riley, Fort Riley, KS, USA

December
8th and 9th
2023

**Operation
North
Pole**



On Fort Riley
At the
Clamshell
671 McGinnis Way



December 8th

**3:00 - ?? Delivery and sort toys for distribution
and help with decorations and set up if needed**

December 9th

**9:30am - 3:00pm distribute toys to Santa for MEB, SOS, EFMP,
NPSP, and Deployed**

**All Volunteers are encouraged to stay until all children have been
seen by Santa**

**3:00 - ?? Clean up and taking any remaining toys up to the
SFAC building**

**We will be supplying and distributing toys for over
850 children**

**All American Legion Family Members are encouraged to dress as
a Christmas Character. After all, Santa always needs Elves.**

**Don't worry if you don't have a costume, we will have a kids
choice ugly sweater contest.**

For more information call

Event chairmen

William Ryan

316-727-4611

Email:

blastedsigns@cox.net

The American Legion Family



Volunteers
without a pass
must enter
through
Henry Gate

All units are being asked to provide cookies for this event. If you are not attending the event but would like to donate, get with Janelle Sanneman at 316-283-1272 or Tracy Kinnick at 316-655-5122, Deb as they will be attending the event and can help deliver cookies. Thank you - Janelle



DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS CHRISTMAS PARTY

BALL-MCCOLM POST 5, EMPORIA

DECEMBER 16TH, 2023 12:00 – 3:00 PM

MENU: SMOKED HAM AND TURKEY, CHEESY POTATOES, GREEN BEANS
AND VARIETY OF DESSERTS (\$17) KIDS 12 AND UNDER (\$5)

FEATURING A CHRISTMAS CONCERT ON THE CELLO

BY LOCAL ARTIST LIZA VIELCHEVA

+ Christmas Karaoke Challenge to benefit Boys State and Cadet Law

POST 5 WILL BE OPEN FOR SOCIAL HOUR 11 A.M. – 12 P.M.

PLEASE CONSIDER ATTENDING:

EMPORIA'S FIRST WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA CEREMONY

11:00 AM, DECEMBER 16TH

MAPLEWOOD MEMORIAL LAWN CEMETERY

2000 PRAIRIE ST

EMPORIA, KS 66801

For more information contact:

postcommander5@kansaslegion.org or (620) 342-1119

Visit: <https://www.emporialegion.org/> for the latest information



RSVP WITH PAYMENT BY **DEC 1** TO:

AMERICAN LEGION POST #5

2921 W 12TH, EMPORIA, KS 66801

NUMBER OF ADULT MEALS (\$17 each): _____

NUMBER OF KIDS MEALS (12 and under, \$5 each): _____

NAMES OF THOSE ATTENDING:

Scan to email RSVP



Mid-Winter Forum

Fri Feb 2nd 3:00pm - Sun 4th 12:00pm (CST)

American Legion Post, 730 W 4th Ave,
Hutchinson, KS 67501, USA

The Mid-Winter Forum offers every member, especially Post leaders and chairmen, the opportunity to learn more about The American Legion, its programs and the direction each program is expected to take if there are any changes being considered, including changes directed by National Headquarters. In addition, the Forum provides information about how and why The American Legion functions in the manner we do as an organization.

It is not too early to reserve your room. To reserve your meals in advance, use the coupon to the left. The Agenda for the Forum will be posted here as soon as it is available.

Mid-Winter Forum Hotels:

Holiday Inn Express

Group Name: American Legion

Telephone: (620) 259-8656

Booking Link: bit.ly/AmericanLegionHutch

Rate: \$119/night

Cutoff Date: January 15, 2024

Fairfield Inn & Suites

Group Name: American Legion

Telephone: (620) 259-8787

Booking Link: [Book your group rate for American Legion](#)

Rate: \$129/night

Cutoff Date: January 1, 2024

MID-WINTER FORUM MEALS

FEBRUARY 2-4, 2024
HUTCHINSON POST #68

FRIDAY 2 FEB - DINNER: \$10.00
CHICKEN FRIED STEAK, GREEN BEANS, MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY,
DESSERT AND SMALL SALAD BAR

SATURDAY, 3 FEB - BREAKFAST: INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION
BISCUITS AND GRAVY, CINNAMON ROLLS, AND BREAKFAST ROLLS

SATURDAY, 3 FEB - LUNCH: \$ 8.00
SANDWICHES WITH ALL THE FIXINGS, POTATO SALAD, CHIPS, AND
DESSERT

SATURDAY, 3 FEB – DINNER: \$15.00
FULL SALAD BAR, ROAST BEEF, MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY, CORN,
DINNER ROLLS, AND DESSERT

SUNDAY, 4 FEB – BREAKFAST: \$ 8.00
BISCUITS AND GRAVY, EGGS, HASHBROWNS, SAUSAGE, AND BREADS

Name _____

Post/Unit/Squadron # _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Number of Friday Dinners to be reserved at \$10.00 each: _____

Number of Saturday Lunches to be reserved at \$8.00 each: _____

Number of Saturday Dinners to be reserved at \$15.00 each: _____

Number of Sunday Breakfasts to be reserved at \$8.00 each: _____

Enclosed is check in the amount of _____

**Mail to: Jeremy Ehart
730 W 4th Ave
Hutchinson, KS 67501**

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILLIARY
SUNFLOWER GIRLS STATE
JUNE 2-7, 2024**

JOIN US

JUNE 2-7, 2024

University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

SUNFLOWER GIRLS STATE

REGISTRATION

Fee is \$400 per delegate.
Registration forms are located
at www.ksgirlsstate.org

Sponsorships may be available
at your local American Legion
Auxiliary Unit

*Democracy in action is a great thing. Teaching
democracy in action is even better. ALA Sunflower
Girls State is a non-partisan program that teaches
young women citizenship and leadership.
Delegates spend a week of learning, and working
together as self-governing citizens. They also learn
about public service from guest speakers, elected
officials, and expert panels,*

OPEN TO ANY HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR GIRL
DURING THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2024



Email Director Lindsay
Maudlin with any questions:
sunflowergirlsstate@gmail.com



NOMINATE A FRIEND!

f ALA KANSAS GIRLS STATE

@KSGIRLSSTATE

http://www.ksgirlsstate.org

2024 Kansas Boys State

Sun Jun 2nd 10:00am - Fri 7th 10:00am (CDT)

Kansas University

2024 Cadet law American Legion / Auxiliary Dept of Kansas

Sun Jun 16th 8:00am - Fri 21st 5:00pm (CDT)

Kansas Highway patrol, Salina, KS

Please go to this link on the Dept Website for more info

<https://www.kslegionaux.org/departments-calendar>

FROM NATIONAL

2024-2025 National Appointment
Application END DEC 15TH

<https://www.legion-aux.org/National-Appointment-Application>

IDEAS TO HELP VETERANS DURING THE HOLIDAYS



The holiday season is right around the corner, and it's important to show veterans extra love and appreciation during these cold winter months. This time of year can be especially hard on veterans who may not have family close by, or it's difficult for family and friends to visit due to veterans being in an assisted living facility or hospital. It's our duty as American Legion Auxiliary members to answer the call of *Service Not Self*, and help our isolated veterans feel loved and valued this holiday season.

There are so many ways to engage with veterans who may be alone during the holidays. Gather members of your ALA unit and help the veterans in your community feel appreciated.

For homebound veterans

- Bring them homemade goodies and snacks.
- Make a casserole each week and drop it off at their home.
- Bring over crafts, crossword puzzles, Sudoku worksheets, magazines, books, etc., to keep them busy during the long winter.
- Write them thoughtful cards explaining how grateful you are for them and thank them for their service.
- Gift them a stocking stuffer for Christmas filled with things they enjoy or need.
- Bring them hats, gloves, scarves, warm socks, throw blankets, etc.
- Give them streamers for New Year's and a new calendar.
- Organize a meal train.
- Pick up their groceries or send groceries through Instacart.
- Help with any errands they may have.
- Focus on conversation and companionship.
- Lend a helping hand in any way you can.

For veterans in assisted living facilities

- Contact a local facility to see what items are allowed inside – it won't be the case for every location – but at least asking will give an idea of what's allowed and what kind of things would really benefit veterans during those harder months.
- Send a care package that includes the items that are allowed. A few popular examples are playing cards, puzzle books, journals, pens, lip balm, fuzzy socks, a knitted scarf, specialty teas, a handmade drawing, a handmade card, an appreciative letter, etc.
- Try visiting a veteran once a week.
- Play cards with them.
- Do something creative together like painting or drawing.
- Be a listening ear with a thankful heart.

For VA residential home or hospitalized veterans

- Work with your local U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs residential home or VA medical center to see how you can help veterans staying there. Ask the VA what you can bring to benefit veterans living there.
- Depending on their protocols, try visiting once a week.
- Ask ALA Junior members to draw pictures and bring the artwork to veterans at the VA.
- Give them a thank-you card, and Christmas and New Year's Day cards.
- Bring them magazines from The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary.
- Gift them puzzles and books for entertainment. Keep them company.
- Show them kindness and compassion. You may be the only person visiting them during the holidays, so make a positive impact.

If you want to have the sunflowerette and the weekly membership report email to you, please make sure you have your email on record with Carol at Dept office.
departmentoffice@kslegionaux.org