



The Anchors Aweigh Dispatch



President's Message

*Pamela A. Elam-Lipscombe
Department President
2022 - 2023*

Dear Members,

Seasons Greetings!

As we pull in to dock for the Holidays, I take this opportunity to wish each of you the merriest of holidays. Please enjoy your time ashore with family and friends.

Thank you for all your hard work for our Veterans, our Military, their families, and the community.

Full Speed Ahead,

President Pam

*Christmas is more
than just presents,
it's love and harmony.*

—Julie Hebert

ALA

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.

Chaplin's Corner

December Inspiration

Vesta Lane
Department Chaplain



Lord, at this festive holiday time, we pray that You would be with us in all that we do and all that we plan. And today, we particularly want to ask You to bless the holiday celebrations that we will be participating in. We pray that Your love shines during this time and that we

reflect You in our actions, attitudes and behaviors at the event. Prevent any discord we pray and may we be united together in love and fellowship to Your praise and glory. Amen.



"Honor Our Veterans Everyday"

National President Vicki Koutz
Theme 2022-2023



District 16 Members
delivering food items to
Martinsburg VA Medical
Center

16th District Answers the Call

Jennifer Lowe, 16th District Secretary

Demand was high and the food inventory at the Martinsburg VA Medical Center Food Pantry was empty. Through the coordinated efforts of the 16th District, the American Legion Family came together to provide monetary assistance. Additionally, canned goods and other food items were provided to help replenish the food pantry. Thank you 16th District for quickly responding to the call!

Department President's Special Project

MK9s Service Dogs

Pamela Elam-Lipscombe,
Department President

Department President

Pamela Elam-Lipscombe with Service Dog Trainer Teri with Service Dog in training Orion (center); and Service Dog Trainer Michele with Service Dog in training Mosby (right). Michele is the founder of MK9s Service



Post-Traumatic Stress Disease (PTSD) is a mental health challenge that some people develop after experiencing a life-threatening or traumatic event. Research shows that 5-20% of veterans suffer from PTSD. They become angry, depressed, or anxious. Many studies show that service dogs can be of great aid in coping with PTSD.

I am excited to share that MK9s-Service Dogs, a 501 © (3) organization has been selected as my Department President's special project for the 2022-2023 Auxiliary year.

MK9s mission is to supply highly trained service dogs to maximize the independence and quality of life for our veterans who suffer from mental disabilities such as PTSD.

MK9s is 100% volunteer based. A dedicated volunteer team raises and trains each puppy. Volunteers come with strong military backgrounds or many years of experience in the service dog training environment. All administrative functions, service dog training, mentors, are provided voluntarily.

Puppies are specifically matched with the Veteran and the Veteran begins working with their puppy at 8 weeks of age. Training takes place for approximately 18-24 months.

I am optimistic of being able to sponsor and name a puppy for a Veteran. Make your check payable to ALA Department of Virginia, earmarked President's special project.

Department Calendar

Day on the Hill

January 18, 2023
Richmond, VA

The American Legion

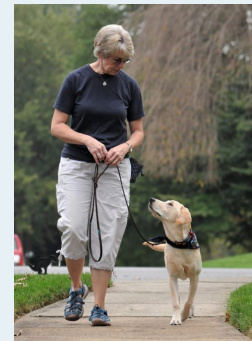
Washington Conference

February 27—March 1, 2023
Washington, DC

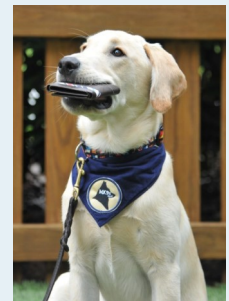
Department

Spring Conference

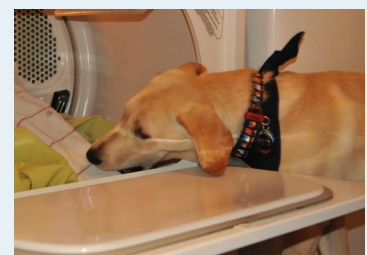
March 3-5, 2023
Renaissance Hotel
Portsmouth, VA



Loose Leash Walking



Wallet Retrieval



Helping with Laundry



Making Wishes Come True

Ethel Carson, Department VA & R Chair

Thank you Auxiliary Members for your outpouring support of the Department VA&R Project, "Honoring Our Veterans Everyday, Making Wishes Come True". Through your generosity we were able to make wishes come true for the three Virginia Fisher Houses, (Portsmouth Fisher House, Richmond Fisher House and Fort Belvoir Fisher House). Your donations consisted of over \$1,300 in gift cards and \$1,500 in in-kind donations, (i.e.- paper supplies, cleaning supplies, non-perishable food items).

As we continue Honoring our Veterans, let us continue expressing our appreciation to those who have served and are still serving. Let's continue to volunteer at our VA Medical Centers, Nursing Homes and other community organizations.

"Be The One", as holidays often create additional emotional stress on our veterans. We need to continually be engaged in reaching out to assist a loved one or calling a help line in times of crisis. Be the One to make a difference in the lives of our veterans.



Donations Delivery
to
Richmond Fisher House



Donations Delivery
to
Portsmouth Fisher House



***Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah,
Happy Kwanzaa***

Nalena Klaas, Department Membership Chair

No matter who you are or how you celebrate the holidays, it is a time of caring and giving.

Caring not only for loved ones but also for the well being of our veterans, military and their families. Caring for members of the community and children in need. This is where Auxiliary members do such fantastic work. We care for others just like they are family.

Giving to those less fortunate than ourselves. Homeless veterans and hospitalized veterans or military. Again, this is where our Auxiliary members excel.

So how does all of this apply to Membership? Well, without members none of this is possible.

We need you to accomplish all these things. How can you help? How about giving the gift of membership for a family member or friend for the year?

Hope all of our Members have a wonderful holiday!

Month in Membership



Welcome!
Presentation of Charter to
Dublin Unit 58.



Hopewell Unit 146
New Member Initiation



Portsmouth Unit 190
New Member Initiation

Setting Sail with Public Relations

Darla Lisbon, Department Public Relations Chair



National recommends that each unit uses a Facebook page to advertise what your unit is doing! Here are a few helpful tips to set up and maintain an interactive page!

- When creating or updating your Facebook page, make sure it is easy to identify. For example, “American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 123, Anyplace, Wisconsin,” or “Georgia Department of the American Legion Auxiliary” The easier your page is to identify, the easier it is for the public to find it.
- Always have a minimum of two administrators for your page. If you have only one admin, and they move out of your area, or become ill, you will not have access to your page. By having more than one admin, you will have someone to post when you’re unavailable and help monitor the page.
- Always have a photo, graphic, or video. Canva.com is a good resource for creating graphics. The more graphics and pictures you use, the more interesting your page becomes to the public.
- Use action photos if possible. Remember, do not use pictures with alcoholic beverages in the photo.
- Always ensure your posts are about the ALA and our mission. Think about what this picture is showing the public. Are we showing them we are having a good time or are we showing a picture of us serving the mission? If you have a picture of someone that is not a member, make sure you have their permission to use the photo.
- Remember, the American Legion and the Auxiliary are apolitical, so never use political pictures or make political posts/comments on your Unit/District/Department Facebook pages.
- It is very important to keep your page up to date and current. It can be discouraging for the public to look for an event and see that your page hasn’t been updated. Remember, what you post on Facebook reflects your members, Unit, District and



Americanism Essay Contest

Dr. Deborah Blanch, Department Americanism Chair

The Americanism Essay Contest was created to teach students the value of patriotism and what it means to be American. Thousands of students participate in the program each year and help promote a lifelong respect for our flag and country. Students (grades 3 to 12) explore the fundamental rights and freedoms we enjoy today. Each year's contest has a different theme; one student in each category per division is awarded a prize. There is a category for students with special needs. The unit is responsible for reviewing and ensuring the correct information is filled out on the form.

Essay Title: *"What does patriotism mean to you?"*

The following steps are required to complete and submit the information needed.

- Every unit should review all the essays in all categories and pick the best **one** to submit. **Ties are not allowed.**
- **Units** must receive essays **by February 24, 2023**. This allows time to review and select the best one from each category. Please be sure all the information is **completed and current** on the cover sheet.
- It is **suggested** that you have a committee of three people that consists of your Americanism Chair, a past president, and one other Auxiliary member to review and assist with the final selection.
- All the **final essay-winning** essays need to be sent to the Department Chair between the dates of **March 1 to March 15**. The winning essays unit can be emailed and followed up by mailing a hard copy. The essay submissions will be acknowledged and reviewed **between March 1 to March 15**.
- After the best of the best Americanism essays have been selected, they will be forwarded to the Southern Division Americanism Chair by **April 15, 2023**.
- Additional information can be found at vaauxiliary.org.

National Security

Kimberly Marsh, Department National Security Chair

"Did You Know" that you can help our military families by clipping coupons? Here are some sites to visit for information on the "how-tos". There is a brief note by each to give you a heads-up on the information the site provides. Our military families appreciate any help they can get.

- <https://www.coupons.com/> has printable coupons
- <http://www.grocerysavingtips.com/p/military-family.html> provides a list of the bases that accept coupons. Also gives a lot of detail on participating in the Military Family Coupon Program.
- <https://www.couponcabin.com/troops/> This site is wonderful! Has addresses to submit both current coupons and expired coupons. They distribute the coupons. There is a list of what they can use and what they cannot use.
- <https://www.tipresource.com/.../send-expired-coupons-to.../> site provides a couple of addresses to send these coupons to for those overseas.
- <https://militarybase.net/military-commissaries/> *"Find a list of the over 230 military commissaries located both stateside and overseas. The Defense Commissary Agency operates the commissaries and offers rewards cards, coupons, online ordering, curbside pickup, savings, and sales events in communities."* A telephone number is provided for each base, so you can contact them with questions.

These are just a few of the sites that can be found when browsing for military coupons. Let us know what you find that can help our military families and what our units are doing to collect coupons.



Newsletter Submissions

Please send your submissions for the Newsletter by the 10th month.

Pamela Elam-Lipscombe
Department President
Newsletter Editor



Zone Leadership Workshops



Northern Zone



Western Zone



Eastern Zone