

**A Community of Volunteers  
Serving Veterans, Military,  
and their Families**



**Department of Virginia**

**Issue 5**

**February 2026**

***PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE***

**Greetings!**

The Spring Conference is right around the corner. It will be held February 27-March 1, 2026, in Portsmouth, VA. We are honored to be hosting Southern Division National Vice President Vickie-Thrower Mills. You don't want to miss our exciting Leadership Training and current program information and initiatives from our Department Chairs. Following our Spring Conference, the Washington, D.C. Conference will be held from Sunday, February 28 through Wednesday, March 4, 2026. What an exciting week for the American Legion Family!

While the past month has definitely been a challenge with the weather, thank you to all units and members who have continued to hold meetings, participated in Post activities, visited hospitals and nursing homes, conducted buddy checks, participated in community events, and so much more.

Thank you to Norfolk Post 327 for the invitation to attend their Law and Order Award event on January 27, 2026. It was a privilege to be there as their law enforcement officers and first responders were honored. We can't thank them enough for their service and dedication to protecting us every day.

We extend our deepest condolences to the family of Peggy Magahey, our Volunteer Affairs and Veterans Services (VAVS) Representative at the Hampton VA Hospital, and a dedicated member of the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Unit 48 in Hampton for 42 years. She will be profoundly missed.

The Year-End Report due date for units is fast approaching! Hopefully, your units documented events as they occurred. The due date to your department chair is April 15, 2026.

Congratulations to Margaret Jeffries of Unit 41 as our new certified VAVS Associate Representative for the Martinsburg, WV VA Medical Center. Thank you and all our VAVS representatives for your service!

Check out program information, scholarships, awards, and what's been happening in and around the Department. Don't forget to "Purple Up" for our Spring Conference!

**Regards,**

***Carol Campbell  
ALA Department of Virginia  
2025-2026 President***

## ***Chaplain's Prayer***

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the many blessings for the American Legion Auxiliary , Department of Virginia, this year.

Father, we are having our Spring Conference at the end the month. Please allow us to have a great fruitful and knowledgeable meeting. Lord, my prayer is that all leaders come with food that will provide working tools for all. In your name, thank you.

Amen.

Vesta Lane  
Department Chaplain

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## ***Historian News***

The American Legion Auxiliary unit historians preserve the unique stories of our units while sharing a common purpose: "Service Not Self." Their work supports the Four Pillars of the American Legion and helps advance Americanism across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

For the Spring Conference 2026, it would be greatly appreciated if unit historians (or a unit representative) would bring pictures, historical documentation, and minutes from district meetings to the Spring Conference. This information will be placed in the President's Book and presented to the Department President at the Annual Convention in July 2026.

As a reminder, year-end reports are due April 15, 2026. These reports are recommended tools to gauge the direction and effectiveness of your unit's activities. Forms and/or narratives should be sent to the Department Historian no later than April 15, 2026, for year-end reporting.

Please mail or email your year-end reports to:

Janice Banks  
Department of Virginia Historian 2025-2026  
3626 Bell Street  
Norfolk VA, 23513  
Banksjanice5@icloud.com



# "PURPLE UP!" for Month of the Military Child"

ALA Department of Virginia  
Spring Conference  
Saturday, February 28, 2026

The goal of "Purple Up! Day" is for our military youth to see the support in their schools, youth groups, and their community.

Let us show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifices!

Pack something "PURPLE" to wear for a group picture to Celebrate **April as** the Month of the Military Child.

We will take the picture on Saturday afternoon.  
See you there in your "Purple" regalia!

Remember to "PURPLE UP!" on April 15th. in your communities!

Karen and the Children and Youth Committee

# ***Education News***

The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) National and Department Scholarship Program offers many scholarship opportunities. The due dates for submitting these applications vary, but some are due soon—March 1, 2026. Please check out the Department ALA website for more information on available scholarships. To learn more about the national scholarships and the eligibility requirements, you may view the recording of an ALA Academy presentation “Scholarships Live” posted on the National website for additional information.

The Department of Virginia sponsors three scholarships. They are the Dr. Kate Waller Barrett; the Veterans and Medical Scholarships. Both the Veterans and the Medical Scholarships are 100% donation funded. Please consider donating as a Unit and/or as an individual to support the Veterans and Medical Scholarships by May 1, 2026. Donations go to “ALA Dept of VA” with the specific scholarship fund(s) identified on the memo line. Thank you for your support of education in the Department of Virginia!

Possible education initiatives to do through June are:

Donate to and promote both Department of Virginia and National Scholarships.

Continue to Give 10 to Education in your communities. Restock your schools’ supply closets. January often brings classroom supply shortages.

Participate in Teacher Appreciation Week (May 4-8, 2026).

Encourage schools to participate in The Month of the Military Child (April 2026) and Purple Up! Day (April 15, 2026) to honor military children in your communities. Sponsor a party for military children in your community. Present a Military Child Table at your local school, unit meeting, or at your Post.

Encourage schools to invite veterans to speak in their classrooms—around Memorial Day might be a good time to do this!

Consider contributing to or fulfilling a “Classroom Wishlist” for a teacher at your local school.

Collaborate with Virginia “Purple Star Schools” in your vicinity.

There were twenty-five Mid Year Education reports received in December. I am pleased to see that our units have been busy with Veterans in the classroom events; participating in Give 10 to Education; participating in National Education Week (November); providing National and Department scholarship information to local schools and the community; and providing “local” unit scholarship opportunities.

Thank you for your efforts to promote Education and life-long learning in our Virginia communities!

See you at the Department Spring Conference!

Krystle Bransky

Dept of VA—Education Chair

February 2026

[legislative@vaauxliary.org](mailto:legislative@vaauxliary.org)

Susan Oertel

### ADVOCATING FOR VETERANS SINCE 1919

“Founded by an Act of Congress after World War I, The American Legion fiercely advocates for the unique needs of every generation of veterans, service members, and their families who pledge to protect our nation. Today, we are committed to destigmatizing mental health support, offering peer-to-peer resources, and empowering everyone to **Be The One** in the fight to prevent veteran suicide.”

You can do your part as a member of the American Legion Family by contacting your legislators thru emails, phone calls or letters. Make your voice heard and let us all advocate for the veteran, past or present, who made your membership possible.



Scan and sign up for Action Alerts

### 119<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, 2<sup>ND</sup> SESSION

THE AMERICAN LEGION is the largest of all U.S. veteran service organization with nearly 1.4 million members working through more than 11,000 local posts in communities worldwide. We proudly advocate for veterans, military strength, youth and patriotic values. The following priorities for the second session of the 119th Congress are presented here, in no particular order, followed by the legislation The American Legion supports that can address these issues. They are all important and driven by resolutions passed by the organization’s all-volunteer, all-veteran membership.



Go to **LEGISLATIVE AGENDA** to view the priorities:

file:///C:/Users/rsoer/Downloads/13LEG1225-Legislative-Agenda-Brochure.pdf

***National Security News***  
***Salute to Servicemembers Award Information***

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) National Security team has put out a call to action to submit a nominee from the Department of Virginia. The call to action is this: think about the servicemembers you know. Reach out to your members and communities. Start drafting those nominations now. Let us make sure these heroes receive the recognition they deserve. The Salute to Servicemembers Award is a national honor presented annually to one enlisted servicemember, from ranks E1 to E9, in each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. In total, there are seven awards, one from each branch, including the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, and the National Guard/Reserve. These honorees represent the very best of military excellence and community service. They embody our mission of Service, Not Self.

A complete nomination includes four simple components: 1) your online nomination form. 2) a narrative, up to 1,000 words describing the servicemember's military achievements and their community service. 3) a photo of the nominee in UNIFORM, preferably an official DoD photo and 4) an endorsement from someone in their command group.

All nominations must be submitted online using the official ALA nomination form. This form allows you to upload the narrative, photo, and endorsement directly. One of the most empowering parts of this program is that any ALA member, unit, or department can submit a nomination. You simply need to tell the servicemember's story. If you have a member or unit nominating a servicemember, please let us know at [NationalSecurity@vaauxiliary.org](mailto:NationalSecurity@vaauxiliary.org). Recipients of the Salute to Servicemembers Award are honored at the ALA's National Convention. The ALA understands commitment to service and obligations that may prevent the servicemember from attending the convention, but do not exclude them from consideration for this award.

Crystal Cross  
National Security Chair

**During February members participated in Mission Training; conducted buddy checks; delivered cards and crafts to Veterans at VAMCs, nursing homes, and hospice care; participated in parades; and Valentine's Day events.**

**Thanks to Units 41, 146, 176, 180, 284, 330. and District 17 for sharing these photos!**





**American Legion Auxiliary**

**Department of Virginia**

**P.O. Box 6886**

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