



The Family Tree

December 2015 Vol. V, Issue 5

Steps to Legislative Action
From the Family: SAL
From the Units
Membership Report



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[This month]

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Unit 340 (seen in photo above) visited firefighters and EMTs on Make a Difference Day. See what other units have been up to recently!

The Family Tree

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.

The Family Tree

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“From the Service of One, Comes the Support of Many!”



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



PEARL MCINTYRE

president@alaf1.org

I have been busy, visiting Units and I enjoy seeing everyone in my travels, especially interacting and listening to the Units achievements. I want to say a big ‘THANK YOU’ TO Dunedin Unit 275 for the Golf Tournament they put on with the proceeds going to my special project this year “THE FISHER HOUSE”. Thank you Lyn Felice and all the members of Post/Unit 275 for all your hard work that went into making this tournament a success. It is great to see the family working together. From the moment I arrived to breakfast before I headed home the hospitality was outstanding. Thank you all again.

I have to brag about the Unit I belong to and a day they celebrated with the Veterans. It was a “Welcome Home Viet Nam Vets” – “40 Years in the

making.” The traveling wall was in our neighborhood, so Post 162 bused the Veterans and guests from the Post to where the wall was on display. They were escorted by 30 plus American Legion Riders on their bikes. They then returned to the Post for a day of free food (what a buffet) and refreshments. It was a great day for all who came. The day was a family affair, put on by the Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of the Legion and the Legion Riders. Good things happen when the family works together.

I was also honored to be a part of a ceremony that the Quilts of Valor put on. Three Veterans were invited to Post 162 to receive a Quilt. The ceremony is very mov-



Unit 162 in Deerfield Beach presented Quilts of Valor to three veterans. President Pearl (second from right) thanked the men for their service.

ing. As I thanked each Veteran for their Service, one of the Veterans said he was going to frame the Quilt and hang it in his home, another Veteran said to me as I thanked him, “No, Thank

You, I always thought I was forgotten, but today let me know I wasn’t.” Then on Veterans Day my Husband was also a recipient of one of these

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Quilts. He was so proud to be nominated by Unit 162 to receive the Quilt. To know more about this program and how to nominate a veteran go to www.QOVF.org.

I attended the 9th District Ball. This ball is put on every year to honor the Past Commanders and Past Presidents who served the District. It has been a long standing tradition in the Ninth District and it is a nice way to say thank you to these Commanders and Presidents. I am looking forward to attending as many Area Balls as I can.

My District visits start up again the middle of November and I am

looking forward to these visits. When I return home from Fall Conference I will be visiting the 13th District.

Please keep sending in your membership as soon as you receive it as you know we are aiming to meet our goals. Just keep asking, as we know there are many eligible members out there, we just have to ask. Keep those Palm Fronds growing as with more fronds that means more members have joined or renewed. Thank you, to all of the Units for the hard work you are doing for membership.

I apologize to Department for sending in this

notice late, however, I wanted to thank everyone who attended the Fall Conference this year. I hope you all enjoyed the program and the change in format. I wanted to present programs that have not been done before. Also I hope you enjoyed the opening on Friday with Santa Bob and his Santas, and I had many members tell me how touching the opening ceremony about our National Anthem was on Saturday. I need to also say Thank You to Maureen Costello, Shirley Fraser and Kimberly, for all the help they gave me putting the Conference together. Kimberly will

be sending out a survey on the Conference, we would love to hear your comments.

I hope everyone enjoyed Thanksgiving with your families, and your Legion families. I know that many of the Units work with their Post to serve a Thanksgiving Dinner to Veterans that would not have had a Thanksgiving Dinner. Thanks for all you do for our Veterans.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all!

For God and Country,

—President Pearl



Because we ♥ our heroes.

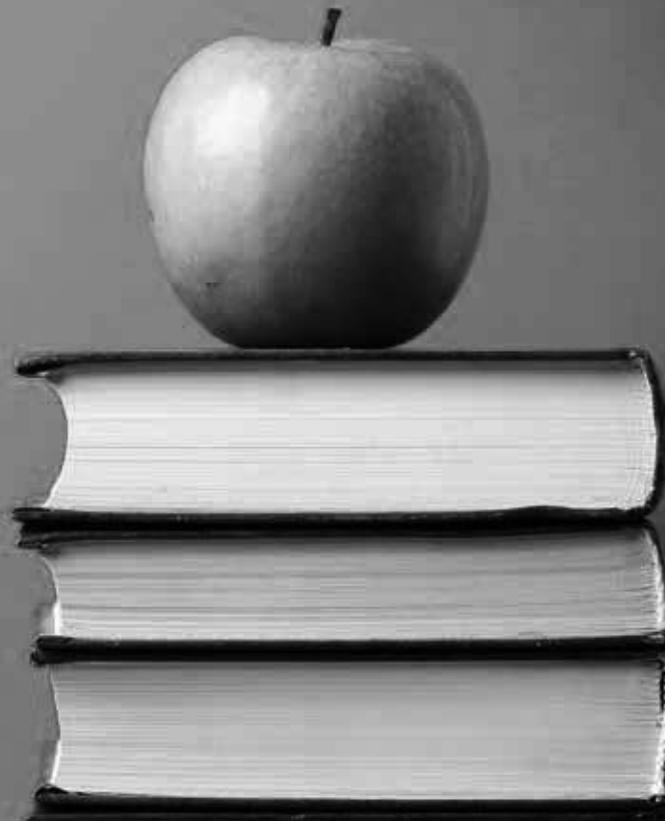
For 25 years, the Fisher House program has provided a "home away from home" for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. These homes provide free temporary lodging so military and veterans' families can be close to their loved one during a medical crisis and focus on what's important — the healing process. Because of your support, Fisher House Foundation is able to support the heart of our program, the operation of more than 60 existing homes. Additionally, our Hero Miles program assists with travel needs, and our scholarship program offers educational opportunities to military children and spouses. With your help, we can continue meeting the needs of the military community today and long into the future.

Show your love by making a donation to Fisher House. To learn more, please visit www.fisherhouse.org or call (888) 294-8560.



Education

The American Legion Committee on Youth Education renames its Americanism program.



ELEANOR AMATO

education@alaf.org

The American Legion, through a resolution, recently updated their Americanism program Veterans in the Classroom to the more inclusive Veterans in Community Schools. Veterans are very important to our American history and the entire American Legion Family believes accounts of their experiences while in uniform and as a result of their military service should be preserved and shared with others.

Our school systems and the manner in which outside groups and volunteers operate with them have changed rapidly since the inception of the program, requiring a broader focus on how American Legion members interact with local school communities. Many more pressing op-

tions to become involved with local school communities exist than making a single presentation to a classroom.

Therefore, The American Legion Committee on Youth Education decided to rename this program “Veterans in Community Schools”. They felt that a renewed effort be taken by departments to revamp a consistent and ongoing partnership between posts/ units and their community school systems.

This change is immediate. Share this information so that the word gets out as quickly as possible.

Helpful hints on putting together Veterans in Community School activities:

- Get the Legion family excited about the program and encourage them

to participate. Remember nothing great is ever achieved without enthusiasm.

- Contact your local schools with your idea and offer to organize a program for a class, grade level or student body assembly.

- Work with the school to develop a plan for the program that will be beneficial to their students. For example, flag program, discussions with students, Americanism topics, the Pledge of Allegiance, and a 23 minute video “America’s Veterans.

- Be professional. Remember that everyone represents the American Legion Family.

- Make sure everyone knows their roles before going to school.

- Promote the event

through local media and via social media.

- Wear your American Legion apparel.
- After the program be sure to follow up with thank you notes.

More information can be found on www.ALAforVeterans.org. Check out the publication “Veterans in Community Schools: “History in the First Person” on the American Legion’s website at www.legion.org/publication for more hints.

If we all work together with our Legion Family and do a Veterans in Community School program we will enhance respect for the sacrifices of our military heroes among school children.

—Eleanor Amato,
Department Education
Chairman

From Your National Education Committee Member



DIANE ROUSSEAU

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As a member of the National Education Committee, I recently had the pleasure of representing the American Legion Auxiliary at the American Middle Level Education (AMLE) Conference held in Columbus, Ohio on October 15th and 16th. At this annual AMLE conference, The American Legion had a booth in the exhibit hall along with approximately 250 other exhibitors ... and I was there for the ALA! 3,100 attendees were registered for this conference so the opportunity was there to pass on information to many professionals in the education field. Wow!

I assisted TAL's National Education & Scholarships Assistant Director Tim Lankford and TAL National Education Committee Member Jim Davis at the exhibit booth. We handed out

bags of information including brochures on the school medal program, boys state, girls state, baseball, shooting sports, scholarships, and also a flag etiquette book along with other brochures. As a way to get attendees to stop at TAL exhibit booth, we offered them an American Flag sticker for their name badges. Once we had their attention and were placing the stickers, we asked if they were familiar with our programs and went on with an explanation of them and offered them the bag of information. It worked great!

The exhibit hall was full of great information for teachers. I picked up information on a couple of programs that I have passed onto our Department Education Chairman Eleanor Amato ... and Eleanor gave me the

“okay” to write this info up for The Family Tree. Here goes:

“Bright Schools Competition” FREE Student Competition: Explore The Relationship Between Light and Sleep

Designed especially for middle school students (grades 6-8), the Bright Schools Competition creates a hands-on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning experience that will help students, parents, and teachers better understand the link between light, sleep, and student health and performance. The competition is free to enter, and it offers great prizes for students and teachers, including a Go! Middle School Deluxe Package from Vernier. Registration is now open, and projects are due on

January 29, 2016.

Visit brightschoolscompetition.org/LaunchPage.aspx to learn more.

You may also contact Sarah Beistel at sbeistel@nsta.org for more information.

“Right Decisions – Right Now – Be Tobacco Free”

Go to www.RightDecisionsRightNow.com ... there are FREE tools to help teachers, parents, and community leaders teach youth tobacco prevention. It's a FREE evidence-based educational program with the goal of preventing young people from using tobacco.

Please consider passing this information onto the schools in your area. Thanks.

—Diane Rousseau,
National Education
Committee Member



FROM THE SECRETARY



KIMBERLY SULLIVAN

secretary@alaff.org

Girls State

The numbered applications will be mailed starting December 7 to Units we have received registration paperwork from. Remember you must have a minimum of 10 paid members and all quotas paid to register a girl for Girls State.

Newly Chartered Units may participate the year they charter; however, they are required to pay quotas based on the number of members they charter with.

Interested new Units should request an invoice along with registration paperwork from Department Headquarters.

It is very important that a Unit does not interview or tell a girl she has been selected for Girls State until they have the numbered application in their procession.

In the past, we have had Units tell girls they were going to Girls State when they did not have a numbered application and found out the program was full and had to go back and tell the girls they could not go. Save your Unit this embarrassment by following the rules.

Meet the deadline of March 10th!

All completed applications are due ONLINE by March 10th. Late applications will not be accepted.

It is the Unit's responsibility to get these applications completed and signed by the student and parent—not the school!

Do not leave them at the school and expect them to get them completed and return them to us by the deadline.

Tax & Incorporations

Calendar of Events	
Dept HQ Closed	Dec. 24 - Jan. 2
Girls State Unit Application Deadline	Feb. 1
District 6 Constitutional Conference	May 7
District 15 Constitutional Conference	May 15
Convention	June 16-19
Girls State	June 30-July 8

We must remind all Units of their responsibility to file their annual report with the IRS and to be incorporated with the State of Florida per Department's Constitution and Bylaws.

All Units must have their annual report filed with the IRS and a copy of this report must be on file at Department Headquarters.

If your Unit's income for the year was under \$50,000 you must file a 990-N on line. All other

Units are to file a 990 or 990 EZ.

Fall Conference

Thank you all for a wonderful Fall Conference. Take our online survey and tell us what you liked, and areas of improvement for next year's planning. LINK: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ALAFallConference>

—Kimberly Sullivan,
Department
Secretary-Treasurer &
Executive Director



leadership@alaff.org

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

—**Maya Angelou**

Part of National’s Centennial Strategic Plan is to develop leaders. Creating a Culture of Goodwill is a National objective in order to cultivate leaders in our organization. How we treat each other as Auxiliary members and how we interact with the public is a reflection of the Legion Family. No matter who you are dealing with, here are some tips for effective leadership:

- Be Respectful of Others
- Listen and Do Not Interrupt
- Be Present and Pay Attention
- Practice Kindness, Generosity and Gratitude
- Keep Your Cool
- Nurture Social Relationships
- Say Thank You
- Think Positively
- Promote Decency
- Discuss In Private and Praise In Public

These tools, and many others, are located on the National Leadership Plan of Action. The website address is alaforveterans.org.

Here are two more Auxiliary Basic Concept classes that are scheduled. Contact your District President for more information. Please attend and learn more about the wonderful organization that we all love!

- District 8 – December 12th @ Unit 11 Arcadia, 9:00am registration and 10:00am start
- District 7 - February 13th @ Unit 3 Bartow, 9:00am registration and 10:00am start

From my family to yours, have a wonderful holiday season.

—**Jane Hardacre, Department Leadership Chairman**
[DECEMBER 2015]

Tips on Being an Effective Leader



SHEILA VENNER

svenner10@aol.com

Be nice and people will be nice back. Be rude, dismissive or unfriendly and you will be sure to get that back.

How to succeed in this endeavor takes a few important steps. They are:

- When you make eye contact with someone make a point to really see them. One good way is to note the color of their eyes (because you actually have to look into their eyes to do this).
- Use their name in conversation and remember it for the next time. Remembering names is a simple secret to success that many people discount. Do not discount it.
- Pick up something personal from the conversation

and make a note of it so you can bring it up the next time you see them. For example, “Last time we spoke you were heading for a vacation up North. How was your trip?”

- Take a little extra time when you are having a conversation. Stop doing what you are doing (it is not a good time to multi-task), and give your undivided attention to the other person for a few minutes. You won’t regret it.

If you make people feel good, they are not likely to try to make you feel bad, rather, they will reciprocate.

—Sheila Venner, 33-year member of U164

Community Service Reminders & Dates



WANDA BRANDT

communityservice@alaf.org

A major part of an organization is community service. What can we do? Where can we help? Who can we help? Can we provide care and protection for our community? – YES, especially the children of our servicemen and service women.

If we can all work together as a Legion Family we can build a stronger community. Show initiative within the commu-

nities by participation in events such as Walk-A-Thons, Stars & Stripes and Wounded Warriors. You can also consider volunteering at nursing homes, hospitals, homeless shelters, schools, and other events. With winter coming to our great state, how about collecting coats, scarf’s and gloves for our homeless Veterans.

Let’s get the word out! We are here to help our

veterans. By participating we are BRIDGING OUR FAMILY TOGETHER.

Please remember to report all that is done for community service. Remember to report money, miles, hours, pictures and members. Wish everyone safe and Happy Holidays. I look forward to hearing from all of you.

Dates to Remember

- Pearl Harbor Remem-

brance – Dec. 7th, 2015

- Christmas Day – Dec. 25th 2015
- New Year’s Day – Jan.1st, 2016
- Martin Luther King Jr., Day– Jan.18th, 2016
- National Volunteer Week – April 11th - 15th 2016

—Wanda Brandt,
Department Community
Service Chairman



Legislative

Learn what you can do to make a difference in legislative activism.



LINDA GREVARA

legislative@alaf.org

When you recite the Preamble to the American Legion Auxiliary's Constitution at your Unit meetings, you pledge to "participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of the American Legion".

Legislative activism on behalf of America, its veterans and their families is a vital part of the Legion's purpose and aims and something every ALA member should support. Did you know that the very first GI Bill of Rights was created by a Legionnaire? That the Legion's efforts resulted in the creation of the U.S. Veterans Bureau, forerunner of the Veterans Administration? That the first Flag Code to protect the US Flag from desecration was drafted by the Legion and subsequently adopted by Congress?

These and other import-

ant accomplishments were achieved because dedicated members of the American Legion and the Auxiliary worked tirelessly to bring about changes that our veterans and our Nation needed through legislative action.

How can you do your part you ask? It's so simple!

1. Sign up to receive Legislative Action Alerts at legion.capwiz.com/legion/issues/bills. On that site, the American Legion lists the Bills affecting veterans coming before Congress for a vote and how the Legion stands on the subject.

2. Enter your zip code.

3. A form will appear featuring the name and email address of your Representative. Fill in your name and address on the form that appears with a pre-written message prepared by the Legion about

the Bill (you can also make additional comments or you can create your own message entirely).

4. Press send.

Now isn't that easy!?

Some of the recent topics coming up for a vote are:

- Urging Congress to continue funding for the building of the Denver VA Medical Center
- Providing in-state tuition rates for veteran students
- Fighting budget cuts for housing allowances and increased prescription costs for service members and their families

Our Legion family forefathers and mothers did their part and now we must carry on their good work by speaking up to our lawmakers and letting them know how we would like them to vote on issues affecting America and its veterans.

So, sign up today. Tell Washington what you want them to do for America. Do your part. Fulfill your pledge!!

This year a special award will be presented to the Unit that reports the most members who sign up to receive Legislative Action Alerts. Please report the numbers of members who receive the alerts on your Unit's Year-End Report under item #6. The award will be a US Flag that was flown over the US Capitol on Veteran's Day. This award will be presented at Convention and is in addition to the usual awards and recognitions listed in the Plan of Action. Unit Year-End Legislative reports are due to your District Legislative Chairman no later than April 15, 2016.

—Linda Grevara, Dept. Legislative Chairman

From the VA Hospital - Tampa



ANN SANKOWSKI

tsankows@tampabay.rr.com



We are having a very busy November here at James A Haley VA hospital.

November 3 Bingo was hosted by ALA Unit #5. Bingo was hosted on November 10 by ALA Unit #135, from Naples, Florida.

Monday the 9th I did my usual rounds on 3 floors, taking with me 55 beautiful patriotic ditty bags containing toiletries. I also handed out all of the red, white and blue knitted, crocheted and quilted lap robes and blankets that everyone had so generously made and sent in over the past 12 months. (I have to put them away in drawers to save them). The vets always remark about the work and love that goes into making them. How much I

enjoy being able to present them to our hospitalized vets!

Our annual Veterans Day Parade was Wednesday the 11th. We had excellent community participation this year and lots of fun! Senators Bill Nelson and Congresswoman Betty Castor and others spoke to our crowd. There were bands, floats, vehicles and many groups walking and riding in our parade. A very nice lunch and dessert was free after, with cold drinks. It was a beautiful day. I estimate 800 people total.

We are gearing up for Thanksgiving. I love those autumn ditty bags!

I have our plastic storage tubs set up to receive donations

for our Christmas gift bags.

We are planning to make at least 400 bags this year again. They are filled with large toiletries, socks, hats, pen and notebooks, cards and whatever goodies will fill them.

I have ordered styluses again and Hal (AL rep) has ordered pens, both with our organization names on the side. It is a busy time of year.

I thank you so very much for responding so quickly and generously with ditty bags you have sent in. The blankets and lap robes are welcome, thanks and thanks again!

I cannot stress enough how much our office could use some volunteers here at this hospital..if you

can give one morning a month or any time at all, please call me or come by to the 2nd floor Voluntary Services area of the hospital on a Monday or Thursday to talk.

There is a small amount of paperwork to fill out, a TB shot to get, and a little background check. Oh, and your picture badge. Please try it, its fun. Please follow through with a bit of your time for our vets here in the hospital. You won't be sorry.

You are needed badly.

— Anne Sankowski,
ALA Representative
James A Haley
Veterans Hospital -
Tampa

FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION

FAMILY



GREETINGS FROM THE DETACHMENT COMMANDER

squadron120@cfl.rr.com

I would like to thank each and every Post, Unit and Squadron that I have been invited to or visited in the last few months. Words can not express how you have shown me that the Sons and I are a vital part of The Family Tree. The warmth and hospitality has been overwhelming.

On 9-11 I had Honor Guard duties for two wonderful ceremonies which were well attended. On September 18th was P.O.W. / M.I.A. Day {which is always on the 3rd Friday in September} I was invited to a very

10 The Family Tree

moving ceremony at Post 267.

On October 3rd in Volusia County, the 17th District held a Stand Down and what an honor it was for me to participate with the Legion Family and see the delight on the faces of these Homeless Veterans when we handed them a pin or a hat and they all left with a bag of things that you and I take for granted.

One of the most memorable experiences I had was to attend Ssgt. Stephen C. Kennedy's Remembrance Service. Kennedy was killed in

action in Iraq. His mother was presented with the Honor and Remember Flag with her son's name on it, which flies proudly with our Nation's Flag in their front yard.

As you all know Gold Star Mothers are Mothers who have lost a Son or Daughter in the line of duty. GOD BLESS THEIR HEARTS!

Although I was unable to attend Lehigh Acres golf tournament I heard they had a great turnout. Thanks to everyone who helped and played in this worthy event for Children and Youth.

With that in mind, I would like to let you know that my Charity this year is All Children's Hospital. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

I am looking forward to meeting and working with the most self giving women I have ever encountered. Wishing all of you a safe and Happy Holiday.

Being a First Responder to our Veterans,

—Joe Eckenrode,
Detachment
Commander, Sons of the
American Legion

[DECEMBER 2015]



Top: SAL Detachment Commander Joe Eckenrode (right) stands with Gold Star Mother of Ssgt. Stephen Kennedy (left) at Remembrance Service.



Bottom left: Joe Eckenrode (far bottom left) attends Remembrance Service for Ssgt. Stephen C. Kennedy.

His mother is being presented with the Honor and Remember Flag.



SHANEECE DIXON

Shaneece is a graduate of the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications. She joined the Department team in June 2015. She enjoys singing, reading, and giving back to the community.

Other organizations she has previously worked with include: Mayor Buddy Dyer's City of Service Initiative; ORLANDO CARES, the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools, Central Florida Community Action Agency and Gainesville Today magazine.

Position: Administrative Assistant
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Responsible for: **Designing the Family Tree, updating the Department website, filling supply orders, sending and receiving mail and assisting with membership.**



Position: Membership Clerk
Email: membership@alaff.org
Phone: 407-293-7411, ext.244

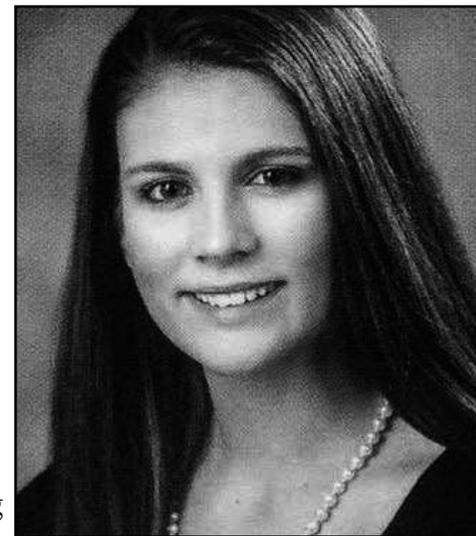
Responsible for: **Processing membership.**

THE STAFF

MEET

Gaby Heenan joined the staff in September 2015. She originally moved to Florida from Long Island, NY. She recently won a full-ride scholarship to attend Rollins College in Winter Park and will be starting as a freshman in Spring 2016!

In her spare time, Gaby enjoys reading and cooking Latin food.



GABRIELLE HEENAN

[DECEMBER 2015]



FROM THE NEC



ERNA SCHWABE

nec@alaff.org

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of our American Legion Family members.

As promised here is the list of Florida children that received COTA money that you raised for our Kids. "CARING FOR COTA KIDS".

Richard from Jacksonville	\$2,500.00
Desmond from St. Petersburg	\$1,500.00
Logan from Orange Park	\$1,500.00

Joey from Kissimmee	\$1,500.00
Casey from North Port	\$1,500.00
CJ from Tampa	\$1,500.00
Rose from Gainesville	\$2,500.00

Thank you for your support of this great program. I will keep you updated as the information comes into me.

—Erna Schwabe, Department NEC

GIVING HOPE You can give hope to a COTA family. Raise funds to give hope to a family in your area. Make a gift to make a miracle for a child. Plan an activity to raise funds and awareness.

Become a Miracle Maker today. Go to www.cota.org to learn more about COTA and how you can help.

MAKING MIRACLES

Join Legion Posts, SAL Squadrons, Auxiliary Units and Rider Chapters across the country as they raise funds for COTA to help a family in their area.

Children's Organ Transplant Association. www.cota.org
800.366.2682 doug@cota.org



Military Child's Ceremony

This is the military child's script our National Security Chairman presented at Fall Conference

DIANN DIRCZ

nationalsecurity@alafll.org

As we honor our veterans we must remember to honor those at home. The sacrifice the children make when a family member is deployed.

When an Air Force officer was asked what he needed in Iraq, he said, "Please don't send cookies, care packages, or socks. Just help take care of our children". We have a great capacity to care for the home front. Now is the time for a new Victory garden. In this garden, we can tend to the needs of the military child.

In honor of the children we present to you the Military Child's Table Setting. This table is inspired by our POW/MIA ceremony to honor the sacrifices and contributions of our military children.

• The **Potted Flowering Plant** symbolizes that the children of our deployed may flower and flourish where they are planted.

• The **Hand Spade** recognizes that the military children may be transplanted to a new location, any place at a moment's notice. They must acclimate themselves to a new school, new friends, possibly a new culture. (insert in pot)

• The **Birthday Cake and Unlit Candles** symbolize birthday's and special events that their deployed loved one will miss while they are away.

• The **Baseball Glove and Ball** represent the games they have without the cheering from their deployed loved one.

• The **Ballet Slippers** signify that there are many special occasions that

go without the deployed loved one sharing in the joys of that day, in person.

• The **Family Photo** depicting a child or children with their uniformed parents represents the foundation of our country's strength of families united in their commitment to national service and willing to make any sacrifice, both at home and abroad to ensure that our flag continues to fly free.

• Families united in their commitment to national service and willing to make any sacrifice, both at home and abroad to ensure that our **flag** continues to fly free.

Remember the children.
Let us pray.
"We are thankful, Father, for all the blessing

you have given to us and for the fellowship we have shared with those here. We ask that you heal those who could not be with us due to sickness.

As always, we pray for our service persons and for their safe return to their families. We ask that we be strengthened with Thy grace as we strive to keep America "One Nation Under God". Amen

Are there any questions??

You are invited to come up to take pictures of the tables.

—Courtesy of **Diann Dircz, Department National Security Chairman**



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



LOIS STACHELRODT

chaplain@alaf.org

As the Christmas Season approaches, let us reflect on the true meaning of the season. May our hearts be filled with joy and may we renew friendships and keep families close. May we all cherish our Memories of those who have decided to journey home and remember that they are never very far from us. May everyone have a Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukah!

—Lois Stachelrodt, Department Chaplain

District 1

Unit 235 Wilber, Judith

District 5

Unit 37 Absher, Deborah

District 6

Unit 80 Thomas, Phylis
Unit 219 Gella, Edna M.
Unit 286 Adkison, Patricia
Koger (Anderson), Diane
Skelly, Linda
Staley, Delores
Unit 347 Hull, Lynne
Sechrest, Connie

District 7

Unit 8 Bauman, Dorothy
Downing, Roberta M.
Gordon, Ethel
Schlichting, Pat

District 8

Unit 11 Haggerty, Mary

District 9

Unit 157 Bianco, Kathleen
McLean, Mary

District 12

Unit 39 Woodall, Roslyn
Unit 189 Cavanaugh, Theresa
Goff, Donna
Mackey, Jean
Yanosky, Ethel
Unit 200 Petruolo, Joann

District 13

Unit 323 Burkett, Donna

District 15

Unit 139 Yano, Veronika
Unit 152 Huber, Marty
Shirley, Joann
Unit 334 Eddy, Elaine

District 16

Unit 104 Keding, Bonnie
Unit 273 Ballard, Janet

District 17

Unit 120 Wilson, Judy

Department HQs

Unit 400 Hagemann, Olive



FROM THE UNITS

—Unfortunately, we have limited space for this section and were unable to publish every submission we received. Visit our scrapbook page on www.alaf.org to see all the photos. We're happy to see all that you do in your Units!

UNIT 283



Unit 283, Arlington, distribute poppies at Publix in the Cobblestone Shopping Center.

—Photo courtesy of Annie Anderson, District 5 President

UNIT 286



UNIT 88



Top left: Little Miss Poppy is seen here helping Unit 286 distribute poppies at a local grocery store. **Top right:** Unit 88 hosts its Fall Festival. **Bottom left:** Louise Wilt (middle) presented Christina Pope (left) with the Essay Medal & Certificate for her Americanism essay. LTC Eric Deal, (Ret) USAF, Senior Instructor, who is seen at the right, prepared the program and brought the Rifle & Drill Team along with the Honor Guard.

UNIT 111



—From the
Department AEF
Chairman, Sandie
Eck:

“A Big Thank You to
the Districts that
entered baskets at the
Fall Conference
AEF Raffle.
We raised \$1,770!”



Top: Members of Unit 340 in Pensacola create packages for the troops in Afghanistan. *Photo courtesy of Linda Knoblach-Harkness, District 1 President.*

UNIT 30



UNIT 30



Unit 30 hosted a booth at Gocio Elementary School's Fall Festival on Oct. 23 in Sarasota. Its mission was to educate the students and families on what "our flower", the Poppy was. A total of 15 members were present including the Post Commander, Pete Fredenburg and two dual members, Lori Callahan and Nellie Dunhoft, along with 12 of its members.

—photos courtesy of Tammy Griggs, U30 President



From left to right: Bailey Gable, Ugwum Nwavbani, Maddie Bierdemann, and Megan Charland pose for a photo at an Auxiliary meeting for Unit 347.

Girl State Chairman retires after 10 years in position

Hello, from American Legion Auxiliary Veterans Memorial Unit 347. Maddie Bierdemann has been our Girl State Chairman for the past 10 years.

This was her last year as the chairman. She has loved doing it over the years, but felt it was time to give it up.

Maddie said it was time for someone else to have the opportunity to do it.

“I have enjoyed doing it and meeting all the girls through the years,” said Bierdemann.

Peggy Hearlson stepped forward and said she would be glad to take over as Girls State Chairman.

I had the opportunity to help Maddie this year by interviewing and helping select the girls that would attend Girls State. When we had the orientation at our unit, I had the chance to meet the girls’ parents with Maddie.

As Maddie’s last duty as chairman, she asked all 10 girls to come back in October for our Auxiliary meeting to share their experiences at Girls State. Three girls attended and each of

their responses are listed below:

Megan Charland: “I am so proud and honored to have been picked. It’s an experience that I wish every girl could go and see.”

Bailey Gable: “I learned you had to fend for yourself. You can’t have Mom hold your hand the whole time. It was good because as an adult you’re going to have to make quick, important decisions. I really felt we had to do that at Girls State.

Ugwum Nwavbani: “I’m so glad I got picked. At first, I wondered what I was getting myself into. By the end, you have a close bond with the girls, and you’ve learned so much. It was a life-changing experience. It makes you want to have a relationship with the government.”

Another year is over for Girls State. I know Peggy is looking forward to interviewing the new girls in 2016 as the new chairman.

—Ann Huxtable, U347
Historian



Top: Auxiliary Unit 3 in Bartow hosts their Hometown Veteran Heroes event at the Bartow Civic Center on Nov. 11.

—Photo courtesy of Mary Lewis, District 7 President

UNIT 193



Top: President Pearl and her husband Bill join U193 in feeding veterans on Nov. 10.

Bottom left: Unit 250 hosts Veterans Day event. **Bottom right:** Unit 81 prepares baskets for Wounded Warriors in Action project.

UNIT 250



UNIT 81



UNIT 359



UNIT 359



UNIT 111

Unit 359 hosted its Kiss a Pig Fundraiser.

Top right: Setup for the “kissing” portion of the two-day event.

Top left: The Unit continues the second day of the event with actual pigs to use in pig races.

—Photos courtesy of District 12 Commander Felix Ayala Jr.

Bottom: Members of Unit 111 served ice cream sundaes for 25 Veterans from the New Beginnings Homeless Vets program.

Membership Report *

**As of Friday, Nov. 20, 2015*

Due to the length of this issue of the Family Tree, we could not publish a full Membership Report. For a detailed and updated membership report, visit www.alaf.org/friday-report, or call Department at (407) 293-7411.

DISTRICTS					
District	GOAL	Juniors	Seniors	TOTAL	Percent
District 1	1903	33	723	756	39.73%
District 2	462	48	225	273	59.09%
District 3	845	13	348	361	42.72%
District 4	1047	19	523	542	51.77%
District 5	3058	155	1408	1563	51.11%
District 6	4155	62	1704	1766	42.50%
District 7	1295	12	582	594	45.87%
District 8	3597	59	1707	1766	49.10%
District 9	1811	174	808	982	54.22%
District 11	1531	89	592	681	44.48%
District 12	3945	80	1862	1942	49.23%
District 13	4795	87	2054	2141	44.65%
District 14	917	7	403	410	44.71%
District 15	1911	29	824	853	44.64%
District 16	7367	97	3430	3527	47.88%
District 17	1773	41	734	775	43.71%
Department (400)	302	0	123	123	40.73%
TOTAL	40,714	1005	18,050	19,055	46.80%

Congratulations to these units for reaching over 100% in membership!

- District 5: **Unit 197** - Jacksonville = 109.76%
- District 6: **Unit 63** - Winter Garden = 125%