

Book of Reports



2022-2023

District 1



ALA District 1
Book of Reports 2022-2023
Pamela Pannasch
District 1 President

District 1 consists of 13 active Units from Pensacola to Panama City Beach. It was a slow start to the new reporting year for some of our Units. Unfortunately, only 10 of the 13 Units actually reported this year. The ones reporting worked their programs very well and we continue to help our Veterans, our Children and our Communities from one end of the district to the other.

Unit 75-Crestview

*The first event for this Unit is Derby Day on the first Saturday of May. Everyone is asked to wear their derby day best. Oysters Rockefeller, shrimp cocktails and several other items are among the menu for that day. The money used is put into the Community Service fund the distribute throughout the year. Games and prizes are given this day and the whole Post participates.

*Auxiliary along with the help of the local Boy Scouts and other family members of the Legion create a poppy field. It is located in the front of the Post and they are constructed with a black stake, red material and wire to form the shape of a poppy. Beside each poppy they place a small American Flag and a white cross. They have done this for many years. Memorial Day they have a ceremony with all members and city officials invited to dedicate this field. The community looks forward to this every year.

*In October they had a coat drive so they could distribute to the homeless in the area when the temperatures start to drop in the evenings.

*In November and December, a holiday meal is prepared for our community veterans and families who have no immediate family to celebrate with. Auxiliary member donated the cooked the turkeys for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

*The Unit partnered with a local school and hand delivered 22 special needs children Christmas presents. These children may not have gotten any presents with the gifts.

*They collected slightly used blankets, shoes, hygiene items and also gave \$500 to a deputy in the Crestview Sheriff Department who works closely with helping the homeless in our area. They also collected teddy bears and stuffed animal to hand out to children who have been removed from their homes to be given to them at that time.

*They collected money and held 50/50 for the hurricane Ian fund and it was sent to those in need.

*They raised enough money to purchase several robotic animals for the Clifford Chester Sims nursing home in Panama City.

*They welcomed Jane Hardacre with open arms and presented a \$1000 check to her for her charity Gary Sinise Snowball Express.

*Every 4th Friday they have spaghetti dinner which they sell and also do bake sales on holiday weeks and play Bunco which is open to the public.

Unit 193 Pensacola

This Pensacola unit works mainly the 4 pillars which are Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children and Youth.

*Toiletries, cleaning supplies, snacks and \$500 donation and \$650 in kind to the Ronald McDonald House was done. Halloween Trunk and Treat for the children was done at the post home and treats, hot dogs, and chips were available. They also provided Easter Baskets for 2 elementary schools in the area to include coloring books, note pads, pencils and bubbles.

*This unit provided clothing to displaced students, gave school items to assist with homeless children, gave backpacks to students to send food home to feed the entire family over the weekends, volunteered with Pensacola College Veterans Upward Bound Program on some of their fundraising initiatives. They also participate in the Give 10 to education spending \$425 and \$80 in kind.

*Unit provided education about flag etiquette, response and support to our country, to our active-duty military and veterans. Showed a DVD to various elementary schools about the history of the United States flag and provided pocket flags to veterans and students in the community. Some children did participate in the Americanism Essay Contest.

*Fundraising was done through Bingo fundraisers for the programs.

Unit 221 Niceville

Niceville does not work all the programs but tries very hard to work the 4 pillars of our organization which are Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children and Youth. They raise their money from raffle tickets, 50/50 and partnering with some of the other families and money is split between families.

*Unit 221 donation of money to Challenge 22 (\$500), Freedom Life Compass Rehab (\$540), Pets for Vets (\$300), Wreaths Across American (\$150), Needy children and veterans for Christmas (\$500), Boys State Transportation (\$500), ALR Unity Ride (\$500), Girls State (\$600), Home Post 221 (\$500).

*They also accomplished the following:

12 members are food handler certified, 6 members are CPR/AED certified, 5 members volunteer weekly to assist with burger night and steak nights, they attained 100% membership by February 2023 and gained 35 new members since May 2022.

Unit 235 Ft Walton Beach-NO REPORT

Unit 240 Pensacola-NO REPORT

Unit 296 Destin

Destin's membership consists not only of local members but many snow-birds come to them in the winter months. They seem to get the programs worked and do a great job.

*May 16, 2022 the City of Destin made a Proclamation for National Poppy Day May 27. The President gave a Memorial Day speech while members distributed poppies for donation at the American Legion and Cemetery.

*Assisted with the Korean War Veterans luncheon on July 27, 2022

*In August two members took children's headphones and Ticonderoga pencils to Destin Elementary School. They also donated \$486 for supplies along with in-kind donations.

*In October members supported McGuire's Halloween Fun Run. The restaurant donated funds to the American Legion.

*This unit has supported their Post by providing funding for epoxy bathroom flooring (\$1890), tile removal of ballroom bathroom (\$650), repair of the air conditioner (\$2000) and post building insurance support (\$1000).

*November the unit provided new bedding and linens to "One Hopeful Place" family homeless shelter.

*The National Security program Troopons-Support Our Troops provided 220 hours, \$120 postage to mail \$36,000 worth of Military Coupons.

*Fund raising consists of dinners and bingo in turn allowed them to send money to different charities on the donation remittance form from department totaling \$2,500 split between charities.

*The unit in combination with Elk's grant written by Terri Griffin provided Christmas Presents for residents at the Clifford Chester Sims VA nursing home in Panama City.

*Constitution, By-Laws and Standing rules were updated to up the membership fee and to have electronic meetings if due to a national shut down.

*This Unit does many Communities Service based events such as monthly blood drives with "One Blood", providing \$2400 per year to Fresh Start, \$2400 to Shelter House, \$250 to Sheriff Charity, \$100 monthly to Blue Door homeless panty, \$600 yearly to Harvest House food pantry and \$100 to Dewey Destin Fish Fry event for Corporal Roy Hamilton's family.

Unit 340 Pensacola

Unit 340 is busy doing their best working almost all the programs. They are very active at their post and in their community helping veterans, children and others in the community.

*In April 2022, dinners are delivered to the homeless during the month. Five girls were accepted for Girls State. Blankets and jackets were delivered to the Veteran's Village and The HER Foundation. They donated \$500 to the Fisher House and \$500 to New Horizons of NW Florida. Make a Wish Foundation gave a certificate of approval for the donations the made to the Foundation.

*In May 2022, a donation of \$100 was given as a going away present to a member who was 74 and 4100 was given to a volunteer for outstanding work they have done.

*In June 2022, 4 members attended convention and came back with reports to their units. They donated \$500 to Favor House, \$200 to VA Clinic, and \$500 to Secret House (a shelter for victims of sex trafficking)

*In July 2022, National Security will have a Flat Member Award and our ladies were busy getting their flat members ready to do some traveling. A 3rd grade class was given snacks and drinks. The Golf Tournament went well and the money received goes to the Girls State Fund. We donated \$500 to the St Vincent DePaul Food Panty and \$500 to A-Hero.

*In August 2022- A donation to the Gary Sinise's Foundation Snowball Express in the amount of \$500 was sent in.

*In September 2022, they participated in a POW/MIA Ceremony with The University of West Florida's ROTC and local cub scouts participating. On 9/11 items

were carried to a local fire department which was very much appreciated and also the HER Foundation in Pensacola. Donations were Rider's Romp \$500 benefits suicide awareness and autism. End of Watch \$500 Memorial to honor fallen Officers. \$500 was given to purchase back packs to give to homeless veterans. \$500 to Phoenix Rising a dog rescue group.

*In October 2022, food was carried to a needy family, the children enjoyed the Truck or Treat served out of the vehicles, treats to first responders and also spent \$400 on a pizza party for the Clifford Chester Sims VA nursing home in which 6 members attended. We also gave \$1000 to the Department of Florida Donation Relief Fund.

*In November 2022, we gave 12 Thanksgiving Baskets were given to needy families. Attended the Veterans Day Parade where we gave away small flags and poppies to veterans. Of the members who attended Fall Conference they found it very informative and helpful. Received donations from tips from Veterans Day meal they prepared in the amount of \$85.

*In December 2022, 3 military families received gifts for their children. There was a Christmas Party Santa attended and 54 children attended to see him. The 23 children names which were on the angel tree were taken by individuals and gifts were purchased and delivered. Eight baskets were given to needy individuals for the holidays. They laid 322 wreaths for Wreaths Across American in Barrancas National Cemetery.

*In January 2023, backpacks were taken to Homeless Veterans at Maxwell House.

*In February 2023, clothing and food were given to the homeless. Donations given this month were to Make a Wish \$500, Fisher House \$500, New Horizons of NW Florida \$500, Ronald McDonald House \$500, Beads of Courage \$500 and a members Celebration of Life \$100.

*In March 2023, they held an initiation of new members after the general membership meeting. Five girls were interviewed for Girls State and are ready for registration and attendance. Leadership class was taught by Linda Knoblach Harkness. There were a good turnout and other people from other Units in our District were in attendance. Donations to St Vincent DePaul's Pantry \$500 and USO \$400.

Unit 356 Lynn Haven

The Unit works all year long to help the veterans, military families and those in need regardless of their status. They have countless hours and commitment from these auxiliary members.

*The Auxiliary cooked the first Wednesday, first Friday and third Saturday of every month which some of their fund raising comes from. They also prepared food for the installation of officers in July, a memorial service for a Legionnaire, and also when the National Commander came to visit.

*This Auxiliary helps the Clifford Chester Sims Veterans Nursing Home play bingo at the post.

*Throughout the year they donate thousands of dollars of goods to the Good Will, Salvation Army and Helping Hands.

*One member donated a cemetery plot, headstone and vault to a military family for their loved ones. This was a \$11,000 value.

*Wreaths were raffled off throughout the year and the money was donated to the Fisher House in Ft Walton Beach.

*Bunco is every second Tuesday of the month. It is a big success and usually 12-18 participants monthly.

*Our National Security spent countless hours cutting coupons and submitted over \$89,203 to mail to our families and troops overseas.

*One of our members donated \$4600 to City of Hope for Meals.

*One Auxiliary members cared for a veteran who had been in a horrific automobile accident. She stayed with him at Shands and then when he came home, she was his fulltime caregiver. She donated over 1000 hours of personal care, companionship, meal prep, medication management, transportation and wound care.

*A family who were victims of a fire and lost everything. The Auxiliary reached out and sponsored that family for Thanksgiving and purchased a \$200 gift card to use toward the children's needs.

*Fifteen Thanksgiving baskets and 11 Christmas baskets were put together by our members. The baskets contained enough food to feed each family for a week.

*One Memorial Day and Veteran's Day a couple of ladies went to Walmart and passed out Poppies. Not a lot of money made but they used the opportunity to educate our community about what the poppy stands for.

*In February 2023 they held a huge fund raiser for Fisher House. They held a silent auction, raffles, cake walk, live auction, and music. They raised a total of \$4000 and presented the check to Fisher House.

*They learned that Cub Scout 321 had a need for uniforms so they gave \$300 for the families who could not afford to pay for their child's uniform.

*They participated in the Clifford Chester Sims Christmas Tree program and sponsored 6 residents with gifts from their wish list. There were 19 other residents which our individual members sponsored solo. Over \$1500 was spent at Christmas.

*The Auxiliary at 356 takes care of their Legionnaires at their own post. They purchased an upright large freezer to house bulk meat in and we share it with all our families. They also purchased 12 new chairs for our outdoor space.

Unit 375 Southport-NO REPORT

Unit 378 Gulf Breeze

This is the "Little Post" in our area but these Auxiliary members do a lot of their veterans and community.

*Poppies were distributed for donation last May.

*Hotdogs and Hamburgers for EMT's, firefighters, and police as well as flag waving.

*Southern Style Auxiliary Dinner Night

*Auxiliary Halloween Party

*Suicide Walk

*Thanksgiving can Food Drive to unfortunate

*Pig Roast One family was sponsored for Christmas

*Delivered cookies to Hurlburt Field Airman for holidays

*Christmas Gift Delivery to Children

*Time Travelers Ball hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. The Post received an award for non-profit organization of the year. All families participated and received this award.

*Auxiliary Italian Night Dinner

*Auxiliary Madi Gras Theme Dinner and Valentins Day Basket Raffle

Unit 382 Navarre

Unit 382 is one of the most active units in our District. They work the programs and see fantastic results.

*Americanism-Unit 382 has participated in the retirement flag ceremony with our Scouts on two separate occasions this past year. -A 3-point flag folding presentation was given to the Auxiliary members to see and understand the purpose of folding the flag and the meaning behind it. -40 flags were distributed to homes across our community to replace worn and tattered flags at no cost to the community.

*Children and Youth-They started the year off with a Meat Bingo and Gift Party for our Children and Youth. We purpled up April for the Month of the Military Child and chose Military Brat Day to honor and thank our children. The event cost was \$678.-We stuffed Easter Eggs which we offered to our members for donations. All the eggs and candy were donated by all the Legion Family members with donated items valuing \$300. The amount raised for this was \$350.-A trunk or treat was sponsored through the local Exceptional Families in Navarre. They had 6 trunks registered and one tent at the event with 10 members participating. \$200 worth of candy was donated and SAL provided \$100 worth of Auxiliary coloring books and crayons to pass out. -Another Meat Bingo in the fall raised \$1836 to purchase toys for children in the community. The check was presented to the Riders to disburse the gifts during their annual Ride for the Claus. – Hosted their annual Children & Youth Christmas Party with over 250 children in attendance. Over \$5000 worth of toys were purchased and food, snacks, decorations and games totaling \$2500. They had 5 game tents with hot chocolate bar, reindeer food, cupcake decorating, face painting and letters to Santa. A Christmas coloring contest was held with 4 children awarded a \$25 gift card each.

*Community Service-Unit 382 holds a lunch after the Memorial Day ceremony at the Navarre Park where 11 volunteers with 55 hours of time donated along with \$650 in-kind said dishes for the hamburgers and hotdogs served to the public with over 300 in attendance. -The unit had the great honor and privilege to escort and guard the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall in October 2022 during the Challenge 22 Suicide Awareness even. The wall was located at the Post for 5 days with 24-hour surveillance. 14 Senior Auxiliary members participated in guarding the wall which resulted in 106 hours dedicated to the Veterans and Community. As with the Memorial Day ceremony, the Veterans Day ceremony had 13 volunteers, 65 hours and \$700 in-kind donations for all the cooking, set up, clean up and serving. -There were 20 volunteers during the year with over 300 hours which were put into 3 food trains for all Family members at the Post the Unit donated \$300 to the Riders for a community charity Wing Cook off for the Starfish Project of NWFL

which 9 volunteering 76 hours and helping their cause to raise \$23,000 resulting in taking 2nd place in the cook off and gaining 2 new members.

*Education-Navarre High School received \$1,000 this school year from Unit 382.

One of the teachers are also an auxiliary member and has been integral in distributing the school supplies she had purchased to the many teachers to benefit over 300 children. -We also had the following Auxiliary members attend various District and Department training as follows:

2 Auxiliary members attended School of Instruction

4 Auxiliary members attended ABC School

10 Auxiliary members attended District Meetings

4 Auxiliary members attended District Training at Unit 402 with Department Instructors

6 Auxiliary members attended Department June Convention

6 Auxiliary members attended Department Fall Conference

*Girls State-Unit 382 was able to send 2 delegates to Girls State this year. They held 52 weeks of Wii Bowling on Wednesday Nights raising a total of \$3272. An auxiliary member donated \$500 towards our fundraising to send the delegates this year as well. After raising the money to send their delegates, we were able to send \$1000 to Department to help defer costs for Girls State. We are hoping to send 4 girls next year during the 2023-2024 year.

*National Security-Approximately 15 meals have been delivered to our local fire station after our Friday night dinners. A \$300 spaghetti dinner was delivered to fire station on 9-11 and we were featured in the Florida Canvas for our efforts. During the Challenge 22 event, we worked with 30 or more law enforcement from 2 counties to escort the Vietnam Wall to our Post and they helped build the wall. Santa Rosa County Sheriff Office presented the colors and offered prayer at the reveal of the wall. – Navarre High School ROTC presented colors on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Challenge 22 and Four Chaplains ceremonies. They also participated in our Children & Youth Christmas party and were recognized for their hard work and rewarded them with gifts in the value of \$400.

Poppy-Unit 382 purchased \$88 from the Department of Florida to replenish our Poppies this year. -Our Poppy Committee Chairman recruited a Co-Chairwoman this year to assist in participating in National Poppy Day at our Post, Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies and dinners for both holidays were open to community. Both young ladies are Auxiliary Junior who promoted Poppies with their tierra filled with poppies. – National Poppy Day and Memorial Day, we raised \$130 and distributed 100 poppies. Auxiliary senior members presented the check

to the Department of Florida at June convention. -Veterans Day Ceremony and dinner raised \$133 and 100 poppies distributed. \$33 was sent to Department of Florida and the remaining \$100 was added to a motion to carry donation of \$400 towards Companion Pets for Veterans at Chester Clifford Sims Veterans home in Panama City Florida for a total of \$500 sent to fund the companion pets.

*Public Relations -Unit 382 has been featured in the Department Florida Canvas 4 times this year. Auxiliary purchased shirts for the Officers to wear when representing us throughout the year. -Fliers have been made and distributed in various locations in our community and our Facebook page throughout the year to advertise events held at the Post such as Meat Bingo, Children & Youth Christmas party, Challenge 22, Ride for the Claus, Fallen Warrior Ride, Fallen Order Ride, Friday Night dinners, murder mystery dinners, New Years Eve Party, Hurricane Supply Drive, Food Drives, Turkey Shoot and all ceremonies. -Several articles were featured in the local newspaper and National American Legion newsletters for our Challenge 22 event.

VA&R-This was our most extensive program worked this year. They had a family yard sale and Murder Mystery dinner raising \$5,300 with all proceeds going to Post 33 in Pensacola for the efforts of preserving their Post. -A table was sponsored at the Greater Navarre Area Chamber of Commerce for the Military Affairs Council Military Appreciation Breakfast. 3 active duty and 1 retired veteran sat at the table and it was a great opportunity to tell them about the American Legion and how we can help them during their service and after they retire. -Held a special Meat Bingo to help aide two veterans from the Post with climbing hospital bills. We raised \$6,100. -They co-sponsored and gave \$333 towards the Greater Navarre Area Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council MAC Day held at the 505th on Hurlburt Field AFB. 150 active duty and personnel with 3 of our auxiliary members in attendance to go over what the Legion does and how we can help. -\$500 donated to Honor Flight. Raised \$710 in raffle baskets from meat bingo for Challenge 22. The day of the event, we had 17 auxiliary members volunteering 190 hours of their time to bring resources for suicide prevention for our military. -Auxiliary provided Thanksgiving and Christmas meals at the Post with a total of 23 members and 138 hours were served for these two events. -Raffle basket was donated to Unit 75 to support their first meat bingo fundraiser. 3 auxiliary members with 100 miles and 25 hours total for all three to attend. -Lasagna dinner was prepared for our Four Chaplain Ceremony with 2 auxiliary members cooking the meal with 30 hours of time to prepare. Total members were 12 with 130 hours. -Donation of \$3500 was given to Post for replacing the roof on

the building. We also purchased \$500 worth of lottery tickets to raffle off to raise more money for the roof. This is an ongoing project. -\$500 was donated to District 1 Chairman for the purchase of Companion Pets sent to the Clifford Chester Sims Veterans Home in Panama City. - During the Ride for the Claus this year we delivered care packages to two local nursing homes. 10 members participated with 25 hours total for this cause. -Our monthly Bunco membership club has a total of 24 members. We have a total of 1,152 hours and 12 members collectively donating approximately \$3600 in-kind donations and approximately 144 hours volunteering by the Bunco host each month. Bunco has raised \$3500 toward our VA&R program.

Unit 392 Pensacola

Unit 392 is constantly finding new and innovative ways to work the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. They have truly flourished this year and will continue to do so.

*April 2022-The focus this month was on the military child. For their monthly food night, they hosted a “Purple Up Pasta Bar”. All proceeds were donated to the local community military children. We reached out to Tyndall Academy, K-8 school and donated \$392 to the students. The money will be divided up among the children and put the funds on their lunch accounts for the school year. Our pasta bar was a huge success and all the kids ate dinner for free!

*May 2022-Taco food night, we hosted our monthly food night for May and had a “Fiesta” themed gift basket up for raffle. We sold out of food and all proceeds benefits our Children and Youth program.

*June, July, August 2022-Summer Vibes Food Truck and Concert Series-During these months the auxiliary invited all members out for our food truck and concert series. Each month we hosted a local food truck and musician for the evening. At our July food night, we raffled off our summer beach buggy full of summer goodies. All proceeds benefited the Education Program.

*July 4 Celebration -Auxiliary members headed up the children’s events at our Legion Family Independence Day Celebration. The kids painted, colored, had sidewalk chalk, kiddie pools and squirt guns to keep them cooled off.

*August 2022-Our Junior Member Rowdy Jane Johns organized our annual school supply drive. Rowdy collected school supplies from the community, we had a box

out at the post for members to donate to the cause too. All the supplies were donated to Lucille Moore Elementary this year.

*August 26, 2022- The unit participated in the 15th Annual Homeless Standdown. This year we made backpacks for the Veterans. Inside each backpack was toiletries, non-perishable food items such as crackers, tuna, granola bars, socks, gloves and emergency blankets. We handed each of them an envelope that included a letter with information about our Legion Family as well as a \$10 gift card to Dollar General. It was an incredible day of giving back and remembering those less fortunate than us. We had a huge team involved from stuffing backpacks, buying supplies in bulk, delivering, setting up and working the event. Our Legion family combined efforts with the auxiliary to support this event financially with each family giving \$200.

*September 2022-Their first blood drive took place on September 11, 2022 for Patriots Day. Our Legion family gathered in remembrance of those who lost their life on 9/11. We participated in the flag lowering and raising detail, served hot dogs and chips to members after the remembrance ceremony. We had 20 units of blood donated, 20 volunteer hours. – Hosted its first steak night and it was a huge success and sold out. The Bay High Soccer team came out and volunteered for the evening and all proceeds were given back to the team.

*October 2022-Monthly food night was Roast Beef dinner. All proceeds benefited our Children and Youth Program supporting our Trunk or Treat. We invited all members to our Trunk or Treat event and to decorate their trunks and pass out candy. The children had candy, cupcakes, juices and water. Local food truck and Wings and Things donated their time, talent and expenses to the event and served hamburger and hotdogs free of charge.

*November 2022-Unit 392 had a monthly calendar raffle. Members could buy tickets for \$20 for daily drawings. All proceeds benefit our VA&R program, specifically our Senior Santa program where we provide Christmas for veterans at Emerald Coast Rehabilitation Center.

*November-December 2022- During the months of November and December this unit had a food drive. Placed boxes and posted fliers collecting donations for the Bay County Council on Aging. The drive was ongoing throughout the holiday season. We delivered the food to the Bay County Council on Aging. This food will help with their food pantry and meals on wheels program. This local agency provides services throughout Bay County to elderly, disabled and disadvantaged individuals who need assistance to maintain their independence, health and quality of life. – A Christmas Party for the kids was very successful. Had 5 different

crafts for the children to create, a visit from Santa and story time. The children enjoyed a hot chocolate bar while decorating Christmas cookies. Each child received a Christmas bag with toys and holiday treats.

*January 2023-This unit participated in the Riders 14th Annual American Legion Riders Chapter 392 Mark Long Memorial Hotzee run. This event benefited 4 local organizations. The Auxiliary hosted a full bar of chili fixings. Attendees gave a \$5 donation for a warm hearty bowl of chili. All proceeds went back to the Rider's Chapter toward their fundraising endeavors. – They also hosted a Crockpot Cookoff and invited all members to join in. Winners received prizes and bragging rights!

*February 2023-The unit hosted their 2nd steak night. It was again a great success and we had a Valentines theme with homemade red velvet cupcakes. All proceeds benefited our Children and Youth program.

*March 2023-Unit 392 had a monthly calendar raffle. Members could buy tickets for \$20 for daily drawings and all proceeds benefited essential programs which benefit the veterans and children in our community. – We also hosted our annual Irish food night. Members volunteered to cook a variety of Irish dishes. We had a great crowd and sold out quickly.

Unit 402 Pensacola Beach

The ALA Unit 402 is a small unit but manage to accomplish our mission with very few participants. All of their officers are hands on for all projects and committees with a few extra members helping when they can. In this past year they met their goals of raising money to help military veterans, their families and communities.

*Flags were put on graves for Memorial Day at West Bay and Pine Log cemeteries.

*Held a Christmas in July golf parade with the Legion family riding down Front Beach Road handing out gift bags to children.

*Participated in the grand reopening/remodel of the Military Welcome Center located inside the NW Florida Beaches International Airport.

*Participated in highway cleanup along Front Beach Road

*Had the privilege of having a Gold Star Family as special guest speakers at our General Membership meeting in October. They had been to the Gary Sinise "Snowball Express" and graciously talked with us about what the program does for Gold Star Families and how much they enjoyed it and how much it helped them.

*Participated in the Veterans Day Parade in Panama City Beach, put flags on veteran graves at West Bay Cemetery and Pine Log Cemetery for Veteran's Day.

*Held their 1st Annual Chili Cookoff. Other Units and Posts participated and we were able to raise \$1000 for the Gary Sinise foundation.

*Participated in Wreaths Across America, donated \$500 to help purchase robotic pets for residents at the Clifford Chester Sims VA nursing home for the holidays.

*Baked cookies for our local Panama City Beach Police Department for National Security month.

*Held a memorial for our Unit's Historian's father. Auxiliary donated \$200 to help with additional costs which was appreciated by the family.

*Donated a raffle basket for the St Patrick's Day. It raised \$67 which we used to purchase food gift cards for the Bay County Sheriff's Office.

As a District our Units strive to live up to our motto of "Service Not Self". We were met with some challenges this year but all in all District 1 shines and we continue to put our veterans, active-duty members, children and community in the forefront. We must work the mission. We will continue to C.O.L.O.R. our world everyday as we work our mission.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Pannasch
District 1 President

District 2

ALA Dept. of Florida
District 2

Book of Reports (2022/2023)

Americanism: reflected through Flag Education, Pledge Allegiance, singing National Anthem, flying flag at homes, attend patriotic parades, Flag Retirement Ceremony, Memorial and Veteran Day events. Participation in Operation Home Front by purchasing supplies and toys via Dollar Tree for military kids; transporting military family members to dr. appts.; wearing of Red Shirt on Fridays and attending town council meetings; joint meetings with Posts regarding Americanism programs. Placement of U.S. Flags on Veteran graves.

AEF: donations via Donation Remittance were made by two (2) reported Units. Chaplain: Open/closing meetings with prayer; prayers at two Memorial Services; Two units reported participation in Wreaths Across America; Card ministry practiced by Unit Chaplains; two other members conducting card ministries in their community; visits to shut-ins and in hospitals and nursing homes.

Children and Youth: carried out through donations to Project Graduation, an event to keep graduating seniors in a party setting alcohol/drug free. Donations to Future Farmers of America banquet and softball team sponsorship sign. Safe Halloween event serving over 800.

Community Service: reported 45 volunteers, 784 hrs., \$3225 spent, \$2000 in-kind donations. Easter baskets for NW FL foster children and Florida Baptist Children's Home; Golf Tournament with AMVETS; Tallahassee Music/Fest; Providing food/flowers due to deaths in community; cleanup projects in two cemeteries; provided care to a burned victim; \$1000 donation to a local woman's cancer benefit; attendance to Annual Future Farmers of America banquets; church food panty work; \$75 to Alzheimer Association in memory of member's mother's death; transporting to dr. appts., February Love Breakfast held since COVID, etc.

Constitutional Bylaws & Standing Rules: all six units updated.

Education: Three units participated in give 10 to Education. A total of \$2760 was spent, a value of \$650 total in-kind donations. One Unit volunteered 10 hrs. to help 20 needy students, \$80 spent, \$80 in-kind donations.

District 2 – continued - “Book of Reports”

Girls State: At this time 5 delegates scheduled for this year (Unit 13, 100 & 241). Funds raised thru bingo, raffles and donations. Nine total volunteers; 788 total hrs.; 4 volunteers scheduled for Girls State.

Historian: Three Units reported activities: Christmas stockings for troops overseas, Wreaths Across America, providing bed sets to Tallahassee Veterans Village; Easter baskets for foster children, participated in Honor Flight, Toys for Tots, Flags on veteran graves at several cemeteries, Law Enforcement Officer Appreciation, Safe Halloween, fruit baskets for senior veterans (\$1620), School Staff Appreciation Luncheons (\$1000).

Juniors: Participate in Safe Halloween, School Staff Luncheons, Placement of flags on veteran graves; participate/represent Auxiliary in Christmas Parades; attend Senior meetings; assist with Veteran Day services.

Leadership: Unit Presidents insured chairmen and officers understood their duties, explanation of Constitutional & Bylaws and Standing Rules, one Unit working on Unit Member of the Year, one member completed all on-line ALA Academy courses, 4 members attended breakout sessions at previous Convention, 15 attendees to School of Instruction, 14 to ABC School and 18 to District Constitutional Conference.

Legislative: Contact with local, state and national elected officials by: 8 phone calls, 11 emails, 3 personal visits. Attendance to town meetings, legislative discussions at unit meetings.

National Security: Troop Boxes (6 plus 28 stuffed stockings, \$185 postage, In-Kind Donations \$506, 25 hrs.); USO (\$200 donation); Operation Homefront, (4 hrs., \$20 donation, \$20 In-Kind Donation); Blue Star Mothers (6 hrs., Banner-1); Homeland Security (37 hrs., Donations \$1266, \$91 In-Kind Donations); Treats to Police & EMTs; /Participation in 9/11 and POW/MIA Ceremonies; Big Bend Honor Guard member at National Cemetery.

Past President’s Parley: Unit continues to utilize a Past Department President and past & present Unit Presidents in the district and past District Presidents for guidance, directions and answering questions.

Poppies: Three Units participated but only one Unit reported. Volunteers wore poppy shirts.

District 2 continued – “Book of Reports”

Public Relations: Two Units uses Facebook; one interview with reporter; four articles sent to Dept. Newsletter and seven event flyers. Approx. fourteen newspaper articles. Two units have sent articles in their newspapers and to Florida Canvas. Members continue to wear “Red Shirt Friday” on Fridays and regular auxiliary apparel at functions.

VA&R: 448 members with 754 hours donating their service; Standdown: 2 members 16 hrs.; Caregivers, 2 members, 266 hrs.; Veteran Transitioning veterans, 6 members, 286 hrs.; Tallahassee Veterans Village, bed frames/mattresses/buddy baskets/clothes, etc.; Tallahassee VA Clinic Pantry stocked; Holiday treats to Marianna VA Outpatient Clinic; Donations via Donation Remittance; Thanksgiving gifts for six (6) veterans; Christmas gifts for seven (7) veterans at Riverchase Nursing Home & Rehab.; Honor Guard participation; attending veteran funerals; Placements of US flags on veteran graves; Veterans Dinner; Fruit baskets for senior veterans; at Tallahassee National Cemetery: purchase and placement of wreaths and Honor Guard participation. Veterans/spouse visitation/house cleaning, to dr. appts./errands. Assist with Honor Flight to Washington DC; Standdown participation; Veterans’ Day Breakfast participation. Food distribution & Nursing Home visits, Christmas gifts for nursing home veterans; Veteran Dinner/Parade at Camp Gordon Johnston. Veteran Day celebration at Marianna VA Outpatient Clinic, Veterans’ Fair.

Kaye Brown
District 2 President

District 3

3rd District End of Year Report 2022 – 2023

This year has been a great year with unit members getting out in their communities and working on helping and assisting Veterans and their families. There is a new unit in the works. I will be going for an organizational meeting and getting their charter papers working for approval,

We have several units that go to nursing homes in their area and take birthday cards and gifts, have ice cream socials. Birthday parties are for all. Since the pandemic the VA doesn't have volunteers on all floors, but they should be back in the clinics and the nursing homes in the VA.

I am pleased to say that every unit attended at least one district meeting this year. This is a first for many years. We also had a unit sponsor an ABC School which was very well attended for the amount of members we have in our district.

We had 5 units send delegates to Girls State. We had two units assist the American Legion with the Four Chaplains service. Our February District Meeting we had a Four Chaplains service as part of our meeting. One unit has revitalized their junior program and the juniors are a very vital component to the Legion Family. The unit also received new junior members. These junior also completed many patches of the patch program.

We had our second annual District Picnic. We have a Post to sponsor the upcoming year. Our District Meetings have been getting more attendance. Our units are doing more programs. One unit is having a game night or afternoon about every month to get more members coming and getting involved with our programs. As these activities grow they are planning to open up to the Legion, SAL, and Riders. It seems to get members coming and having a good time. These members are coming back and to meetings.

We had a unit participate in the Americanism Program and sent 6 youth winners to Department competition.

We are very proud at the 3rd District making our 100% goal. This is a complement that hasn't happened in many years.

We are hoping that the member who said that she would get nominated from the floor for District President. She is a new member but seems to want to learn. I told her that I'm just a phone call away and we want the district to continue to be more active.

Our district has had more communication of what was going on in the district and are stepping up and being involved in our programs. In the last two years we have had more activities. This year when our Department President was here we had more participation from our members from unit members than we have in years.

It has been a pleasure to serve as 3rd District President and to serve under your leadership. I hope you enjoyed your visit to the 3rd District. Our members sincerely enjoyed having you come and visit with them. I was so glad to get the units to do things. The members wanted to show their abilities having you as Department President visit with them.

We went through our year with your COLOR ME THERE by continue our LEGACY OF RESPECT.

Service not self,

Irma Wehrli

3rd District President

District 4



BOOK OF REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP

District 4 went over and above in their quest to bring in renewals and new members for 2022-2023. We went over 100% in membership on 3/10/23 at 101.37%. As of 4/28/23, we are holding the #1 position in the Department of Florida at 108.71%. Eight units are currently over 100%:

- Unit 16 Gainesville – 124.00%
- Unit 155 Crystal River – 117.78%
- Unit 166 Homosassa – 112.41%
- Unit 77 Inverness – 110.45%
- Unit 230 Hawthorne- 106.45%
- Unit 284 Belleview – 103.95%
- Unit 149 Newberry – 103.33%
- Unit 237 Beverly Hills – 101.99%
- Unit 210 Ocala – 90.91%
- Unit 27 Ocala – 89.47%
- Unit 236 Bronson – 86.96%
- Unit 58 Dunnellon – 85.71%

District 4 Units brought in 152 new members, with Unit 155 Crystal River leading the way with 68 new members.

GIRLS STATE

Seven units in District 4 (Unit 16 Gainesville, Unit 27 Ocala, Unit 149 Newberry, Unit 155 Crystal River, Unit 166 Homosassa, Unit 237 Beverly Hills, and Unit 284 Belleview) are sending 15 girls to Girls State in 2023.

DISTRICT 4 PROJECT – SOAP SACKS

District 4 President, Natalie Scott, promoted a soap sack project with members crocheting or knitting soap sacks and the unit adding the bars of soap for veterans, active duty military, or homeless in the community. An award will be given at DCC to the unit making the most soap sacks. Three units participated with a total of 360 soap sacks (Unit 166 Homosassa, Unit 237 Beverly Hills, Unit 284 Belleview).

POCKET FLAGS

Three units folded a total of 300 pocket flags and donated them to local armories and in care packages to deployed soldiers (Unit 77 Inverness, Unit 237 Beverly Hills, Unit 284 Belleview)

HURRICAN IAN RELIEF

Units in District 4 donated over 8,000 lbs of food plus clothing, cleaning supplies, and toys for the communities in the devastated areas of District 13 and District 8, with Post 237 Beverly Hills as the collection point. Items were collected at District meetings plus Unit and Post events.

AEF

Six units participated and contributed to AEF : Units 16 Gainesville, 77 Inverness, 155 Crystal River, 166 Homosassa, 230 Hawthorne, 236 Bronson for a total of \$1,434.

OPERATION HOMEFRONT

Several units participated in Operation Homefront, collecting school supplies for community schools and local armories, and toys for local needy children.

POPPIES

6,676 poppies were distributed in 2022-2023 with \$13,169 raised by most of our District 4 units. Skylar Blair was Unit 27 Ocala's Little Miss Poppy.

A raffle basket with 13 items plus 1 hand made poppy print quilted tote bag were donated for the Poppy Holiday Fall Conference basket raffle.

The Poppies of Flanders Field quilt will be raffled at Dept. Convention on June 18 with proceeds going to Gary Sinise Snowball Express.

Unit 16 Gainesville

Unit 16 held their Blessing Buckets event in November for 25 veterans, including a female veteran and her three children. All veterans were fed – mind , body, and soul. Dept. President Jane Hardacre attended the event as part of her visit to District 4. Several District 4 units donated clothing and personal hygiene items for Blessing Buckets.

Unit 16 adopted a family for Christmas – the female veteran at Blessing Buckets and her three children. They were provided Christmas gifts and food.

Unit 16 collected school supplies and distributed them to local schools.

In addition, Unit 16 served dinners at food kitchens, donated food to food pantries, donated clothing to various charitable organizations, and participated in the Toys for Tots drive.

Unit 16 is sending 3 girls to Girls State in 2023.

Unit 27 Ocala

Unit 27 interviewed a number of Girls State candidates, recruiting other auxiliary units to send one of their candidates to Girls State. The Girls Sate Chairman will ride to Girls State with the Sheriff's Deputies to Tallahassee.

Unit 27 held a breakfast in\\at a local restaurant for President Jane Hardacre's visit, including their Junior member, Skylar Blair.

Unit 27 members volunteered in the community gathering and donating food and clothes to the local food bank and homeless shelter.

Poppies are a major project for Unit 27. This year, they received their first \$100 bill from a gentleman who refused change and wished them well. They presented him with a bouquet of poppies and a flag. He promised to share the poppies with friends and neighbors. They are particularly grateful for the four uniformed Post 27 members who faithfully assist them in this project, knowing that their presence speaks volumes. They always give poppies to cashiers and Publix employees at service desks, bakery, meat and produce departments, as well as management, to show their appreciation for being permitted to distribute poppies to their customers and to remind customers to “pick a poppy” on their way out. The past two years they had fewer volunteers willing or able to participate, but still collected nearly \$5,000 each year.

Unit 58 Dunnellon

Unit 58 started Queen of Hearts as their newest fundraiser at the beginning of 2023.

They hold bingo every other week.

Poppy Days are a big event for Unit 58 in both May and November, collecting approximately \$2000 each time.

Unit 77 Inverness

Unit 77 held a garage sale with the funds going towards the Post Beautification Fund and Post home improvement.

They held a Christmas tree gifts event which raised money for Girls State. Unfortunately, Unit 77 did not send a girl to Girls State this year and will hold their funds for next year.

Unit 77 held a painting party for members across District 4 and outside of District 4. Junior member Skylar Blair attended, as did President Jane Hardacre, 2nd Vice President Charlotte Bass and District 4 President Natalie Scott.

Unit 77 held a pocket flag project for District 4, sharing 300 flags with Unit 237 and Unit 284, each purchasing 100 flags. Unit 77's pocket flags were distributed to a local Armory.

Unit 77 held a "silly tax" promotion at several unit meetings. Attendees were asked to fill out a form with charges for numbers of family members, pets, and other criteria. Funds raised are being donated to AEF.

Unit 77 holds dinners at the Post on a regular basis which helps raise money for veterans.

Unit 77 held a Military Child's Table Ceremony in April with all in attendance asked to wear purple..

Unit 149 Newberry

Unit 149 purchased 10 backpacks filled with pens, paper, notebooks, crayons, markers, etc for a local elementary school in Newberry.

Unit 149 donated \$200 to a local veteran hospitalized after a double lung transplant. They also provided 20 care packages to veterans in a nursing home, each of which was personally delivered by a Unit 149 member.

Unit 155 Crystal River

Unit 155 held a bunco party jointly with the Pilots Club. 48 people played bunco, food was served, and door prizes were given out. They held a 50/50 and a Chinese auction. It was a great success and they raised over \$800

Unit 155 held a Children's Christmas Party for 51 children who were given gifts and lunch. Santa and his elves were there to entertain the children. It was well attended by all Legion Family and everyone had a wonderful experience.

A Snowball Express fundraiser was held during President Jane Hardacre's visit to District 4. They held a dinner dance which was well attended and raised over \$1300 for Snowball Express. They held a 50/50, Chinese auction, had colorful decorations, and a freshly cooked meal served home style.

Unit 155 members spend many hours serving meals, working in the kitchen, and working bingo.

Unit 155 hosted a trick or trunk for community children at Halloween.

Unit 155 members volunteered for a fundraiser benefit for victims of a school bus accident, collecting over \$8000 in kind donations from area businesses and donating \$500 cash.

\$1000 was donated to the Ginger West Foundation.

Unit 155 members crocheted 70 caps for the homeless and chemo caps for Gainesville VA.

Unit 155 assisted a Veteran in obtaining a car in order to get a job.

Unit 155 held a “silly tax” promotion at several unit meetings. Attendees were asked to fill out a form with charges for numbers of family members, pets, and other criteria. Funds raised are being donated to AEF.

Unit 155 participated in the Poppy program by distributing poppies in the local area.

Unit 166 Homosassa

Ditty Bags – 50 ditty bags filled with necessary items were made for homeless veterans and distributed by Day Star Life Services. Each bag held a personal note from Unit 166 and included phone numbers for Service Officer and Suicide hot line.

Veterans Day – Unit 166 partnered with the SAL to honor our Veterans. They purchased mugs and filled them with snacks, including a poppy cookie, pens, pins, and a thank you card (hug-in-a-mug). They provided breakfast, lunch, and snacks and the SAL provided dinner. The Post Historian, a photographer, took pictures of the Veterans who came in and those pictures are on display at the Post.

Adopt-A-Highway – Unit 166 has taken the lead at the Post with quarterly highway clean ups. They average 5 ALA unit members at each clean up.

In July, Unit 166 held a patriotic wreath raffle to benefit 3 year old Alex who has cancer.

They held a bake sale on July 4th and made \$519.50 which was donated to the Post's Building Fund.

Unit 166 held membership drives in August.

In September, they held a fundraiser luau, raising \$226.27 for their Veterans Donations Fund.

Blood drives are a regular occurrence for the Post 166 Legion Family throughout the year.

Unit 166 distributed 691 poppies. Total received for poppy distribution and related poppy events was \$2,363.52

In November, Dept. President Jane Hardacre, 2nd Vice President Charlotte Bass, and District 4 President Natalie Scott visited Unit 166 attended the regular monthly meeting. President Jane participated in assembling the 50 ditty bags. Checks for the Gary Sinise Snowball Express were presented to her from Unit 166, the Legion, and SAL.

On Veterans Day, Unit 166 was at 5 locations with Poppies. They collected \$1,119.13 in donations.

Unit 166 members made 130 soap sacks which are being put into ditty bags for veterans, and also provided to the homeless through Day Star.

Unit 210 Ocala

Unit 210 is very small, with limited participation. The unit members prepare dinners for the fellowship time between the Unit 210 and Unit 27 meetings.

They sent a girl to Girls State in June 2022.

Unit 230 Hawthorne

Unit 230 donates a \$50 gift card monthly to the Robert Jenkins Jr. State Veterans Domiciliary Home in Lake City, FL. The gift card is used for their social events. At Christmas, they donate 10 \$20 gift cards for their Secret Santa gifts.

Unit 230 holds 2 flea markets (Oct. and Mar.) that their community looks forward to attending. It includes an all-you-can-eat pancake & sausage breakfast and

grilled hamburgers and hot dogs lunch. They also have a raffle for gift certificates donated by local businesses.

Unit 230 sponsors a special needs class at their local elementary school. They provide the class with school supplies and fun things for parties. They recently gave them a popcorn popper for the classroom.

With their Post Legionnaires, Unit 230 sponsored 8 blood drives this year.

Unit 236 Bronson

Unit 236 held 2 bake sales and pet food giveaways to Veterans and local families. Funds raised were for AEF.

Unit 236 helped ALR with Snowball Express donation.

Unit 237 Beverly Hills

The District 4 Hurricane Relief Ian collection point was at Post 237 Beverly Hills. Unit 237 was able to collect and transport 8000 lbs of food products along with miscellaneous items such as trash bags, tarps, paper towels, cleaning supplies, coloring books, crayons, and toys.

In October, Unit 237 held a trunk or treat/membership drive.

Unit 237 made 100 pocket flags which were given to the Crystal River Armory.

Unit 237 made 65 soap sacks which were filled and donated to the Crystal River Armory.

Unit 237 has adopted the Crystal River National Armory Unit. They were able to present them with 100 pocket flags and send care packages when they were deployed. They were also given school supplies and toys through Operation Homefront.

Unit 237 assisted their Riders group in collecting donations to purchase wreaths and helped to place 2,500 wreaths at Bushnell National Cemetery and 2 smaller cemeteries with Veterans section in their community at Christmas time.

Unit 237 held a drive to collect items needed by the Citrus Abuse Shelter Assoc (CASA) which is a shelter for abused spouses and their children. They donated

1,859 items including personal hygiene items, cleaning products, and food plus \$350.

A clothing drive was held to help the homeless through Daystar and the Citrus County resource center.

42 Christmas cards and 85 Veteran's Day thank you cards were collected from local school children and delivered to Veterans in 2 assisted living facilities. 75 get well cards were taken to the Gainesville VA Hospital.

Unit 284 Belleview

Creative Unit 284 members crocheted 164 soap sacks. The soap sacks were filled with bars of soap and put into Christmas stockings and ditty bags.

Unit 284 made 100 Christmas stockings for troops.

Unit 284 made 100 pocket flags which are included in their Christmas stockings to deployed troops.

Unit 284 hosts bingo every Saturday, using proceeds for Unit programs.

Unit 284 distributed poppies at their local supermarkets, collecting \$763.85 in contributions.

District 5



Mighty 5th District

2022-2023 Year End Report

District President: Nancy Chandler

All of the Units have excelled this year and some despite diversity.

The Units had their elections of new officers for 2022-2023.

All of the Unit Officers within the 5th District have been duly installed after returning from the Department of Florida Convention.

The Units have thrived this year and pulled together to help another District when a Hurricane devastated everything. The Units sent many in kind donations, money and gift cards to District 13 and Unit 233 was the sponsor and made sure it was all taken to them. The Units sponsored Halloween parties, are collecting items for Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for needy families and the USO, cutting coupons, held Children's Christmas parties with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus and the Grinch, held Children's Easter parties with the Easter Bunny. These Units had all kinds of fundraisers, special dinners, yard sales, 50/50's and raffles to support the Auxiliary programs.

Membership is up this year from last year and we are excelling this year not only on the Unit level but as a District too. It was not easy for some Units but they proved that they were not going to fail this year. At the end of April with one month to go...Mighty 5th District has 9 Units over 100% and 2 more Units at 98%. The District has reached 102% at this time which is over what it was last year. Others have had to struggle due to other circumstances beyond their control.

Nancy CHandler
5th District President

Unit 9- This Unit got off to a very rocky start, they had two officers resign before installation and we had to have a special meeting to get them a President and Secretary. Unfortunately they had several more changes in Officers after that and have

done well to thrive everywhere except membership. Despite everything this Unit has managed to complete many projects and programs for their Veterans in their community.

Juniors started having meetings and in April participated in the Military Child's Table Ceremony.

Unit hosts various activities such as Roadkill Bingo, Themed parties each month, Jeep night once a month, Paint and Sip Night once a month, Breakfast on the first Sunday of each month, started a food pantry for the community, and did an AEF raffle basket to support a local veteran in need.

The Unit participated in 10 for 10. They made a large donation of items to a local elementary school. Gifted the teachers with items as well. The Legion family hosted a trunk or treat, sponsored 3 families for Thanksgiving and gave them meals, hosted a Children's Christmas party with Mr. & Mrs. Claus and the Grinch and the Department President was exhausted after handing out presents to 150+ kids, they gave presents to 30 other kids, did a special box to a family when they heard that they lost everything in a house fire, and divided the remaining gifts and sent them to District 13, Daniel's Kids, and Ronald McDonald House.

They also adopted 5 families from the elementary school for Christmas where they were given provisions for dinner, 3 gifts per child and that child had been given a bike or princess car. They found out just before they delivered that one family who fostered children received 3 kids and so the family made it happen for those kids too.

Rounded out the year by hosting an ice cream social for the teachers' because they wanted to show them some love before teacher appreciation day. The Unit also hosted an Easter egg hunt.

Unit 54- This Unit is at 129.70% in membership at the end of April which is much higher than last year.

This Unit participates in and hosts many activities each month. Roadkill Bingo weekly, Monthly dinners, supporting the Legion in raising funds to redo the parking lot, plans in progress for their 100th Anniversary, Trunk or Treat, Meals at Christmas for the Families in Transition which is through the Nassau County Schools, Bought for Sr. Angels and Nassau County on Aging Seniors. They purchased a table at a Patriotic Luncheon which was in support of the Navy Seals. They also did coupons for troops.

Donated \$3000 to the Legion to fix the fence, donated food and toiletries to the Hope House and Homeless Coalition each month, and donated 2 baskets for the parking lot project and 2 baskets for the FL/GA and donated the funds to the SAL. Provided funds to pay the postage (\$650) to the Adopt-A-Soldier, \$500 to Fernandina Beach High School for sports equipment, and donated \$200 to the Legion for hurricane prep. Donated new sleeping bags and 6 blankets donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution to the Homeless Coalition. Donated \$500 to Council On Aging (COA), held a pizza party and stockings to America's Youth, gave the Department President a check for \$500 for Gary Sinise Foundation, and provided breakfast one morning to cold weather shelter for the Homeless Coalition. Gave \$2500 to K-9 for Warriors, \$500 to Ferst Readers, and \$3000 to the Legion for electric signs. They also are providing lunches for COA for about 25 seniors.

Unit 88- This Unit is at 107.89% in membership at the end of April which is much higher than last year.

This Unit did various fundraisers from Steak Night, breakfasts, RoadKill Bingo, 50/50's and donated food to Wacky Wednesday.

Held a fundraiser for Homeless Veterans @ Clara White Mission in Jacksonville to help 40 Veterans and all the overflow items went to the other side for the other Homeless clients.

Donated 4 raffle baskets to the Fall Conference Poppy fundraiser to benefit the Gary Slnise Foundation. Broke open their AEF bank to find a total of \$110 dollars. Donated \$200 dollars for Daniel's Kids to buy bikes. They put together 15 food baskets for Thanksgiving and gave them to VAVC and at Christmas did 8 more food baskets for VAVC.

Unit 88 partnered with 2 members from Unit 129 to serve coffee, juice, etc. to the VA clinic.

They notified 2 schools and held a Fall Festival which 43 kids and families attended and with the help of the ROTC students they set-up, ran booths to entertain the kids, fed everyone and cleaned up at the end. At Easter they held an Easter Egg Hunt which 61 kids and families attended and once again ROTC assisted the Unit.

They documented 325 volunteer hours that were reported.

Unit 129- This Unit is at 102.23% in membership at the end of April which is much higher than last year.

This Unit held monthly dinners, held Steak Bingo, assisted with the Queen of Diamonds weekly, held Sunday breakfasts, and had Bingo weekly on Wednesday and Fridays.

Members participated in the Jacksonville Sharks game, Christmas in July with funds being divided between Children & Youth and VA & R programs, collected supplies and donated supplies to Unit 88 for shoeboxes they were putting together and donated lap blankets to the VA Clinic.

Held a volunteer luncheon in appreciation for their members and one Auxiliary member received volunteer of the year along with her husband.

Participated in dinners for Meet & Greet for POW-MIA Seven Bridges Memorial Run and Wreaths Across America Poker Run as well as being part of the escort too.

Participated in a bridal shower for an Active Duty Member. Picked up and distributed bread and pastries picked up from Publix weekly. Responded to Legislative emails regarding Bills before the House and Senate. Sent hurricane supplies to District 13.

Visited Veterans at Harbor Chase Assisted Living. Delivered 450 Christmas cards to veterans at Assisted Living and to a grandson's ship. Elementary kids made Veteran's Day cards that were given to the veterans' at the Post. Attended the Lion's Club Barktober to support the purchase of guiding eyes for Blind Training School.

We held a holiday bazaar with 20 plus vendors. Other fundraisers that we did were Silent Auctions, Scratch off Raffle, and Christmas Tree Raffle. Donated a Poppy raffle basket and homemade jewelry at the Fall Conference.

We once again participated in Jacksonville Beach Deck the Chairs where we got 1st Place. Three of our Junior members volunteered at the chair and helped with taking pictures. Created a Juniors corner inside the Auxiliary room including their artwork.

Donated \$200 to USO for gift cards, \$300 for Grinchmas week for \$50 each to 6 kids. Donated \$150 to an elementary school for bike locks, \$100 for small flags and gave them Halloween Safety coloring books. Donated \$1000 dollars to Wreaths Across America. Donated 10 bikes, helmets, locks, and flags to an at risk school in Jacksonville. Donated \$1000 dollars worth of shampoo, conditioner, and facial cleansing to Clara White Mission. Donated to 19th Street Charities, Toys for Tots, dropped school supplies to several schools, and participated in and donated to the Homeless Veterans Stand Downs.

Past Department Membership Candace Marby won a National Award.

Unit 137- This Unit is at 104.49% in membership at the end of April which is much higher than last year.

This Unit is very involved but unfortunately I only received one report from them.

They held Breast Cancer Awareness at a meeting with a guest speaker. They held a raffle, gave out self check packets and served refreshments.

Held these events...Children's Halloween Party, Christmas Party and Easter Egg Hunt. They held a Poppy Pageant and the winners were to be in the Veteran's Day Parade but it was canceled due to the impending hurricane.

They also held dinners and breakfast at the Post.

Unit 194- Donuts for Veterans' @ Clyde Lassen VA Nursing Home May, June and July.

Memorial Day Poppy Fundraiser made \$542 in donations. Donated \$500 at Convention to Project Vet Relief, donated \$200 dollar Publix Gift Card to the St. Johns Fire & Rescue plus tri-fold sweet board and pastries, and assisted with the following fundraisers Fish Fry, Rib Cook-off and annual golf tournament.

This Unit has an afterschool and summer program called the Kids Safe Zone (KSZ). The Auxiliary volunteers many hours with this program and the Legionaries come in and mentor the students. They attended elementary school graduation for 2 of their kids to middle school. A member donated 35 pounds of hamburger meat to feed the kids after school. Their summer program the kids go on two field trips a week, have a craft day, swim day and receive swim lessons in which 6 kids went from red to green

level. High School students through 2 different programs come to read to the kids during the summer 5 week program.

This Unit attended Commander Appreciation Dinner, Purple Heart Recognition Day and escorted the recipient, local candidate meet and greet, 9/11 Remembrance Day, PPC, Past 5th District Commander Greg White's induction to City of St. Augustine FL society award, Little Miss Poppy Contest @ Unit 137, and Clays for Cause Benefit and was awarded \$10,000 dollars for KSZ.

Volunteered 1957 hours that included things like coupons to troupons, KSZ, dinners, breakfasts, community walks and essay contests with the 3rd graders at the elementary school.

Hosted Air Force Ole School Basketball Reunion, held their annual Anniversary Weekend, Built Centennial Park which includes playground equipment, supported other Post with different functions and hosted KSZ Halloween and Christmas parties.

Unit 197- This Unit is at 125.58% in membership at the end of April which is much higher than last year.

This Unit has had a struggle but are recovering greatly. They continue to support their local community. Participated in a community clean-up, a walk for Prostate Cancer with FL Blue, Baptist MD Anderson and Mayo clinic had tents set up and refreshments were served, hosted a trunk or treat, and FarmShare.

Members attended the Department of Florida Convention and then we helped serve food at the Units Installation of Officers. Hosted seniors for Thanksgiving dinner at the Post. Hosted a Red & White event at the Post.

Donated hand sanitizer and hand wipes to local schools. Collected items for Shoeboxes of Love and made 130 boxes and donated them to the homeless centers. Collected toys for the kids Christmas party that was held at the Post. They delivered 40 gift bags to a school for homeless teenagers.

They helped the Legionaries with the Easter egg hunt that was held.

Unit 202- This Unit is at 125.00% in membership at the end of April which is down a little from last year but still strong for a small Post.

The Auxiliary hosts and does every for Trivia. They serve dinners 4 times a month. Every Friday they collect the money, distribute the chips and serve food at the poker nights. Twice a month they host Karaoke night and Taco night. Twice a week they volunteer at the pool tournaments and help with the food. They have weekly volunteers at Bingo. The Auxiliary provides desserts for many Post functions. Once a month they host an all you can eat breakfast. They host a weekly dance class where the funds are donated to the Auxiliary. They collect pop tops for Ronald McDonald in Gainesville. They held their annual breakfast with Mr. & Mrs. Claus. Received \$80 in donations to decorate the Post and a tree in town.

They helped a local veteran that was in need. Collected items and put together Thanksgiving Baskets for local veterans in need. At Christmas, they passed out gift cards to local veterans that were in need.

Donated funds towards a grill for the new pavilion . In October, they held a Casino Night to raise some funds. The Auxiliary raffled off a pool stick to raise funds. They held a bake sale and raised \$300 dollars, rummage sale and raised \$800 dollars, and raffled off a basket, held a variety show and dance and made \$300 dollars.

Unit 233- Members and Junior participated with ALA Breakfasts, Installations around the District and attended a local military promotion. A member participated in Northern Area Training, a Post clean up, assisted with Bingo several times, SAL Sunday Football, and membership drive at Nocatee Farmers Market. A member helps take a husband and wife to their doctor's appointments 3 times a month and to the grocery store weekly.

Held a Back to School Picnic, Oyster Roast, hosted Christmas Day dinner, and attended the Department of Florida President's dinner.

One member participated in Pearl Harbor Day, one helping a veteran get around to the doctors and grocery store since the hurricane wrecked his car, and one member who has become a caregiver.

One member and a junior assisted 2 other Units with their Children's Christmas Parties, delivered Hurricane Ian relief items collected around the 5th District to District 13, attended the Polar Plunge at Unit 137 where the junior raised \$300 dollars for Snowball Express and then the junior jumped in the pool with the Department of Florida President and they help served breakfast at Unit 283 one Sunday.

Unit 244- This Unit is at 125.00% in membership at the end of April which is higher than last year. Despite this Unit struggling with Leadership for several years they have excelled in membership for the last 2 years.

Again they had leadership issues and resignations but the ladies who stepped up have worked hard. These ladies have had nothing given to them from previous leadership and so they have had to literally reconstruct their records for the Unit. The Constitution and By-laws had not been updated for years and so they had to make that a priority as well as all the State of Florida records so that they were current. The current President

is not running again but she is going to mentor the incoming and make sure that she has good records and books to hand over to the new leadership.

Unit 250- This Unit started off by donating \$250 dollars each in school supplies to two different schools. Donated \$1000 dollars to VFW Post 1988 for Homeless Risk Veterans Stand Down & Retreat in Clay Co., Donated \$4000 to K9 for Warriors from revenues from Thursday Lunches, and donated \$1000 dollars to hurricane relief and give to District 13.

Held a trunk or treat for the community and 109 kids and families in attendance...11 cars and 2 motorcycles participated. Assisted the Legion in an event "Raise the Floor" and the funds were to replace the floors in the canteen area and kitchen in which the Auxiliary donated \$2500 dollars and those funds were from bike run, basket raffle, silent auction and donated food.

Members are always collecting toiletry/grooming items for veterans and the homeless veterans stand down. Members came together and made Unit tie dye shirts to represent Dept. Present Theme this year. Collected food for food baskets for the holidays and 8 baskets were made and given out for Thanksgiving. The Legion Family came together for Thanksgiving and fed 20-25 people. Helped Legion and SAL with their breakfasts, the Auxiliary did Wednesday night dinners, Saturday breakfasts, Friday night dinners to raise funds to work their programs and logged 84 volunteer hours.

Unit 250 Participated in helping Children & Family In Need for the holidays by raising funds from bike run, raffle baskets, silent auction, and food which allowed them to donate \$2025 dollars.

On Veteran's Day with the help of the Legion were able to raise \$500 from distributing Poppies.

Unit 283- Started off after installation of officers...

Donated 65 backpacks to the USO. Then we donated school supplies and backpacks to those members who work in the education field. Delivered special requests of backpacks to seven other area schools when the requests came in.

VA & R team has been providing Gifts of Love items and working on thank you cards for their service to various Veteran homes and clinics. They have taken 8 tubs full of clothing so far. Members of the team participated in City of Jacksonville Stand Down where they set-up a table and passed out many items plus information about the entire Legion Family.

Hosted an Appreciation Luncheon to bring together seasoned members, past presidents, new members, and new officers together in hopes of getting mentoring. We invited the 5th District President to the event.

Legion Family hosted Chemo Heros Party in support of a SAL Junior for his last Chemo treatment with the ringing of the bell. The event included a water slide, bounce house, a bubble machine and snow cones. The Auxiliary donated to 4th and Gold and provided the food for the event.

On 9/11, 9 ladies attended a ceremony at the Post and delayed the starting of their breakfast until after the first bell and a moment of silence in honor of the fallen.

Held a Gold Star Recognition Luncheon and had a great response and plan to continue this partnership and honor more mothers. Hosted another Gold Star Mother Banner in partnership with the First Coast Blue Star Mothers Jacksonville Chapter. We gave banners to 5 Gold Star Mothers who were in attendance with photos of their children and enjoyed talking about them.

Members participated in the primary elections, flag retirement, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk, blood drives, 4 Chaplain Ceremonies, paint and sip nights, reporting sessions, and donated 2 Mason jars and a tote bag full of crafting supplies to Unit 194 KSZ.

Children's Halloween Party (23 Kids), 42 Food baskets packed for USO, Legion Family, teachers and staff, Supported Hurricane Ian Relief by donating \$3000 dollars and sending supplies to District 13, Children's Christmas Party (35 Kids), Packed 94 bags for Christmas food distribution which helped 47 families...they got two bags and a \$25 gift card which was divided 10 Legion families, 10 USO families and 27 elementary school families, Did a "No Dough Dinner" at USO Mayport and feed 45 adults and 50 kids, Children's Easter Party (29 Kids) and Children's Military Child Table Ceremony conducted by the 5th District Juniors.

Unit 316- Two members attended Stop the Bleeding training hosted by the Mayo Clinic at Unit 129. Two members attended with the Department of Florida President the Sheriff Youth Ranch in Hilliard, FL. President Luke attended the 5th District training at Post 88. Four members attended the Department of Florida Convention, received awards, installed to higher office, and were elected as delegates to represent FL for the National Convention.

Members participated in an escort for a local hero who died serving our country, distributing Poppies at Memorial Day Ceremony, helped with an event in the memory of an SAL member, received 100% membership ribbon plus Historian and Education award, hosted Steak Night twice a month, collect coupons for troops overseas, and pull pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House.

Members attended events:meet & greet @ Post 129 to support and participate in 7 Bridge POW/MIA Remembrance Day Ride, Sunday Brunch @ Post 194, benefit for K9 Line Inc, benefit for KSZ @ Post 194, benefit for Special Olympics @ Post 233,

Christmas Day Luncheon @ Post 233 and had a great visit with 3 fireman who stopped in, and the Polar Plunge @ Post 137 which was to benefit Gary Sinise Foundation.

Members and 4 Juniors decorated for the Witch's Brew and Halloween Party, Members attended NAS JAX Air Show while wearing branded attire, members and one junior helped with the Legion Family golf tournament which supported Children & Youth programs...Collected money from selling mulligans and 50/50 for the Girl State Program, held a Rockin Sock Hop to raise funds for Auxiliary programs, members and juniors help with Valentine's dinner, karaoke, and cake walk all to benefit Girls State, and one senior with the help of one junior prepared and served St. Patrick's Day dinner to benefit the Autism Society.

Unit 372- This Unit is at 110.71% in membership at the end of April which is much higher than last year.

Every month these members collect box tops for education, collect and cut stamps to send to the veterans at the VA hospitals, they collect coupons and process them for Troupons \$2086.80 dollars to date, collect aluminum cans and funds go towards a new Post home, and pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House.

They have 3 members who have spent 80 hrs making Boggy Bears (11) for Camp Boggy Creek, making a quilt for the new Post home and knitting 12 afghans donated for veteran homes. Five members participated in a Veteran Social @ Discovery Village for Assisted Living Community where they gave out homemade blankets. Four Members participated in a membership drive with the entire Legion Family. One member went to Orlando and participated in a Gary Sinise Event. One member participated in the flag line for the Jacksonville Memorial Wall. Many members participated in different Post dinners and a Chili Cook-off.

Members participated in Project Vet Relief fundraiser (\$1700), Jacksonville POW/MIA motorcycle ride, Post Service Officer Training (\$213), Merry-go-round (\$100), Wreaths Across America (\$20), Post 194 Children's Village (\$165), Hurricane Relief (\$200), Zombie Ride (\$150), SAL fundraiser (\$150), Veteran Concert (\$1325), and Snowball Express (\$620).

Unit 373- Two members have taken on collecting and processing coupons for Troupons and so far have sent \$4,720.97. Sent more coupons totaling \$7,557.99 overseas. They received a thank you letter from the organization that processed the coupons they sent in.

Two members attended the School of Instruction held at Unit 194.

Working with the Legion to put out a newsletter every other month.

Members volunteered for the "Ring the Bell/Red Kettle" and donated emptied medicine bottles which we give to Post 283 and then they give them to the Fernandina Beach Humane Society once a month. Members also joined in with other Posts to attend Jacksonville Icemen's Hockey game on Veteran's Day.

The Legion family came together at Christmas to help a family through the Quigley House of Green Cove Springs. They gave presents and gift cards to the family of 5 which consisted of a single mother and 4 children. The organization sent them a thank you letter for their support.

Unit 401- Each month the host dinners for fundraisers, collect activity items for seniors at local care facilities, participate in the 10 for 10 by collecting school supplies and delivering to local schools, and each month at our meeting we pass the bank for AEF.

The Auxiliary purchased a wall mounted fan for the Post kitchen and gift cards for a member who is currently undergoing Chemo treatments. They began collecting items

for “Operation Shoebox” for Ronald McDonald House. During a car show they had a raffle basket and a dessert auction. Provided a meal for the Hilliard MS Football team before one of their games. Delivered donations to Ronald McDonald house and Operation Shoebox too. Gave a Mary Kay gift package to someone who is battling Breast Cancer.

Collected food for Thanksgiving Food Baskets, bought gift cards for Lake City Domiciliary, Held lunch with Santa event for kids, delivered cookies to fire station and two agricultural stations. Delivered stocking to 6 veterans at Dayspring Village, and donated food and various items to a man and his children just before Christmas.

Sponsored a cross representing the Post during the “Remember Our Heroes” display that will be up from June until Veterans Day at Hilliard Town Hall.

For God and Country,
Color Me There!,
Nancy Chandler
5th District President

District 6

6th District Books of Reports

For 2022 - 2023

The 6th District were excited to begin our year buzzing through the district and coloring our world for our Department President Jane Hardacre. 6th District honored our Past Department President Jan Croft from the year of 1969-1970, and we all were “Being a Doer”! In our district we were running and buzzing with our Betty the Bumble Bee and new Auxiliary member Bumblina. Throughout the year all the units in the 6th District Continue Our Legacy of Respect for our Veterans.

Unit 19 Orlando Memorial– Kathy DeRouin, President

Unit 19 has been extremely busy doing all their programs, under Americanism they have laid wreath for Memorial Day and Wreaths Across American at the Greenwood Cemetery. The members of the unit have flown the American flags at their homes all year. During their meetings they have said the Pledge of Allegiance. Due to Hurricane Ian they have house a military family for 54 hours. One of their Junior visited numerous places like the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, WWII Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and the FDR Monument.

Under Community Service they have done the following things to support their community. Meals on Wheels, homeowner’s association, Base Camp for Children with cancer, volunteered in churches, Vacation Bible did school crafts. Then all accounting for Down Syndrome Foundation, Bike Camp, United Against Poverty Board Meetings, National Night Out Against Crime. They also participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Fundraiser and delivered, restocked, collect money, and awards. After Hurricane Ian they hosted a family from Ft. Myers for 2 months, and had 710 hours, visiting nursing home, hospitals, Seniors First, Women’s Choice Clinic, and Orlando Police Department Traffic Control for Events with the total of \$3,609.50 and 1,457 volunteer hours. We updated our Standing Rules because National has increased the amount we to send to Department and National, so our unit increase our dues from \$35 to \$40.

The unit has participated in Give 10 to Education collected School supplies, 50 reading books, clothing, shoes for 4 children, erasable pens, stapler, electric pencil sharpener, USB drive, storage bags, plastic folders, play dough, playground balls. Then we picked up school supplies for Operation Homefront and delivered them to the National Guard in Sanford. We had two members attend PTO meetings, Open House, and three members attended awards ceremonies. Had a Junior participated in the Fun Run fundraiser running 34 laps for a S.T.R.E.A.M Lab (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). A member tutored all subjects at the Celandine Life Preparatory Academy for children with autism, Down Syndrome, and other special needs. Two Juniors serviced their school by being on the Safety Patrol helping in the hallways and classrooms. A Legionnaire walked the halls at Joan Walker Elementary School and students saluted him. Two Legionnaires attended Disney Bingo Night at Wolf Lake Elementary along with 1 Junior, and 2 Sr. Members. A member dressed up as Cat in the Hat and read to 5 classes and a member ran the Junior Achievement program called Biz Town.

The unit and their members had a back-to-school faculty breakfast and gave cookies to the teachers and went to Two Book Fairs, and 3 members volunteered at 2 schools. They help setting up displays, restocking, running the register, and helped students’ shop. One member

dressed up as a lion to motivate children to come to the Book Fair. They also help with the Reading Book Challenge, a member purchased books to motivate children to read.

The Unit members also participated in Teacher Appreciation Week, being snacks Star Bucks Coffee, desserts, breakfast. Then the members helped with VPK graduation, holiday, and Easter concerts. Our unit made donations to the Department and Memorial Scholarship fund.

Unit 19 sponsored one girl to go to Tallahassee for the Girls State Program. We have one Junior member that was elected Honorary Junior Department Vice President, and attended convention, installation, and Fall Conference. Their Junior presided over the Junior Department Meeting at Fall Conference and participated in the Art Project for the Gary Sinese Foundation. They had three Juniors help at the Florida National Guard Christmas Party. One Junior Earned 2 gold-level patches through the patch program: Community and Safety and National Creative Arts patch.

Under the Legislative program they had one Senior, and one Junior attended the campaign for Apopka Mayor. As of April 28, 2023, we have 94 Seniors and four Juniors in our unit.

National Security we participated in Operation Homefront, school supplies, and holiday toys went to the FL Army National Guard. Worked with the FRG leader at the HHB 164th Air Defense Artillery Brigade for their Family Day Event. Poppy letters were mailed to Auxiliary, SAL, and Legionnaires asking for donations. Poppy cans are placed on the bar.

Public Relations we advertise on the post website, direct mailing of poppy letter. Disney Character Bingo – picture was taken by the principal of Wolf Lake Elementary with the WWII veteran wearing his hat and placed it on the school website. Our unit donated T-shirts and personal care items for female veterans to the Lake Baldwin Domiciliary. \$200 donated men's socks, underwear, undershirts, games-checkers, dominoes, card games to Lake Baldwin, \$400 purchased him new pajamas. Three members visited a Legionnaire in a nursing home and he passed away in March 2023.

1 Junior made cupcakes for a Celebration of Life to a Legionnaire and placed American flags on the cupcakes-March 2023.

Unit 55 South Lake Memorial of Clermont – Trish Gardner, President

Here are some highlights that our Unit has done this year.

Held a huge yard sale for Snowball express. The Unit did quarterly donations to Clermont Compassion which include items for the Troop packages, Hygiene items were taken to the high school to be given to homeless students. The Unit also donated clothing and household items to New Beginnings for the homeless in their community. The members from Unit 55 held an ice cream appreciation party for the Girl Scouts who helped with our yard sale. Unit 55 Auxiliary members participated in laying wreaths at several cemeteries for Wreaths Across America. We held a spaghetti dinner to raise funds to be able to

send 4 delegates to Girls State in June to Tallahassee, Florida. We assembled baskets of goodies for our Veterans in the local nursing home and we delivered them to the nursing home. Decorated a Christmas tree that was placed in downtown Clermont with a patriotic theme to honor our veterans. Then lastly the Unit held an initiation of all members who were never initiated into the Auxiliary.

Unit 80 Charles Swanson, St. Cloud – Heather Cunningham, President

Our year started with Memorial Day, and we had about 10 Volunteers, with 20 hours from start to finish, our hours also consisted of planning the ceremony and meeting with the city of St. Cloud. We had 4 juniors and 1 junior SAL member distribute Poppies and open with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In June we had a Car Show raising money for Wreaths Across America (15 hrs). In June we sent 4 Awesome Girls to Girls State to learn about our state government. Wreaths Across America on December 17th was a big success; we were able to cover all 1,380 graves in the Mount Peace Cemetery.

In August we collected school supplies from our signed Dollar Trees in St. Cloud through the Operation Homefront. We picked up 80 boxes of School supplies and they were passed out to 4 Elementary Schools for the needy kids and the military kids in each school. Again, in December I collected 60 boxes of toys, which we passed out to 4 Elementary schools, and sent 20 boxes to military and homeless students in the 12th District

We then had our Valentines Dinner, with Raffle Baskets and 50/50 where we raised money for Boys and Girls State Transportation. (20 hours)

In March, we hosted a Chili Cook-off where we raised money for Wreaths Across America, we had raffle baskets, door prizes, and 50/50. (15hrs).

Some of our on-going projects were Bar Bingo where monies raised went to our various programs. We just recently had to stop it for a while due to lack of volunteers.

On Thursday nights we do Bingo-Bango, donations go to our various programs and also we started an Angel Fund which helps members in need when they haven't been a member long enough to use the AEF. Criteria has been established for disbursement of funds.

Other ongoing fundraisers are a quarter candy machine, a candy jar where members can get candy for a donation. At our meetings members attending donate \$1.00 to our Department AEF.

Unit 112 – Winter Park, Marge Berrios, President

Although we are a small unit it has been a very eventful year. The following are some highlights of our activities. Membership – We had two new members join, one being a male spouse. We are at 108% membership now.

Girls State- This year because of donations we are able to send our regular Delegate and a over-quota delegate. We interviewed 8 girls from 3 different high schools.

Americanism – It was a banner year for the essay contest. We had 40 entries from 3 high schools and 3 elementary schools.

Children-Youth- Our members donated more than 300 hours to C&Y projects. One being our support of the backpacks, food pantry project at a local school where at Thanksgiving we donated non-perishable food items for 20 families.

Poppy-held 2 Poppy booths at different locations and collected \$175.00 in donations.

National Security – sent \$1600 worth of coupons to a military base in Okinawa.

Education – We participated in the Give-10 to Education at a local school donated \$250.00 for this program. They are awarded Scholastic Achievement awards to one boy and one girl in 5th Grade in 8 different schools. We also provided a goody breakfast basket to one school during Teacher Appreciation Week.

VA&R – Three food baskets donated at Christmas for Giving Tree Families through Lake Baldwin VA each contained more than \$125 worth of food items.

Community Service- Over 5000 hours and \$7,000 in-kind and donations from giving free counseling services to running from charities to helping local HOA, BSA and churches.

Constitutional and Bylaws- We review every year and we changed our Standing Rules to allow for due change coming in 2024.

The above are just highlights of all our activities, these programs were only worked by 7 members.

Old Glory Unit 183 – Penny Kanbara, President

Unit 183 Old Glory was so excited to start buzzing around Dynamite District 6 working our mission and programs in C.O.L.O.R as we Continued Our Legacy of Respect for our veterans. The unit worked the programs in Americanism, American Legion Auxiliary Fund, Constitution and By Laws, Community Service, Education, Girls State (is great!), Historian, National Security, Leadership, Poppies, and V A & R. The members of Unit 183 spent a total of over 1500 hours volunteering in these programs and spent a total of over \$4,000 and \$1,000 of in-kind donations throughout the year. We held many fund raisers including the very colorful purse auction during Madam President Jane's visit to the unit. Our Sons and Legionnaires dressed in colorful dresses and make up while they modeled the purses. The night was a huge success, raising over \$1500 for the Gary Sinise Snow Ball Express and lots of laughs were had by all. Old Glory Unit 183 also packed homeless hero bags and distributed them throughout the community to the homeless veterans. They also provided over 50 laundry baskets full of nonperishable food items to HUD-VASH and prepared over 60 Easter Baskets for the Ronald McDonald house. The big event that Unit 183 completed this year was the 2nd Annual Tushies and Toes Fun Run to raise awareness for the needs of socks and underwear for the underprivileged children in Seminole County. We received in kind donations of 767 pairs of underwear, 1247 pairs of socks, 7 pairs of shoes, \$100 in gift cards and \$1800 in cash donations to purchase new shoes. The event was a huge success, The members also participate in the veteran's day programs, Vietnam Veteran's Day, Pearl Harbor Day and attended two flag retirement ceremonies throughout the year. In addition, they support the Legion Family and post by volunteering hours to clean the post home, cook dinners, provide support to other family fundraisers and decorating for the holidays. They also have fun attending post parties like Halloween and Christmas and outdoor family movie nights. Unit members were thrilled with this year's theme of "BEE A DOER" and embraced the theme with bees, beehives, and honey decorations during installation and beyond. We learned about mentorship and our own Past Department President TK Wildrick was presented with a mentor pin at Workshop. Old Glory Unit 183 is proud to have new members that are attending meetings, signing up to volunteer and wanting to learn more about the programs and the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Unit 219 John Gella Memorial Fruitland Park – Diane Spencer, President

Unit 219 John Gella Memorial Fruitland Park has been some busy bees. In the following months you can see how these Bees have been buzzing for our Veterans, Community, Military families and our Children & Youth.

First off in September they gave to the following schools to help with underprivileged children, instruments and/or uniforms: \$300 to Fruitland Park Elementary School for underprivileged children, and \$250 to Leesburg High School's Band Parents Assoc. for instruments and/or uniforms. They are also helping The Villagers for Veterans donating money in the amount of \$200 being earmarked for the Ashley's Cottage, which is a new female veterans; transition home being established in Fruitland Park.

In September their annual peanut butter drive started with another all-time high for this unit. They have received 337 jars of peanut butter to be given to Beyond The Walls food pantry in

Fruitland Park... for "Make A Difference Day" on October 22nd. 🤗 For this same food pantry they have given them 162 gallons of water and 78 cans of beans..

December they participate in Wreaths Across America on December 17th, which they laid 132 wreaths on veterans cemetery at the Shiloh Cemetery.

February they hold their annual 50's/60's dinner and dance to raise money for Boys & Girls State, which is on the 1st Friday of February. In which they have raised \$1,305 for Girls State plus the same amount for Boys State.

They also gave \$200 to VetFest to go to the Fruitland Park Police Department to assist in getting another police dog.

March this awesome Unit 219 has donated \$500 dollars to Ronald McDonald House in Orland, along with \$1000 dollars to The Villagers for Veterans earmarked for Ashley's Cottage.

Biggest Donations this Unit has done is \$500 to Beyond The Walls food pantry, \$500 to assist the Fort Myers area hit by hurricane in October, and \$50 each to their 4 area organization. 😊

Unit 219 John Gella delivered dinners to their area First Responders for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. They spent about \$300 on each holiday to supply these meals. Member Sandee Rouse delivers them!

Unit 239 Mascotte/Groveland

This is 6th District newest Unit and they have been busy in their community and trying to get new members to join their Unit or the Post.

In April they held an Easter Extravaganza for the community children with breakfast, taking a picture with the Easter bunny, prior to the egg hunt, all gathered around the flagpole and said the Pledge of Allegiance then had the Egg hunt. The unit members set up a table at the local ACE Hardware with poppies, coloring books, and brochures on the history along with membership information.

This unit had two brand new to Auxiliary stepped in to be President. They joined a local tire shop to have a Halloween event with free popcorn and candy handed out to all the children and had an outdoor movie. The Auxiliary joined with Post 239 to hold a flag ceremony for a local woman's deceased father veteran; presented her with the folded flag in its shadow box.

In December they had breakfast with Santa event for community children. RSVPs were required to ensure each child received an appropriate gift. Breakfast was served to around 70, then the children were invited to decorate their own cookie and then, Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived, and

the presents were handed out and an instant photo was taken. This Unit has achieved 100 percent in membership\

Unit 286 Pine Castle – Jennifer Summer, President

This year we had five ladies attend the Department Convention in June. We had three members attend Department Workshop. Our Unit hosted a district ABC School of Instruction with eight members in attendance. The Unit participated in the Back-to-School brigade with Operation Homefront and Dollar Tree. The Unit members (three helped) picked up from seven stores and received thousands of school supplies. These were used to stuff 100 backpacks for the Back to School event that was held in July. The left-over items were donated to seven schools in the area. The Back-to-School Party was done as a drive through party due to the Covid numbers being on the rise at the time of the event. The 286 Post family handed out 100 stuffed backpacks. Prior to the event the VA Hudvash Program social workers were given the information about the party so that veterans that needed assistance could sign up their children. There were 17 families signed up through that program. There were 34 children that received backpacks. In October the Auxiliary spearheaded the Post 286 family Cancer awareness fundraiser. There were members that volunteered to cut their hair to be sent in for a place that makes wigs for children. The monies raised were also donated to this organization. (I think they said it was around \$4,000. In November the Unit started planning for the Post 286 C&Y Breakfast with Santa party. The Unit once again participated with the Operation Homefront/Dollar Tree toy drive. We picked up from seven stores and received thousands of toys. We used part of the Toys to stuff goodie bags for the C&Y Christmas party and all the rest were donated to the Edgewood Police Department and to the 6th district riders for the toy run. The Unit distributed Poppy's in November. In December the Unit took charge of the Post family C&Y Christmas Party. Once again the information was shared with the VA Hudvash social workers to share with the Veterans. Not as many were interested in breakfast with Santa. There were about five families from the VA that signed up. There were 50-60 community children signed up. Santa was a big hit.

The unit also handles the Post family Angel Tree. There were 9 families signed up that needed help this year. The Post family provided food baskets that held enough food to last about a week maybe more. Plus, the 16 children received 2-3 gifts each. Two weeks before Christmas we received a call at the Post that a woman was desperately in need of assistance for Christmas. She had tried all the normal places to sign up for help but had waited too long and was told no. At our December meeting voted to adopt this family for the holidays. There were four children and the Mom. We made sure all four children had a great Christmas. The mom was even given a small gift. The Unit also donated \$650.00 along with another \$430.00 from donations collected by the commander to the family to help with her rent and power bill. She had recently been unemployed and in an accident. When we delivered the stuff to her she cried and cried when we handed her the money. She said the landlord had just served her a three-day eviction notice. Needless to say, none of us had dry eyes after that. In March the Unit prepared for Madam Presidents visit. She came to visit with our unit on her birthday (March 18th). It just so happened that it was the monthly spoon dinner so, she got lots of home cooked southern food. She was also surprised with homemade German chocolate cupcakes for dessert. We played a video about Snowball Express and then with the help of SAL Commander Davey Kemper we did a progressive raffle of a quilt that unit member Nancy Troxel made just for the occasion. We

raised \$528.00 on the raffle and the money will be given to Jane at this years, Convention during the parade of checks. You know who the winner of the quilt was 😊 . The Girls State Department raffle was also done during her visit. I believe someone from Unit 10 won. The Unit is currently helping plan the next cancer fundraiser for May 6th. This time the money raised will be donated to Libby's Legacy. We are also getting our stuff together for National Poppy Day poppy distribution. We've also started talking about what to do for the back-to-school party this year

Unit #347 Lady Lakes – Maureen Caswell, President

It has been an extremely busy year for the Unit, another terrific year!

The following bulleted items are our accomplishments this year that we are most proud of. These items have been included in the narrative/numbers below.

- Donated \$10,000. to the Hurricane Disaster Relief Fund for District 13
- Purchased a new shuffleboard for our Veterans at Post 347 - \$15,000.
- Donated \$2,200. To District 13 so that they could send 4 girls to Girls State. That included tuition, \$50. Spending for each of the four girls and \$400 toward the cost of their bus.
- Awarding \$15,000. in Scholarships this year, two under Americanism and one under Education
- Donated \$19,150. on the DRF this year

AEF

- Member donations from General Meetings amounted to \$486.00
- Donated \$10,000. to hurricane victims through the disaster relief fund
- DRF disaster donation of \$1,600. National - \$300. Dept. - \$300. General -\$1,000.
- **In summary, The Unit donated \$12,086. to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.**

Americanism

- Awarding \$10,000 in scholarships – (two \$5,000. Scholarships)
- Donated \$500. to Wreaths Across America
- Donated \$1,000 to 80th Anniversary of the Four Chaplains
- Donated \$6,400 to Fisher House on DRF
- Two members volunteered 888 hours as part of Post 347 Honor Guard
- Spent \$2,520. this year serving lunch to Veteran's on Veterans Day, Memorial Day and hosted the American Legion Family Early Bird Dinner. 39 members volunteered and logged 152 service hours.
- Donated \$2,500 to the Riders of the American Legion for their summer legacy run.
- **In summary, The Unit donated \$20,400. to the Program. 41 volunteers logged 1,040 service hours and served 318 Veteran Meals. Our in-kind donations were \$2,520. 148 Veterans families have been served by our honor guard members.**

Children and Youth

- Donated \$2,500. to Karate World. The money is to assist local children that could not afford to make a trip to compete in competitions. Karate World has a board of directors that is managing these funds.

- Donated \$2,500. to the Lady Lake Little League. We sponsor an all- girl team. One of the benefits of the donation is that we get a large Auxiliary banner that hangs on the backstop of the field.
- Donated \$500.00 to Beads of Courage for children facing serious illnesses.
- Donated \$1,000. to COTA, another organization that helps children in need of an organ transplant.
- Donated \$314. in candy and snacks to the Lady Lake Not-so-scary Halloween event. 4 members volunteered and logged 16 hours of service.
- The Unit does an angel tree each year with the salvation army. 100 gifts were donated to various age groups. The value of the gifts donated was \$3,100.
- Donated \$717.00 in candy and snacks to the Lady Lake Easter Egg Hunt, 3 members logged 12 service hours.
- Donated \$1,275.00 to local schools for special sized clothing for children in need
- Donated \$341. For t-shirts for pre-school students for their first day of school and for field trips
- Donated \$1,025 for snacks for Villages Elementary after school mentoring
- 50 gifts were donated to the Toys for Tots program at a value of \$1,500.00.
- **In summary, The Unit donated \$6,500 to various organizations, and had \$8,272. Of in-kind donations. 7 members logged 28 hours of service.**

Community Service

- Organized the American Legion Family Food Drive in August. Raised \$400. In cash. In-kind food/items donated totaled \$29,760. 26 Auxiliary members participated and donated 106 hours of service.
- Donated 50 loaded food boxes and large tote bags for 50 families for Thanksgiving and 50 families for Christmas. The Unit spent \$13,552. 39 volunteers logged 97 hours of service.
- Donated \$10,800. to three local food banks. Each food bank receives a \$300. monthly check
- Donated \$1,800. to the Wildwood Soup Kitchen to serve one hot lunch per month from The Auxiliary. This began in October.
- Donated \$755 dollars this year to Habitat for Humanity. The Auxiliary provides a large basket of cleaning items for the local family when they take possession of their new home. We have supported 4 families, and have 4 more baskets on queue.
- One member works with the Salvation Army kitchen and picks up leftover eggs from a local farm monthly and picks up unsold breads, cookies and pastry from Panera weekly. The estimated in-kind value of these donations to the Salvation army is \$110,000.
- **In summary, 187 members logged 1,135 volunteer hours. The Unit spent \$26,332. on various organizations. The Unit's in-kind donations totaled \$143,723.00**

Education

- Sent two students to the National Flight Academy at a cost of \$3,000.00
- Host an annual Town Hall Meeting where the students are the Town Commissioners for a day at a cost of \$841.00

- Participated in Operation Home Front. Distributed school supplies at an in-kind value of \$6,699.00.
- Awarded a \$5,000. Scholarship to a student needing help with tuition
- Attended 5th grade graduation to award 5th grade students an Auxiliary Education Medal - \$120.00
- 158 students made Thank-you cards to be given to Veteran's on Veterans Day
- Donated 175 Campbell soup labels, 143 General Mills Box Tops and 200 lbs. of Pop Tops for local Elementary School
- Donated a State Flag to the Rimes School at a cost of \$38.
- Donated \$900. To the Memorial Scholarship fund
- **In summary, The Unit donated \$9,741.00 on the program. The Unit's in-kind donations totaled \$6,857.00. 11 members logged 67 service hours.**

Girls State

- Sending 12 girls to Girls State this year at a cost of \$5,400. Twelve volunteers logged 18 hours of service.
- Donated \$2,200. to District 13 so that they could send 4 girls to Girls State. That included tuition, \$50. Spending for each of the four girls and \$400 toward the cost of their bus.
- Donated \$216.00 in food to the District Picnic for Transportation. Served 88 dinners. 3 volunteers logged 28 hours of service.
- **In summary, The Unit spent \$7,600 on the program. 15 members logged 46 service hours. In-kind donations were \$216.00**

National Security

- Donated \$125,814. face value of coupons to Troopon. 10 members logged 26,648 hours of service at a postage cost of \$127.00.
- Members logged 60 service hours to operation Home Front. Since we have no military bases in our area, we donated the items to two local schools. The in-kind value of the donations are reported through education and children and youth. Hours gets reported through national security.
- Donated \$328.00 in food to local police and fire departments on appropriate days to recognize first responders. 2 members logged 19 service hours.
- Donated \$1,000. to the Lake Weir JROTC program
- **In summary, The Unit donated \$1,127.00 to the program. 12 members logged 26,727 service hours. The Unit's in-kind donations were \$126,142.00.**

Past President Parley

- We celebrated our Female Veteran's this year with a luncheon in their honor. We honored 87 female vets at a cost of \$1,750.00
- 12 volunteers logged 44 hours of service.
- **In summary, 12 members logged 44 service hours. In-kind donations were \$1,750.00**

Poppy Program

- The Unit distributes Poppy's twice during our calendar year. In May, we do a two-day distribution on the Friday/Saturday prior to Memorial Day. We also distribute Poppy's on Veterans Day
- Our Veteran's Day distribution was cancelled due to inclement weather. We distributed at Post 347.
- **The Unit raised \$10,251. In May and \$192.00 in November for a total dollar amount of \$10,443.00. The unit distributed 10,212 Poppy's in May and 200 in November for a total Poppy distribution of 10,412 Poppy's. 142 volunteers logged 284 service hours. The Unit's cost for Poppy's was \$1,000.**

VA&R

- Prepared 215 goody bags for Veteran's on Veterans Day. These veterans are in local assisted living facilities. The Unit spent \$1,659.00. 13 volunteers logged 31 service hours.
- The Unit hosted an appreciation dinner for the Toys for Tots Veteran volunteers. The Unit spent \$239.00. 13 volunteers logged 31 service hours.
- The Unit hosted a fundraiser for Village for Veterans Ashley's House. This is a female transition home for homeless female veterans exiting the military. The Unit spent \$1,638.00. 13 volunteers logged 106 hours.
- The Unit donated \$3,362.00 to Villagers for Vets - Ashley's House
- The Unit purchased a shuffleboard table for Veteran's at Post 347. The cost was \$15,000.
- The Unit Donated \$2,000. To Southeastern Guide Dogs.
- The Unit donated \$500.00 to the DAV annual Golf Outing.
- The Unit donated \$1,600 to the Gary Sinise Snowball Express Central FL foundation on behalf of our Department President
- The Unit donated \$8,200 to the following entities through the DRF: Veterans Nursing Homes - \$700.; Veteran's outpatient events/needs - \$600.; VAMC facilities - \$4,900.; Florida National Creative Arts - \$2000. For a total of \$8,200.
- Donated 13 quilts to Lady Lake Senior living for Vets residing there – In kind donation - \$260.00.
- **In summary 98 members logged 1,030 hours, served 1,503 veterans at cost of \$33,938.00. Of this amount, \$2,254.00 was classed as in-kind donations. These hours included, taking Vets to appointments, making meals, taking a Vet to dinner, doing wellness checks, working for Village for Vets Bingo, working honor flight, working operation shoebox, working Tri-County female vets group, worked flags for fallen vets, and donated clothing and personal hygiene items.**

Unit 347 is extremely proud of the achievements we've made this year. Our totals are as follows: 413 members logged 30,357 service hours. The Unit donated \$116,470 in donations to support our programs. In-kind donations for the year were \$165,592. We served 1,503 veterans. Our Poppy proceeds for the year were \$10,443.00. Wow, we did great!

For God in Country,

Paula Fox

6th District President

District 7

**No Report
from
District 7 President**

District 8

UNIT 11 in ARCADIA was struck by Hurricane Ian in 2022. Their building was totally inundated by the Peace River for several days. As of May 2023, they are still not back in their Post, but are working on rebuilding. The Legion at Post 11 has had a fundraising picnic and the Auxiliary participated by selling baked goods and selling 50-50's.

UNIT 69 in AVON PARK on a regular basis works in the kitchen. Once a month they serve wings, a full dinner. Also on one Saturday a month, they are in the kitchen cooking. They accumulated 432 hours and 144 volunteers.

Coupons and care package are sent to the troops overseas. Greeting cards are sent to St. Jude's Childrens Hospital. They collected \$101,235.00 in coupons. Money spent on these projects were \$500 and 526 volunteer hours were involved.

During the summer they held their annual school supply drive and were able to provide two schools with backpacks, supplies, and a donation of \$500.00 to each school. They gave 100 \$25.00 gift cards to a Head Start Program. They also participated in the Give 10 Education Program. Volunteer hours were 436 with 36 participants and total donations of \$1500.00 made up of in-kind and cash donations. In December donations of toys and money were done to provide a Merry Christmas for local children, veterans, and their families.

The Unit sent 6 girls to Girls State. The Girls State chairman and her committee spent over 30 hours working on this program. A Casino-Murder Mystery night was held with proceeds donated to President Jane's charity, the Snowball Express. The Unit had 30 volunteers who volunteered 100 hours.

They spent over 100 hours and had 25 volunteers who helped sort and box up supplies for District 13 effected by Hurricane Ian. Pizza and cold drinks were provided to the National Guard while their members gave them a break from handing out supplies to the hurricane victims.

In April they attended the Department's Children and Youth Picnic with 15 members present. One of their members, Cindy Lair, who wrote a children's book read it to the children in the attendance. The following weekend they held a Children Awareness Expo. It was very well attended with many other organizations teaming up to participate and bring activities for the children. Cindy read her book, signed it, and handed it out to the children. It took over 50 volunteers and 200 hours to do this event.

The Auxiliary Unit works well with the Family of American Legion Post 69 and is extremely proud of the cooperation of all members to accomplishing what they do for the Post, veterans and community.

UNIT 74 SEBRING sponsors many events during the year. They provide Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. Raffles are held on Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. A brown bag auction and chili dinner were held. Poppy donations were solicited at a local merchant. They Participated in the Project Vet Relief Expo Auxiliary 74 booth at Post 69.

Many donations were made to various organizations, students, veterans and their families, and community groups. Some of them are as follows:

\$750.00 in scholarships to 3 students in the ROTC programs

\$200.00 to Champions to Children

\$350.00 in gift cards to local schools

\$250.00 to Project Vet Relief

\$977.00 in gift cards and toys to 2 veteran's families and toys to the Sheriff's toy drive

\$100.00 to Highlands County Sheriff's Department for Easter baskets

\$750.00 to ROTC students

\$340.00 to Wreaths Across America

\$500.00 to Fischer House of Bay Pines

\$500.00 to New Testament Mission for water main damage

UNIT 113 IN ROTONDA WEST has many volunteers and works well as a team. They held dinner dances several times throughout the year for Flag Day, Labor Day, Valentine's Day, and St. Patrick's Day. Holiday parties included Halloween, where supplies were collected and donated to a church and food pantry. They also had a Trunk or Treat for Halloween where members handed out candy to children at a local church. A Christmas pot luck dinner was held to be enjoyed by all at the post.

A free shredding event was held in June for the community. School supplies and cash donations were accepted to purchase additional school supplies. Later in the summer a school supply drive was held and all items were then distributed to local schools.

In July a sock hop was held where 75 pairs of shoes and 74 bundles of socks, as well as, cash was donated. All donations went to the Greater Kid Needs organization. Another unique event was an odd ball party. Odd supplies in the auxiliary office were raffled and an egg hunt was held. A reverse draw and baskets were made. The DJ brought hula hoops for a contest and Santa came for a visit.

November events included providing dinner to 110 veterans and community members. A Bandana Band dinner dance was held with food donated by a past Post commander, Jerry Faught.

A Christmas Angel Tree was set up with generous donations of cash and gifts. Christmas presents were given to 102 children from 38 families. An estimated \$1000 of gifts were distributed. Leftover toys were donated to the local Boys and Girls Club and clothing was given to Kids Needs of Englewood.

A very big event of the year was their fashion show. It was a sold-out event with 248 attending. They put in many hours of planning and organizing. The community donated many of the raffle baskets and almost \$13,000 was raised. An amazing patriotic event was held featuring the American Bombshell Girls. The Bombshell Girls wore WW2 uniforms and sang patriotic songs from that era. Six residents from Douglas Jacobsen Military home were in attendance. The oldest resident was a 100-year-old woman. They opened the show by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Throughout the year several Unit members visited Vineland Elementary School and awarded students the Heron of the Month Award. They have been doing this for many years and the students are very honored to receive the award.

Donations to many organizations throughout the year have been made. Some of them are as follows: Suicide Awareness, Tidewell Hospice of Englewood, Post 11 in Arcadia, Camp Boggy Creek, The Snowball Express, Douglas Jacobson Veterans Home, Southeastern Guide Dogs, Special Olympics, C.A.R.E., Project VetRelief, Meals on Wheels, My Warriors Place, and Fisher House.

Unit 113 is very proud to have provided 3 scholarships to local high school students and sending 3 girls to Girls State in Tallahassee in June.

UNIT 159 IN VENICE communicates with its members through a monthly newsletter and Constant Contacts and a Facebook page. They have approximately 650 members and are fortunate to have all committee positions filled and are proud to say all committee reports for 2023 were completed. With the help of their members, they were able to donate almost \$20,000 to the Veterans, Children and Youth and Community programs.

Their first event of the year was decorating the Post for the 4th of July. They hosted 6 dinner dances for the Post and paid for the entertainment at each of them as a donation to the Legion for their willingness to welcome them into their home.

Once a month they go to the Douglas T. Jacobson Veteran's Nursing Home in Port Charlotte to play bingo donating money for winning and provide cookies and lemonade. With the help of the Sons and Riders, they invite them to the Post once a month and buy lunch for 6 vets and 2 caregivers. Birthday cards are sent to residents of the nursing home, also. The Auxiliary and the Sons jointly purchased 2 dart boards for the homes new activity room. They worked with the DAV and the VFW to present 120 gifts to local veterans in nursing homes.

In the beginning of the school year, they partner with local Dollar Tree stores to collect school supplies in the Operation Homefront program. They donated 6 boxes to local schools.

Several of their members started a quilting group to make Quilts of Valor in partnership with Peace River Quilts of Valor. Nine quilts have been presented so far. They collected items from local vendors to raffle off at the Post's annual golf outing. Unfortunately, Hurricane Ian happened and the event was cancelled.

Most of their Executive Committee Members attended the School of Instruction in Bradenton with 2 members presenting Programs because they were District Program Chairmen.

Unit 159 recognized their Gold Star Mother and hosted 3 other members of her Gold Star group. At one of their meetings, they presented Blue Star pins to all members who are Blue Star moms. While working with the Riders and Sons, they held a fundraiser to benefit their Post bartender, Laura Bovee who is fighting cancer.

They decorate the gazebo at Patriot's Park, on both Veteran's Day and Memorial Day. Also, they walk with the Legion members at the annual Christmas Parade in downtown Venice. Their Christmas project involved helping a local family who suffered a tremendous loss. They partnered with Venice Christmas Angels to collect gifts and monetary donations. A young couple lost their lives in a car collision and the brother of the deceased took in the 10 orphaned children. They went from a family of 4 to a family of 14. The Legion Family presented approximately \$8,000 in goods and gift cards to the family.

The Unit was very honored to host President Jane on her visit with a luncheon. Jane helped with filling out Valentine cards to be delivered to children's hospitals. After the devastation of Hurricane Ian, the Unit donated \$500 to Unit 11 in Arcadia who was affected by the storm. They worked with local Publix stores to distribute Poppies and presented a Poppy to Veteran residents in nursing homes.

Two \$1000 scholarships to female senior students at Venice High School were given. Also, two \$1000 scholarships were presented to nursing students at State College of Florida. They are sponsoring 3 girls to attend Girls State this year and hosted the orientation for District 8 this year.

They work with the local schools to recognize deserving students with a gift card and a certificate. The students are chosen by their teachers. There are 15 schools and they recognize one boy and one girl at each school. Two students are recognized in the MCJROTC at Venice High School with a gift card and a certificate, also.

Unit 159 will be sending at least three members to the June convention in Orlando and looks forward to meeting and talking with other members throughout the state.

Unit 254 IN NORTH PORT sends its sick and passed board members families flowers. They regularly attend District 8 quarterly meetings, the District School of Instruction, the DCC, the Department Convention and Conference, and the Southwestern Area picnic.

Prior to the school year beginning, they participated in the Dollar Tree school supply program providing backpacks and the donated supplies to Post families and local children, and their adoptive family.

They donated \$335 in slippers and art supplies to Solaris Health, \$200 for a veteran's funeral, \$100 to help a veteran's wife, \$150 to the North Port High School Graduation Night Out, and \$250 to the Gary Sinise Foundation. A donation was also made to Post 11 to their rebuilding fund due to the damage caused by Hurricane Ian.

When Department President, Jane Hardacre, came on her Unit visit, an English Tea Party was held in her honor and they donated \$100 toward her stay while in District 8. They held their first annual Wiffle Golf Ball Event which was a huge success. Gift baskets were made and a 50-50 was held.

They sent one girl to Girls State, covered the cost of spending money for them, tip money for the bus driver and the bus rental. They attended the Girls State Orientation at Post 159 too.

Gift cards to two children, totaling \$100, were given to their adoptive family at Christmas time. Gift cards totaling \$50 were donated to their adoptive veteran family, as well as, \$628 in gifts. They held a Christmas drive-through for 16 families totaling \$638. They held a Christmas dinner for the Post Family and provided Christmas gifts to community children and veterans. They bought, wrapped, and had Santa Claus deliver Christmas gifts to Post and community children. Goodie bags were distributed, also. Another toy drive provided eleven local children a total of \$868 in gifts.

They participated in the Valentine Card campaign in sending cards for the Childrens Hospital. The Auxiliary hosted line dancing every Tuesday night. They are always there to support the Sons of the American Legion, the Riders, and the Post in their events. On Flag Day, flags were distributed to local children and on Poppy Day distributed poppies at a local grocery store. They participated in North Port's annual Memorial Day service at City Hall and at the Post, also.

UNIT 325 IN ELLENTON under Children and Youth provided a local middle school teacher with \$300 for supplies for her classroom. They partnered with their Post members to have a Trunk or Treat event at Halloween. They raised \$1200 for the Toys for Tots program, as well as, \$3000 to F.E.L.T. (Feeding Empty Little Tummies), a food pantry that services underfed school age children throughout the year.

Their Wreaths Across America Committee was able to pass out over 1700 wreaths at two local cemeteries. A presentation of the Military Child's Table was held at the post. They have assisted their Post with honoring and welcoming home Veterans, with Quilts of Valor quilts. They honor young veterans, active-duty military, and centurion veterans. Often, they collect donations for the Tangled Threads organization that creates the wonderful quilts and have raised \$1037 to date.

They collected clothing and volunteered at a local Stand Down. They assisted a veteran leaving Veteran's Village with basic household goods and honored veterans at Manatee Springs with Christmas goodie bags. There were four veterans receiving home health care from Bay Pines with no family that the Unit provided necessary items that were needed.

For Canines for Heroes, \$1000 was donated to assist veterans in getting to and from appointments, shopping, and pay some doctor bills. When their Riders chapter was hosting the starting point for a Gold and Blue Star Service the Unit assisted with providing a continental breakfast. They hosted the Post Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner which always is welcome by their Legion families.

They sponsored three girls to Girls State in Tallahassee, spending \$4,222 on the program. As a result, one of their delegates won the Department Essay Award. Four mini-ABC classes were held throughout the year. They established their Constant Contact outreach program also, this year.

Respectfully Submitted

Harriet A. Martin
District 8 President

District 9

9th District Book of Reports 2022-2023

It has been a very interesting year for the 9th District Department of Florida. A couple of units were very slow on getting the memberships into department, but thankfully they are all doing great.

Unit 36 and the Legion helped served breakfast and diner after the flooding that occur in Broward County, they served between 25-30 meals for the residence in the area, most of these people lost everything that they owned including their homes. They are also reorganizing the unit.

Unit 92 in Hollywood started having breakfast once a month, and the monies raised goes to the Veterans and the community in the area. Sending 2 Girls to Girls State this year.

Unit 142 Pompano Beach started the year by donating truckloads of school supplies to a local elementary school, which came from Operation Homefront along with donations made at the post home. Held children's Halloween and Christmas party for the local children and Veterans grandchildren. They send coupons overseas to Japan, Korea, and Germany totaling \$484,979.79 Sending 2 Girls to Girls State this year

Unit 157 Margate the 1st Vice President stepped up to be President after the President and an Executive Board member were killed in an automobile accident. They are doing excellent with membership and just trying to get the unit members to move forward with our programs. Sending 2 girls to Girls State this year.

Unit 162 Deerfield Beach for women history month in March, they featured four women veterans with a synopsis of what they did in uniform and a picture of them while serving our country. They collected clothing and hygiene products for the homeless veterans. Thanksgiving time they created

a food basket for an active deployed member. Sending 4 girls to Girls State this year.

Unit 180 Plantation donated 120 backpacks full of school supplies for veteran's children. Once a month on Friday night they have a bake sales and the monies go to benefit the TA'S Tas benefit. They raised over \$1,200.00 for this event. In October save the TA's Tas is held and they raised over \$4,000.00 and the monies went to Broward General Hospital for veterans and their families. Sending 1 girl to Girls State this year.

Unit 321 Cooper City they are still during the Pen Pal program with the local elementary school with fourth graders. Food collection for "Forgotten Soldiers Outreach". Still doing the family bingo. Sending 2 girls to Girls State this year. Donations to the Joe DiMaggio Childrens Hospital in Hollywood.

Unit 365 in Sunrise has supported their Post 365 veterans with their participation in their special activities like the Police and Fire Fighters. Participation in Veterans Day, Memorial Day and making themselves visible with the community.

For God and Country
Gail A Dupuis
9th District President

District 11

What an amazing year District 11 has had. We got to honor one of our members for 50 years of service to the American legion Auxiliary organization. At a district meeting . The district Legion family honored Fran Carlton for her devotion to the American legion Auxiliary. We presented her with a 50 year Pin, an engraved watch and flowers and a tote. And a mentor pin, She has mentored this district for years . She has been a godsend to me this year. I don't think I would have made it through the year if it wasn't for her. She is there for most events and always willing to volunteer . giving guidance. Leadership . The members of district 11 made this year go by so fast. We played a game called steal the key. The Keys to success. The game was you went to a unit and took their key they had made and left a note , who had taken their key. And to get it back you had to donate \$20 to the Gary Sinise Foundation of central Florida. And it was to get the units to move around the district and meet the members of other units and find out what they do to raise money for the mission . And have fun. Which they did. They really enjoyed traveling the district.

Unit 20 in Belle Glade had an awesome year . They increased their membership by 8 new members. Putting their membership at 123.08% They started their year with 3 officers and after the ABC school . At their next meeting they filled their officers list. And they have only gotten stronger. They have been working with their Post family. They had a strong turn out at the school of instruction and ABC school. They were encouraged to attend the Fall conference in 2023-2024 seeing that most of them are new officers. Eager to learn the programs. I can see them being even more successful in the coming year.

Unit 20 held bingo 2 times a week . They held steak night once a month, which they rotated with the legionnaires and the Sons of the Legion sponsoring the dinner. Working together as a FAMILY . Continuing their legacy of Respect. The Family had a veterans day BBQ where they had a drawing for \$10,000 . And each received around \$8,000 profit.

With the money they raised this year. They helped the legionnaires. Bought and donated school supplies to the local school and they helped a member with medical expenses. They also donated the Department President's Project this year. The Gary Sinise Foundation. They made a donation to the District 9 Unit who lost a Unit President and her mother who was a past Unit President.

Unit 47 In Lake Worth. These members worked hard in their membership making it the highest in district 11 @ 129.73% in membership. They worked hard this year helping members in need. Having events. Basket raffles, dinners and more to raise money for the veterans. They participated in the Missing in America Project. Continuing their legacy of respect. They worked together with the legion family. Helping each other with their events.

Unit 62 In Stuart took off out of the gates like a racehorse. They continued their legacy of respect. They worked with their legion family supporting each other's events. They worked hard on their membership making it to 111.52% with 610 members. They have a lot of fun drawing their members in to support the mission. They had a wreaths across America ceremony at their local cemetery and raised enough money to place a wreath on the veterans graves. Helping Children at Operation 300. They got their legionnaires to dress up as women for hooters frolies.

What a great time that was. They believe in working together as a family. And have been there for their community and their veterans, They had events to help their members in need. Helping the homeless. These members are hard working. But most of all they like to make it fun and exciting. They raised money to help fill the homeless clothing closet at the VAMC. They also raised the money to purchase a new District banner , the American flag, new poles and stands which were in desperate need of replacement.. They sponsored the Snowball express Gala we had in honor of department President Jane Hardacre for her visit to the district. Their members opened their house up to the Department President , 2nd vice and department secretary. They did so much. They participated in the Missing in America Project. They packed boxes for troops overseas . Collected school supplies. And purchased hundreds of backpacks. Filling the backpacks with supplies and bringing them to their local schools

Unit 64 in Okeechobee continued their legacy of respect. They helped their post fix their building. They worked hard to help their families in need. They concentrated on helping the handicapped children. And helping the community. They worked hard in their membership to reach 104.35%. They have dinners to raise money. Their members believe in the mission. The unit president has been working hard for the legion family . They struggle to get the members to step up and be officers. But they feel strongly about the mission and will keep pushing forward to do their best to help the veterans and their community.

Unit 65 In Delray continued their legacy of respect. They were very busy this year . They have a deep passion for the mission. They word\ked hard to help their veterans. Helping at the VAMC in West Palm Beach. Volunteering at voting polls . Volunteering at the south florida fair. Letting the community know they are here for their veterans and for the community. Attending all meetings at ABC school and school of instruction. They held events to raise money for the Gary Sinise Foundation of Central, Florida. They made the most money stealing keys. For the keys to sucuess . In honor of Past President Shirley Frazer. They are a strong family. They made 100% on their membership. They have a lot of mentors in their unit . They helped a single veteran with 2 children. And paid for a one year membership for all three.

Unit 141 These members are determind to help their veterans and the community. In October they donated \$1,250 worth of clothing to the VA . In September they had a live and silent auction and raised over \$10,000 which They donated to Renewal Coalition, In March they had a luau which they raised over \$800.00 and donated \$500.00 to Tunnels for towers. They also made up a raffle basket for the snowball gala and they took in over 300.00 towards the Gary Sinise Foundation. They worked with their legion family to help their community. . They had members continue their legacy of respect , and worked to help their legionnaires and their events. They had dinner to raise money. They chose not to raise their dues to offset the increase in department and national. They choose to work harder to raise the money instead of passing it on to their members .

Unit 199 In West Palm Beach made big strides this year. They were invited back into their post family home. And they have become a true family . Working and supporting the Legion family. They believe in the mission. And their passion for their veterans and the community. They held food drives, toy drives. fairs, Veteran support events. Held dinner and dances to raise money for their community and for the veterans. They were recognized by the city as a family for all their hard work and dedication to the community. They worked hard on their membership making it to 121.52% . Their members are stepping up cause they want to be involved in all the amazing things they are doing for the veterans and the community.

Unit 268 Had a busy year. They spent a lot of time helping their community with food distribution monthly. They had events to raise money for their veterans. They participated in rider events . They worked hard with their legion family. They worked hard on membership . They had lost members to the pandemic and members passing. They participated in The Missing in America Project. They believe in the mission. They have events that reach their local families in need..

Unit 271 In the spirit of improving our community, Unit 271 participates in multiple standard events, such as sending christmas cards to those serving overseas, valentine cards for children in the hospital, giving blood and gathering school supplies. Our volunteer services include Memorial Day observances, providing transportation to veterans, serving on nonprofit boards, helping out Jupiter Medical Center's Cancer Center, Our Sister's Place thrift store. They participated in 2 of the missing in America Projects at Lake Worth Cemetery and are looking forward to the one coming up soon.

They also collect and donate to various organizations such as the West Palm VA Medical Center, Fisher House, and the Stand Down House Project to name just a few. We gave out gift cards to families in need. They also provided stuffed animals to policemen. In order to make these donations and pay for our other activities, Unit 271 holds fundraising events such as hosting Semi-monthly "Show me the Money" games, 50/50 drawings, collection cans in local businesses, and individual member donations.

The President says, It has been an honor to work with these hard working women of Unit 271; they are a group of giving and caring women.

Unit 277 These Members worked hard all year . They worked to help their legionnaires , They held events to raise money for the mission. They made 100.19 % membership. They have had bake sales,dinners and other events to raise money for their community. Members participated in The Missing in America project. They continued their legacy of respect and worked with legion families to help veterans and their families.. They had a member who participated in painting houses for the veterans..

Unit 288 Was hit hard with the pandemic , They lost 7 members this past year . They still worked hard to get to 71.43% in membership. This unit is a widowed unit. And most of their members are in failing health. The unit President has been working hard to keep the unit going .They meet by phone still because of their fragile health. They have been to district meetings .

Their heart is in the mission of the auxiliary. And that's what keeps them going. They meet at their local church to think of ways to help the community.

Unit 367 had a busy year . They made 125.93% on membership this year. is a very small group of women who are eager to do things for local veterans, their family and the community. The members who attend the meetings enjoy sharing the historical events in history that led up to the founding of the American Legion Auxiliary. They enjoy finding out about significant programs that have evolved over the years and making skits or art work to get the message out. Some of the members enjoy making meal tray cards for the VAMC to place on the meal tray to help spread the message of love that the women feel as they make 100 cards for each holiday they select.

Having the challenge to make the large key and decorate it in a colorful manner brought some talented Legion members to the task and helped the auxiliary be very proud to have something both groups could come together to complete. Helping the homeless vets is a project that we do in a big way at their December meeting. They buy almost \$200. Worth of food and \$200 worth of socks and underwear. Each member also brings 20 hygiene items to give to the homeless veterans. The VAMC does the sorting and distributing of the donated items.

During teacher appreciation week we get a large box and cover it with colorful materials. The members bring in wrapped candy,apples, oranges and notes expressing their appreciation for all that teachers do for the community. One school receives this gift.

District 12



DISTRICT 12

YEAR END REPORT

2022 - 2023

DISTRICT 12
BOOK OF REPORTS
2022-2023

Hearts was our theme and we really put our hearts into everything we did this past year. We began by re-uniting back into one big twenty-unit district to everyone's delight.

Our year began with a School of Instruction which we dedicated to reporting. The District Chairmen set it up similar to Workshop with posters and giveaways. We focused on reporting by handing out year-end report forms with instructions on how to obtain the hours and funding amounts. Then we turned the ladies loose to visit the tables and talk one-on-one with the chairmen. Everyone was given a pair of heart shaped sunglasses and we had a productive and festive learning experience.



We followed with two ABC schools, one on the north end and one on the south end of the district. Both were successful. Our district meetings were well attended and we provided speakers as well as some training in various aspects of auxiliary leadership at each.

The third quarter began with our District meeting on December 3. In order to promote the Gary Sinise Snowball Express, we had a guest speaker from Post 81, Bill Dodds, who is a volunteer with the Patriot Guards. He gave us a 20-minute presentation and slide show of everything that happens in Orlando the first week

of December with the children and surviving spouses of our veterans. It was very moving and informative and triggered a motivation for the units to raise funds for this charity.

The highlight of the year was President Jane's visit in January during which we visited with sixteen of the twenty units over four days.

Two big district picnics, one held at Wickham Park and one at Post 117, raised enough money to cover the costs for both the Boys and Girls State buses this coming June. The Auxiliary made and donated all the side dishes, served the food, and ran the raffles. The SAL did all the cooking and the Legion handled the refreshments and set-up. It was a successful cooperation of family members. It was also a rewarding effort in teamwork with our entire Legion family.



The individual units did incredible projects during the year, all employing hearts, hearts and hearts.



A “Stand Down to Stand Up” was held in Cocoa in January to provide clothing and personal items to veterans. 21 volunteers from several units put in 520 hours for this project. Veterans were helped to find housing, get to doctors’ appointments, help with signing up for veterans’ aid and VA Benefits. A hotel room was even provided for a veteran caring for his sick wife. One unit provided a celebration of life for a deceased veteran.

Unit 318 held various fundraisers for veteran causes, including a unit bake sale.



Unit 39 provided a “Ride-thru” luncheon for veterans and first responders. Cars and motorcycles drove through the parking lot where they were handed bag lunches as a thank-you for their service.

Unit 189 participated in the unveiling of the POW/MIA monument in Sebastian on February 26, which was sponsored by the SONS of the American Legion, who spearheaded the project in the city. The auxiliary also contributed to the funding.



Poppies were distributed at schools, malls, post offices and businesses. 7095 poppies were given out raising \$13,100.

Unit 81 hosted a Past Presidents Parley luncheon. Special guest was the first Department President, Charlotte Voorhis of West Palm Beach as played by one of our members.

Standing Rules were updated to reflect new dues structures to cover the increases in national and state dues.

For Public Relations, unit names and logos were included in advertising posted on social media and printed flyers. Unit 348 in Cape Canaveral has its name and logo printed on a banner that hangs inside the school lobby since they have an active partnership with the elementary school. When soliciting or championing auxiliary causes, members wore auxiliary apparel, pins and nametags.

For Children and Youth, six units participated in “Purple Up for Kids” during the month of April. Applications for two Good Deed Awards were submitted to National. One entry was from a teen who started a “Soles for Souls” program which provides shoes to disadvantaged children. Units provided school supplies, clothing, books, Halloween and Christmas parties and presents and collected Valentine cards for two children’s hospitals.

Juniors placed flags on graves, held bake sales, collected school supplies, helped with poppy distributions, volunteered to help with activities at their local units.

District 12 is sending 35 girls to Girls State this June.

District 12 is currently at 105.39% membership with 11 of 20 units over 100%.

For God and Country,

Char Kinlen

District 12 President





District 13

It is with honor, respect, gratitude and kindness that I submit this report as the District 13 President for the 2022-2023 year. I don't want Hurricane Ian to define District 13. There's no doubt that what we experienced and continue to experience is devastating, debilitating and massive. I wouldn't wish this on anyone. There is a certain sadness and depression as these leaders had to rehash what they personally lived through and survived. That said, there is also an underlying strength that emerged out of this catastrophic event. As President Hardacre coined the phrase of "Phoenixes Rising," I hope this report captures the strength we all possess as we continue to rise.

As Unit 38 stated, their year was both challenging and exciting. After the hurricane swept through Southwest Florida, they could fortunately open. They utilized and organized their meeting room as a staging area for supplies. They solicited donations, helped arrange transportation and communicated with every Post to find out what was needed. If you are ever in downtown Fort Myers, you must visit the history room they put together complete with a 1776 Navy Uniform.

Unit 90 in Cape Coral is highly active. When the hurricane hit, many of their plans changed. Though their post sustained some damage, it was their members, including the president, who suffered tremendous damage. Despite that, they never stopped their efforts and events they had planned. They served hot meals every day to 250 people. Team Rubicon stayed there for two weeks to help with Ian relief. In March the Unit manned two concession stands at the Boston Red Sox training home games. They served food and drink to the public and accumulated a tremendous amount of volunteer hours and money for their Auxiliary.

Unit 103 luckily had minor damage in comparison to many other posts. They invited Team Rubicon to use their post to sleep, shower and prepare food. Because of that, their Unit had no access to their Auxiliary room. In addition, Ian seriously affected the morale of the Auxiliary. Their president, First Vice, 2nd Vice, Chaplain, and Sergeant-at-Arms all resigned. Thankfully, they had a strong executive board that worked diligently to fill those positions and work the mission. They have been active acquiring funds with events like 50-50 raffles, Bake Sales, and selling Tervis tumblers. They continue to be a strong and profitable unit.

Unit 110 started off the year with a team building and planning meeting. They participated in many patriotic holidays including a Four Chaplain service. Even though their post was also destroyed, it did not stop them. With no electricity, they set the Tiki Bar up outside and worked their programs from there. They had everything from Bar Bingo, a Breast Fest, Trunk or Treat for children and gave

Christmas gifts for needy children at their annual Children's Christmas party. They had a food bank for victims of Ian, collected cleaning supplies, and cooked and served the local community. For a Unit that's closed, they've emailed over \$423,227 worth of coupons overseas and donated 3573 hours in total to coupons and services to the community.

Unit 123 in Sanibel has had one of the most challenging years ever in their history. Right after the brand new president was installed, their beloved treasurer died in childbirth. It rocked the whole community. The celebration of life had over 300 people in attendance. The President held her first meeting in September and then right after Ian destroyed the entire island. There was nothing to be saved. All records, files, checkbooks, Charters and guides were washed away or buried under mud. Within days of the storm, the Post commander resigned, but that did not stop this president. This mermaid would not give up. She wanted to learn and she attended every District function. Her focus continues to be on community service as well as serving their members and veterans as they navigate through this unprecedented event. Their biggest accomplishment has just been surviving and coming closer together as a community.

Unit 130 in Labelle was fortunate with minimal damage from Hurricane Ian. Members stepped up to assist anyone in the 13th district and Post 130 became a staging place for hurricane supplies. This unit has worked nonstop making money by using every holiday as a fun filled event. Their pancake and sausage breakfasts, lasagna dinners, cake raffles, etc. are always packed with people and are delicious. They also sponsored four blood drives throughout this year.

Unit 135 in Naples had 5 feet of water inside their post from Ian. Once again, they lost everything. Members all over stepped in to ask how they could help. From that day forward there were an average of 10 people a day at that post that offered their trade in painting, electricity, air conditioning and craftsmanship. So many members had lost their homes and this post became their second home. Many members had nothing to go home to and the sad thing was these people didn't need anything because they had nowhere to put it. There's still people in the same position today, but this unit makes sure they take care of each other. When they opened, the first thing they did was have a huge fundraiser for their sister unit 303. As they said, they needed to do something to start the healing process for them.

Unit 136 in St. James City worked every program right from the start. They had Blood Drives, dinners for First Responders and stocked the Pine Island Food pantry. After Ian hit, the Island was destroyed. All power was lost including every telephone pole. The day after, members were at the Post and all around the

Island assessing the overwhelming damage. With no power, they opened the patio to anyone left on the Island. They began cooking meals three times a day to 900 people. They turned their canteen into a distribution center and received donations from all over the District, State and Nation. By Christmas, they held Pancakes with Santa and gifted 64 children and 15 families on the Island who may not have had a Christmas to celebrate this year. Even better, Department President Jane Hardacre was there as a Christmas elf helping Santa pass out presents. They are open now and working the mission even stronger than ever. They are staying positive even though many people on the Island still don't have homes or cars yet.

Unit 192 was hit with great destruction leaving their Unit as well as many homes, including the Presidents, inoperable. Rather than give up, they zoomed their meetings. Though many of their programs were deeply compromised, they still did observe Teacher Appreciation Days and volunteered by reading to Edison Park Elementary school children in all grades. Many also volunteered in the local Food Pantry, the Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility and Renaissance Apartments for Sr. citizens to name a few.

Unit 274 on Fort Myers Beach had an incredible beginning before Hurricane Ian roared ashore and decimated the whole city, beach and Post. Eight feet of water left the post in shambles. Amazingly, they held meetings at various restaurants to figure out their direction. The Auxiliary has purchased all new tables, chairs, and barstools for their post. They seized the opportunity to take on a concession stand at JetBlue Park for six weeks. It was a lot of hard work, but with great volunteers and determination, they did it. They all proudly wore their Friday red auxiliary shirts and earned a lot of money. Even with all the heartbreaks and devastation, they are still there for the veterans, children, and community, and they will continue to strive on.

Unit 303 in Bonita Springs was going strong working many programs and making money for their charities. Hurricane Ian brought a 7 foot storm surge that destroyed the Post, that area and many parts of Bonita. The Auxiliary came together and unloaded pods and pods full of cleaning supplies, canned goods, pet food, diapers, etc. to help their community in need. In some of the harder hit areas, they brought supplies to people. On October 1 a crew, including 12 auxiliary members, began gutting out Post 303. Camp Bonita set up a tent outside the Post and handed out 700 meals a day. They also set up a mini grocery store for anyone needing supplies and the Unit helped keep their shelves stocked. The VFW in Bonita Springs graciously offered to share their home in this time of need and have allowed them to have Tuesdays and Thursdays devoted to the American Legion. They are working nonstop raising money to rebuild their post but are still in a long line of building permits. A

bright side in this Unit occurred when their commander was picking through the slime and discovered 303's Auxiliary Bell. He took it home and polished it to its original beauty. Travis Perkins, webmaster for the National American Legion Auxiliary magazine, came to the VFW to photograph and write about this story. Unit 303 was featured in a full page article in the February edition.

Unit 323 in Lehigh acres started their year off great. They came back from Convention full of energy. They were working many successful fundraisers and raising money for all their charities. Then Ian struck. Thankfully, their post home was not affected because they became District 13's Command Center for all donations from all over the state and nation. Every person pulled together. There was no rank there. Department officers including our Department President Jane Hardacre were continually there bringing supplies and helping distribute everything back into the community. If another post needed something, they called 323 and someone got it there. If you ever wanted a lesson in networking, you should've witnessed that. They also continued fundraising to make sure the District 13 family was taken care of. That said, they were still able to fulfill their obligations.

Unit 336 in North Fort Myers had a very busy year despite many challenges. When Hurricane Ian hit that area, the Post fortunately was able to open for business soon after. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Auxiliary was not able to receive and hand out supplies at their post. That did not stop this Auxiliary. They ended up partnering with the Suncoast Community Center which is in an impoverished area of North Fort Myers. Many department leaders delivered multiple trailers full of supplies to that Center and the Auxiliary worked nonstop to make sure their community got the necessary supplies they needed. This unit has never lost sight of the mission and has diligently worked every program.

Unit 351 in Tice, Florida is referred to as the Small but Mighty unit. They stepped up and went above and beyond by becoming a hurricane relief supply distribution center. They unloaded trucks, trailers and vans and organized food, goods, supplies, etc. They faced challenges in their community and in their own unit with electricity, downed trees and trying to get to destroyed and devastated areas. When there was no room left in their building, one member rented a "Pack Rat" for the unit to use. This Unit's biggest fundraiser is their annual Family Carnival to benefit children and veterans. It is designed around the children of the community, including foster children. This unit is also known for their decorated Pringles cans, where they fill them with candy and assorted goodies to send to deployed troops.

In summary, this Hurricane did dominate this report. It had to. The destruction and devastation to our area has left scars that will take years to heal and rebuild. The resolve of these Units still holds rock hard. At every installation I showed everyone the letter U. I said this is going to represent YOU- Unity, Unified, United, UNITS! We accomplished that and more! This is but a sample of what District 13 performed this year. I would say the greatest accomplishment we did was survive together. Never have I seen humanitarianism, teamwork, dedication and support from the District, State, and all over the nation come together to help us rebuild from such a tragedy. This district has defined the words found in our Preamble including service not self, Americanism, loyalty, and devotion to others. Lastly, without Department President Jane Hardacre at the helm, things would have been different and we would not be where we are today. Her monthly visits gave us the boost, the motivation and the drive to carry on the mission. That woman is our PHOENIX.

For God, Country and Kindness

Jan Farrington, District 13 President

District 14



American Legion Auxiliary

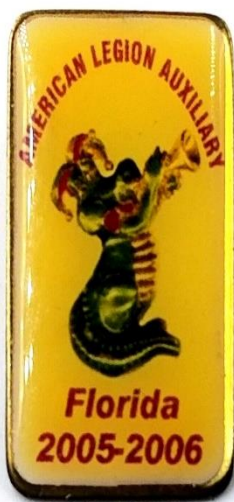
Department of Florida

District 14

YEAR END NARRATIVE REPORT 2022-2023

Submitted by Nancy Casquarelli

Theme: In the spirit of President Jane Hardacre's theme of Continuing Our Legacy of Respect, District 14's mascot is "Balls" to honor Past Department President Edie Herrington (2005-2006) "Let the good times roll" (rolling in the membership) theme. PDP Herrington's "Mardi Gras" theme was a homage to New Orleans unbreakable spirit after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.



Left: Past Department President Edie Herrington's official pin

District 14 encompasses to both Miami-Dade and Monroe County, we have 11 Units in total (Unit 28 Key West, Unit 31 South Miami, Unit 43 Homestead, Unit 67 North Miami, Unit 98 Coral Gables, Unit 133 Palmetto Bay, Unit 154 Marathon, Unit 168 Key West, Unit 333 Key Largo, Unit 346 Miami and Unit 374 Key Biscayne) however only 9 submitted an annual report. There are several Units in District 14 that didn't submit formal reports and many neglected to report their hours, dollars spent and fundraised etc, which will make this

report technically inaccurate. Note: several Units are still limited by their lack of experience with technology, but many Units are rolling with the times.

Americanism – Members of the 14th District said the Pledge of Alliance, sang the national anthem, participated in Patriotic parades and Wreathes Across America and attended flag burning ceremonies with local Boy Scouts. One Unit held a flag folding demonstration for Post-Grad students at South Florida Autism Charter School. Units hosted Veterans Day potlucks and attended Memorial Day ceremonies. Unfortunately, no Units participated in the American Essay Contest.



Above: Unit 154 Marathon Veterans Day Parade



Above: Unit 154 President Katherine Cassin and members of Unit 154 Marathon at Veterans Day parade.

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND – At all district meetings we talk about AEF and we make sure that our members are educated about this great program. Unit 154 Marathon had two members who needed help and they got through the AEF. Unit 154 Marathon also raised \$3200 for the AEF by having a Halloween party, raffles, selling off donated items at the Posts' Flea Market also the Post 154 donated a portion of their weekly games earnings to the the Auxiliary for AEF.

CHAPLAIN- Our Units opened and closed with prayers. And 241 sympathy, get well, thinking of you and birthday cards were sent. Unit 43 Homestead participated in Wreaths Across America and Unit 98's Chaplains visits and volunteers with vets at Miami Jewish Health. Units draped their charters 8 times and participated in Memorial Day, Veterans Days and attended members funerals.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH - Many Units in District participated in toys for tots events, units organized brown bag event for local children in Key West in December where Brown Bags are filled with toys and candy and hamburgers and hot dogs, chips and drinks. Units raffled off gift cards and bicycles, Collected and distributed toys at the Wesley House, set up a tropical Santa's selfie-booth at their Post for the kids and parents took pictures, Unit members printed out the pictures and served brownies and chocolate milk to the kids. One unit organizes a monthly lip synch battle event

inviting all the local children living near the post to participate. Units promoted Red Shirt Fridays and Purple Up day by setting up Military table at Sugarloaf School. A unit purchased several copies of the ALA Halloween Safety coloring book from Flag and Emblem and gave them to South Florida Autism Charters School Trunk or Treat event where the books were set up at tented coloring stations. All of our Units in the 14 th District love our Boys Scouts. Many troops use American Legion Posts as their meeting spaces. Our members are always willing to support them at any of their events at the post and encourage them anyway we can. Recently Unit 98 gave a good citizenship citation and a special silver eagle cuff bracelet to 3 Boy Scouts who recently earned their Eagle Scout rank with a silver eagle bracelet cuff and gift cards. Units participated in back-to-school events giving out backpacks filled with school supplies to local kids and teens. Units participated in other local holiday events like Easter Egg hunts and creating Easter baskets and Passover baskets for kids.



Above: Post and Unit 98 Coral Gables Commander and Unit President presenting Good Citizenship Citations for Boy Scouts who earned their Eagle Scout rank.

COMMUNITY SERVICE – District 14 reported 36 volunteers, volunteering 2352 hours. Raising over \$13,220 and over \$950 in in-kind donations. However this number isn't accurate as many Units didn't properly report their volunteer hours or earnings from various fundraisers, raffles etc.

Unit 28 Key West sent a donation to the local Special Olympics. In October to April, Post 28 show movies and Auxiliary provide a snack bar during the movies for guests. We average 2 times a month and bring in about \$300 after the split. They are well attended on Saturday night. They end as the snowbirds go north. - We had a big yard sale fundraiser and bake sale with the SALs. It was advertised and they split the earnings. October 15, 2022 was Unit 28's annual cancer walk. Members from Unit 154 Marathon came dressed in pink from head to toe and in tutus and tw as a great event. The Halloween party with dinner afterwards, a silent auction, bake sale, pumpkin raffle, and sold jello shots. For the Halloween party they found bicycle and it was then hand painted and named a "Conch Cruiser". We sold raffle tickets. We had a 50/50 and a costume contest. November 2022 - We set up a box for toys for the Wesley House. Unit held two Mary Ellen's Vibrator races – Mary Ellen's is a restaurant bar that hosts weekly charity event where battery powered vibrators race their way down a custom-made wooden track. People bet on the fastest or slowest racer – it a very popular.



Unit 31 South Miami – This Unit donates monthly to community food banks total: \$5,000. \$350 of school and art supplies to a South Miami Childrens program. Donate \$500 to Gary Sinise Foundation. They are active members of their Post usually there are between 10-15 members help out during their events. Unit 31 donated \$5000 in toys to the South Miami Police Department.

Unit 43 Homestead sponsored the Posts New Year's Event and donated \$100 gift card to a local family.

Unit 67 North Miami - Unit manages a weekly flea market at Post 67, unit members volunteer time every Saturday from 8am to 1pm. All donations that do not make it to patrons or whomever needs personal items, we send to the Miami Mission, VA, or Red, White, and Blue thrift store. Unit 67 works alongside their SAL's helping them out during their events like their drive thru Toys for Tots event (past President Members donated a grab bag for volunteers at this drive thru that contained a gift card) and big Pig Roast event. Every Sunday the Auxiliary provides breakfast at the Post. \$250.00 spent on 4 families for Thanksgiving boxes towards one Army, 2 coast Guard, and one Family in need. Unit 43 provided a back to school breakfast for teachers and staff (\$75 people) at Greynolds Park Elementary.

UNIT 98 Coral Gables - Unit 98 we have 2 very active volunteers in the community who volunteered 20 hours at the food bank at St Augustine Catholic Church and volunteered over 300 hours at South Florida Autism Charter School (SFACS). Both members proudly wear their ALA membership pins and red hoodies with the ALA emblem whenever they volunteer. Unit members gave rides to Post members to and after general meetings and have taken and picked up veterans from the VA when the veteran didn't have a ride. Unit members clean or decorate the Post for events or holidays, members are always there ready to lend a hand when the Post needs help with painting or fixing. Unit members provided desserts at every general meeting.

In November, Unit 98 raised \$1000 at their Post and donated it and several cans of food to the St. Augustine Catholic Church for their annual Thanksgiving food drive



Unit 133 Palmetto Bay – Unit members helped out the Post, with \$400 in kind donations and 110 volunteer hours.

Unit 154 Marathon – Unit 154 serve Breakfast every Sunday at their Post. Following Hurricane Ian they collected much needed supplies and delivered them to Suncoast Community Center in Ft Myers, FL. Unit 154 Marathon did a total of four trips to the west coast to deliver much needed supplies. Unit held two different fundraisers for families dealing with medical bills due to cancer and participated in the cancer walk event with Unit 28 in Key West. Also Unit 154 participated in a monthly flea market to provide financial support to local families battling cancer. Unit 154 reported spending \$345, donating \$350 in-kind and 1786 hours volunteer by 15 members.



Above: Members of Unit 154 Marathon at a fundraiser and delivering hurricane supplies to Ft Myers.

Unit 168 Key West – Unit members participate in events alongside their Post like their annual Brown Bag December event where the Auxiliary contributed to providing food and toys for the bags that distributed to the local community. Unit 168 also helped their Post in their Easter events providing colorful eggs and decorated Easter baskets. During the Holiday Unit 168 raffled off gift cards and a bicycle. Unit 168 holds a monthly “lip synch” battle event to raise funds for their programs.

Unit 333 Key Largo – Unit 333 held a Chili cook off benefiting Veterans at Crystal Health and Rehab, (nursing home), check (\$250). They also participated alongside their Post in Football squares sold for super bowl \$425 to post (co-host) and \$425 to Auxiliary. In February the Auxiliary Valentines Day flowers, candy and appetizers provided to the Post and then the Unit had their End of Season Soiree “tacky tourist themed” fundraiser event benefiting the Veterans Sailing Association.



Above – Unit 333 Key Largo presenting a check to Veteran Sailing Association

CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS – We had 8 Unit who updated their Constitution and By Laws to reflect membership dues changes. We discussed at district meetings the importance of keeping C&BL's up to date.

EDUCATION – Units in District 14 donated school and art supplies, backpacks, gift cards, made breakfast and donated herbal teas and a plug in teapot for Teacher Appreciation Week. Units donated ALA Halloween Safety coloring books to a local schools Trunk or Treat event and gave more than 200hrs to local needy kids. Unit's donated \$1500 to local scholarships and \$20 given to the Memorial Scholarship.

GIRLS STATE – District 14 are sending 9 young ladies to Girl State 2023! Units hosted spaghetti dinner fundraisers, asked donors, performed bake sales and sold jello shots. The units selected their delegates by hosting interviews and choosing their best candidates. 2 Units even held their interviews together and then chose the best candidates to be delegates. 65 volunteer hours spent on 2023 Girl State Session and 1 volunteer from the District 14 will be attending the 2023 Girl State session. District 14 just had our Girl State orientation and this year Girl State delegates from the Keys were able to attend the meeting via Zoom from the Keys at Post 154.

Pictures below taken at District 14 GS Orientation April 22, 2023



Units invited their Girl State 2022 delegates to return and give their reports. We are proud of Unit 98 Coral Gables delegate Julianna Correa for being elected Lt. Governor of by the 267 delegates at Girl State 2022, she also earned the Samsung scholarship. Julianna returned several times to Post 98 to give her report, to help serve dinner and sell raffle tickets.

Pictures below of Julianna Correa



Historian – District 14 has 11 Units, 3 submitted a report. Units in District 14 celebrated getting their 100% memberships. Units held several events to raise money for the ALA programs like AEF and Girls State and also for Veteran Sailing Association, Ronald McDonald House and for individual members suffering from cancer. Units worked alongside their Legionnaires and attended Memorial Day events, Veterans Day parades, American Legion Birthday, toy and food drives during the holidays. Units went to various community events and at schools and represented our organization with pride. Units took pictures of their events and posted them to their Facebook pages. Some created newsletters.



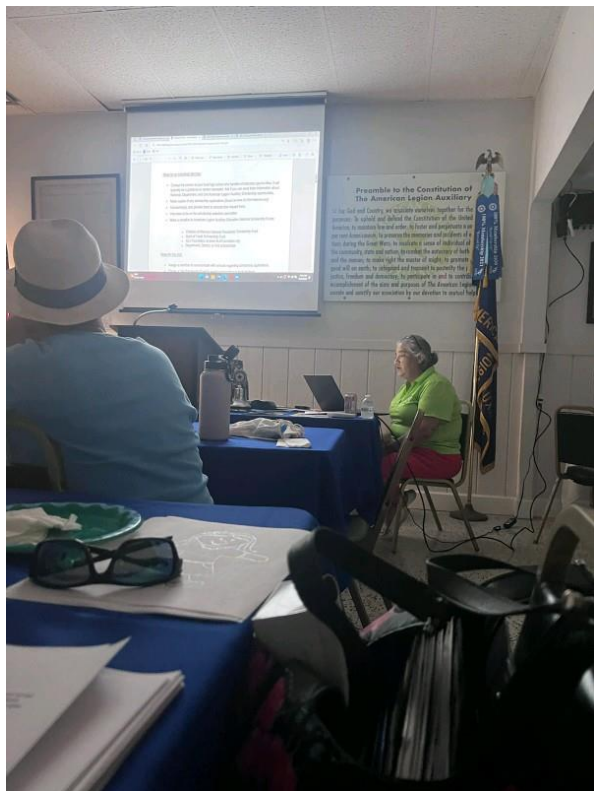
Above: Unit 154 Marathon at a Celtic Festival in the Keys



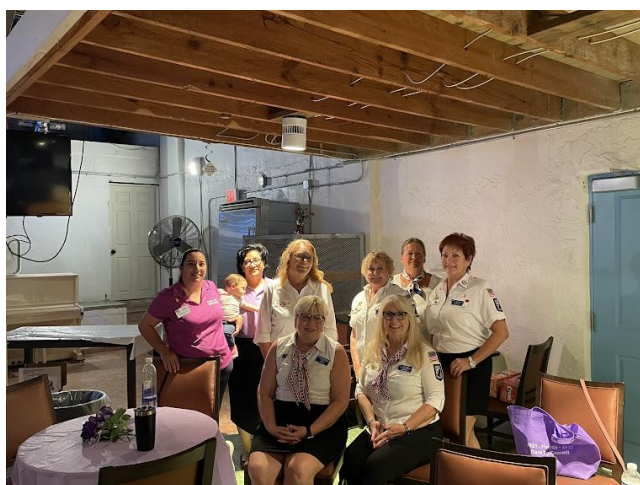
Above: Unit 98 Coral Gables donated a cake for the Legion's Birthday 2023

Juniors – There 11 Units in total in District 14. 3 Units in District 14 have Juniors - however only 2 Units reported. Unit 67 has 2 Juniors but they are not active. Unit 133 had a Junior and a SAL participate in patches (JR5, SAL7), community service, poppies and VA. 2 Juniors went to ALA FL Department Convention 2022, 2 Juniors attended workshop, 2 Juniors went to the ALA FL Fall Conference, 2 Juniors attended Unit and District meetings and 2 Juniors from District 14 plan on going to ALA FL Convention 2023.

Leadership - Of the 11 Units in District 14, 10 of them I have been in active communication with. Of those 10 Units all reported to me verbally that they have talked with their members about the duties of their chairman and officers. Though only 4 Units submitted Leadership report forms. Most of our Units read and reviewed their CBL and updated them. Over the past 6 years (give or take) Units 168, 333, 374 and 346 haven't submitted reports of any kind or have gone to any District Meetings, Fall Conferences, Conventions, School of Instructions, ABCs or DCC's (or Girl State). There are many reasons for this: Hurricane Irma, the Pandemic and members either moving away or passing on. With that in mind, many of the members left are just beginning to learn about this organization, how it works and their place within it. So it's with great joy that I report that out of the 11 Units in District 14 - 9 of them submitted an annual report. 8 out of the 11 Units participated in District meetings, School of Instruction and ABC. Many of the members - mostly officers - this was their first ever ALA District meeting and left confident and inspired - so much so they submitted their reports by the deadline. There are two Units who are struggling but with the help of Past District Presidents Stacy Cusano and Nettie Goggans and Past Department President MKP, they helped them navigate through it. With confidence I can say that 11 of the 11 Units in District 14 work the mission and give so much to the community. Every ALA member I met in District 14 is passionate about the Auxiliary and want to put their best foot forward and continue our legacy of respect.



Above: District 14 School of Instruction 2022-23 @ Post 98 Coral Gables



Above/below: District 14 Meeting – Keys edition @ Post 168 Key West



Above: District 14 ABC – Keys 2023 @ Post 28 Key West

Legislative – ALA members of District 14 follow the Department of Florida’s ALAFL Legislative Facebook page and see it as a valuable resource. Units paid 6 personal visits to local elected officials, subscribed to 2 elected officials e-newsletters, sent 4 emails and letters to National elected officials. Units posted petitions from the American Legion national website on their Facebook pages in support of the PACT Act that would help veterans exposed to burn pits during the war.

National Security – Units spent 46 hours creating and sending 40 troop boxes (\$1000 postage). Units also participated in Operation Homefront volunteering 36 hours and with in-kind donations amounting to \$1250, helping out Military families by volunteering 240 hours and donating \$725 and \$136 in-kind donations. Units also donated \$300 and volunteered 15 hours for FEMA/CERT and volunteered 6 hours and donated 6 pints of blood at 6 different blood drives.

Past President Parley – District 14 mascot for 2022-2023 is “balls” to honor Past Department Edie Herrington (2005-2006). Her theme was a Mardi Gras “Let the

good times roll”, her colors were green, gold and purple and her theme song was “Proud Mary” by Tina Turner cause we were “...rolling in the membership”. For District 14 membership parade at Fall Conference, we dressed up like it was Mardi Gras morning and danced down the aisle. For our upcoming Convention, PDP Herrington asked District 14 to play a second line song instead of “Proud Mary” and we’ve chosen the song “Do Whatcha Wanna” by The Rebirth Brass Band. We’re all going dress up for Mardi Gras again and throw light weight plastic balls into the crowd. Unfortunately, not many of our Units reported participating in Past President Parley. But I know for certain that many Past Presidents in District 14 are always willing to mentor and go above and beyond for their Units and this organization. Special mention to Past District Presidents Stacy Cusano, Nettie Goggans and Linda Barichak for all their guidance and support.

Poppy – Members love Poppies!! Units in District 14 promoted the Poppy Program with Poppy letters, cans and at National Poppy Day and Memorial Day events. Unit 346 Miami attended a Remembrance Day ceremony at Woodlawn Park cemetery and laid a poppy wreath at a Soldiers memorial statue. Unit 154 Marathon engaged with the public by setting up at their local Publix. Unit members dispensed information and distributed Poppies. In total District 14 distributed 2700 Poppies and raised \$3888 for Poppies.



Above: Unit 346 Miami @ Remembrance Day event at Woodlawn Park. Pictures posted by the City of Miami



Above: Unit 346 Miami. Pictures posted by the City of Miami

Below: Unit 154 Marathon – National Poppy Day @ Publix

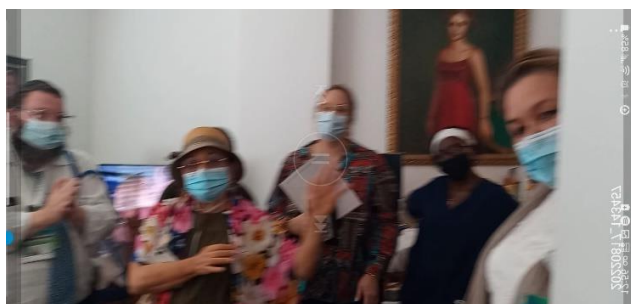


Public Relations - Out of the 11 Units in District 14, 6 Units: 43, 98, 133, 154, 333 and 374, maintain a Facebook page, a FB Group page or a FB Family page with an estimated 1534 followers. Most Units post their events and accomplishments on Facebook. Unit members wore their ALA branded hoodies and shirts, including Jane Hardacre's C.O.L.O.R. pink polo, some wore their vintage ALA jewelry. We spread the word about the Gary Sinise Foundation and we hashtagged #colormethere as often as we posted or emailed. Members were interviewed on local television TV-88 in the Keys at the Veterans Day and Fourth of July parades wearing their ALA branded shirts and hats.

VA&R – Units in District 14 assisted, visited and supported hospitalized veterans at Miami Jewish Health and members did a fundraisers and donated \$250 to Crystal Rehabilitation Center. Unit members gave ride to veterans to and from their doctor’s appointments and to and from the Post after general meeting, brought meals to vets donating over 240 volunteer hours and over 548 miles. Units created light weight blankets for vets at a local rehab in Key Biscayne. Units 333 and 31 helped organize their Commanders Celebration of Life memorials at their Posts. Units provided retired veterans at their Posts with gift cards, embroidered hats and specialty cakes for the holidays. There are several full-time caregivers to veterans in our membership throughout District 14, what they do for their veteran family members and friends is amazing.



Above: Unit 333 Key Largo presenting a check to Crystal Rehabilitation Center



Above – Unit 98 Coral Gables Chaplin w. staff and Rabbi Levi at Miami Jewish Health presenting a certificate of appreciation and flowers to Navy vet Robert Kellerman

District 15



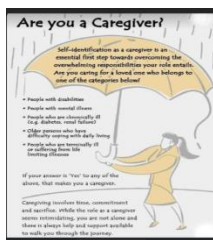
May 1, 2023

District 15 Book of Reports for 2023

The Units hit the ground running right after Department Convention. Like most all other District Presidents my year started off with performing Installations for those Units which requested them, and presenting awards to those Units who couldn't attend the convention. It was great to see the enthusiasm for #COLORMETHERE from the Family units and friends. Of course there was boot camp and workshop to attend, gathering more knowledge and meeting the new Department officers and chairman. My head was spinning with all the information I was learning and new faces I was meeting. Then it was time to hold my School of Instruction on August 20th. The District chairman did an excellent job presenting the programs and new action plans and it was well attended by the Units, with over 50 members in attendance. I took full advantage of being a proud Delegate to the National convention, and loved meeting the attendees from other states. I felt like a sponge. A joint family District meeting was held on September 24th. We were pleased to have a quest speaker, Eric Diaz, present information about the Gary Sinise Foundation and Snowball Express (to the entire Joint meeting) and also have the new Department President Jane Hardacre attend. Michele DeGennaro, presented Conflict Resolution at the 2nd District meeting and 2 Gold Star Mothers informed us of the history and symbols on the Gold Stars/Blue Star Mothers for the 3rd District meeting. The next District meeting will be the DCC and is scheduled for May 20th. The District was expanded and welcomed a new Unit 108, who received their Charter at Fall Conference in November and hopes to add another new Unit 418 soon. The District is blessed with great program chairmen, who especially think outside the box. Three of these chairmen, Andrea Sherman, Dawn Davis and Tammy Zell approached me

with the idea of having a Legions Got Talent Contest, to raise funds for the Presidents Charity. I said run with it, and they did. We had 4 units which held auditions, raising money with a progressive 50/50 and raffle baskets. What a huge success for the first try and next year will be bigger and better. Hopefully this idea will grow to other districts. Everyone had fun with President Jane's COLOR theme and Continue Our Legacy of Respect. Looking back to last May, the District had the honor to host a few days with the National President Kathy Daudistel, what a role model. She visited numerous Unit Auxiliaries and presented Caregivers awards. Below is just a BRIEF summary of some of the activities and accomplishments of the Units.

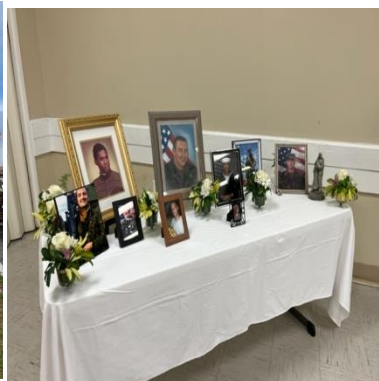
From last April to present, we worked the mission and are here "for the cause, not the applause."



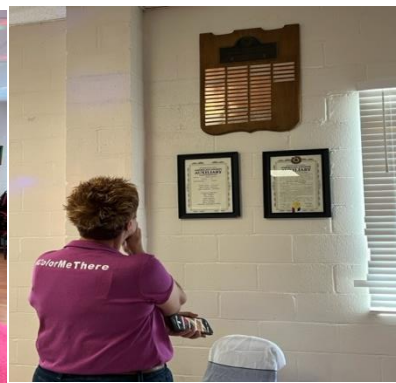


Unit 5 – USS Tampa Unit 5 held major events like Wreaths across America and Memorial Day services celebrations with luminaries and flags. They held a Gold Star Mothers tea and attended all District training and meetings. The unit hosted Operation Homefront gathering school supplies, raised funds to donate 100 thanksgiving turkeys for active military families and clipped coupons for national security. And that’s not all, they donated over 100 baby hats, helped support boys and girls state transportation for the District, sent out troop boxes and helped District 13 recover from Hurricane Ian. This Unit provides two District Chairman.





Unit 99 - Nothing Reported. Andrew Jackson Unit 99 collected and delivered school supplies and assisted the Post in a Veterans Day luncheon. They hosted President Jane with a luncheon where she and learned the history of the Unit and Post and helped assemble Easter Baskets for Veterans at Heron Pointe Health and Rehabilitation center. Their decorations are always impeccable and Unit is always inviting.





Unit 108 - This is a new Unit, Lutz-Land o' Lakes Unit 108, chartered in November 2022. While this was officially the beginning, they started by attending training, doing Community Service and cutting Coupons for National Security programs long before then. They invited the local newspaper to a coupon cutting event where they had over \$10,000 in coupons, and received added support in clipping coupons from the local AARP chapter. The Unit helped donate clothes and shoes to Dress for Success; participated in Poppy donations; flag burning ceremony; Four Chaplains; and Vietnam veteran's dinner. They created a dessert table for Post Christmas party and assisted the Post in a golf tournament. On Wednesday they pickup and deliver bread to 1st responders; senior centers local churches; and Tampa homeless ministry. All members were excited and jumped in with both feet. They even managed to invite the Department President for a brief visit. Upon learning more about the Auxiliary programs, a unit member donated the funds to send a girl to Girls state and another is planning on attending as a city advisor. The Unit has taken advantage of the knowledge of the District chairman to learn more about the Auxiliary programs and never afraid to ask questions.



Unit 111 – Nothing reported. Seminole Unit 111 has graciously hosted all District meetings including the DCC and participated in Legions Got Talent, sending 3 people to the finals. They held a High Tea. They struggle to do fund raising activities such as yard sales as the Post is open to the public, holds public yard sales every weekend and the hall is frequently booked for public social events. The Unit provides our Girls State Chairman and hosted Girls State Orientation, providing drinks and snacks for the delegates, alternates and family. They continually strive to support the Auxiliary mission.





Unit 138 – Hugh Gilbert Strickland Unit 138 has C.O.L.O.R.ed the lives of our Veterans, Active Duty, Children and Youth, and Community as they worked our mission all year. They are the largest unit in the District. The Unit is always there to support the District and hosted the School of Instruction with over 50 people attending and hosted a Peacock Themed Tea Party visit by the ALA National President, Kathy Daudistel, last May

They communicate using various social media outlets, targeting all age groups, including use of a monthly newsletter, (designed through smore.com) reaching over 1200 people just in the last year. Because of this newsletter, they have had an increase in membership renewals and are at 113.69% for the year. They work with the Post Family to cross-post each of all events, always wearing auxiliary branding. They also have submitted and been published in Canvas six times this year.

In addition, they have taken #colormethere to a new level! Every event decoration, flyer, and piece of apparel that we encounter is festooned with bright colors. Their events specifically align with President Hardacre's theme and embrace them with color. Their newest recurring event, "Munch and Meet," meets quarterly. This is used as a recruitment and mentoring social for both new and old members. During that time, they create a #colormethere craft, eat lunch, and share Auxiliary knowledge. All units are invited. They hold an early bird membership drive with each renewal the member receives either a fish or steak dinner.

The post family opens its doors to host the District Picnic, a fund raiser for Boys and Girls transportation. They were the first Unit to hold a Legions Got Talent audition round, supplying 3 talented members to the finals, and were the

hosts for the final round of Legions Got Talent finals. As part of her District visitation, President Jane was honored to be a judge in this event. The Auxiliary holds monthly breakfasts to support Girls state.

Their Military Childs table was viewed by many and they celebrated Mother's day by holding a POPPY themed painting with a twist event. Whether it's Halloween, Christmas, Easter or back to school they do something for the kids and the community. Thanksgiving is no exception. When Hurricane Ian hit they were right there, supporting District 15 and their community. They supplied Thank you cards for the veterans at Baldomero Lopez written by the local elementary school. This Unit is proud to have two District Chairmen.





Unit 139 - Nothing Reported. Dale Mabry Unit 139 had some struggles with their newly elected officers, but with some guidance they came to a workable solution for all members. They now have been able to move forward with all their books in order. They support the Post by helping with dinners and bingo. President Jane was invited to call bingo during her District visitation.



Unit 147 – Nothing Reported. Gunn Hwy Unit 147 also struggled with new officers but was able to move forward. This Unit is small but contributes greatly to the food pantry. Some members make and donate beautiful blankets, which get delivered to Baldomero Lopez State Veterans nursing home. The Auxiliary helps in

the kitchen during bingo. President Jane was honored to call bingo for one of these events. Keep up the good work.



Unit 148- Alafia Unit 148 started their year helping active military by visiting Veterans care giving Support program. They held a Valentine Masquerade dinner to raise funds for the President's charity, the Gary Sinise/Snowball Express.

They attended numerous services at Veterans Memorial Park and gave out or sent thank you for your service cards to our military, they even invited President Jane to the parks Welcome Home to Viet Nam Veterans ceremony. Unit 148 graciously hosted the District ABC School and provided the attendees with a fabulous lunch. They were also one of the four Units that held auditions for Legions Got Talent, sending 3 members to the finals along with their own cheering section.

The unit makes donations to Child Services Charities; Department Scholarship Fund; and Military families, while the juniors made Happy Fathers day cards to Post Family members. They are big into mentoring with 5 members being recognized.

They participated in cookouts by making side dishes for 4th of July, Labor Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving, and donated food to Liberty Manor for Thanksgiving.

Along with the community they cleaned up Hackney Cemetery and placed new flags on Military graves. They continue to keep members informed by maintaining their Auxiliary FB page or updates to the Post newsletter or teleprompter. This is one active Auxiliary that says #colormethere and continues to have fun while working the mission.



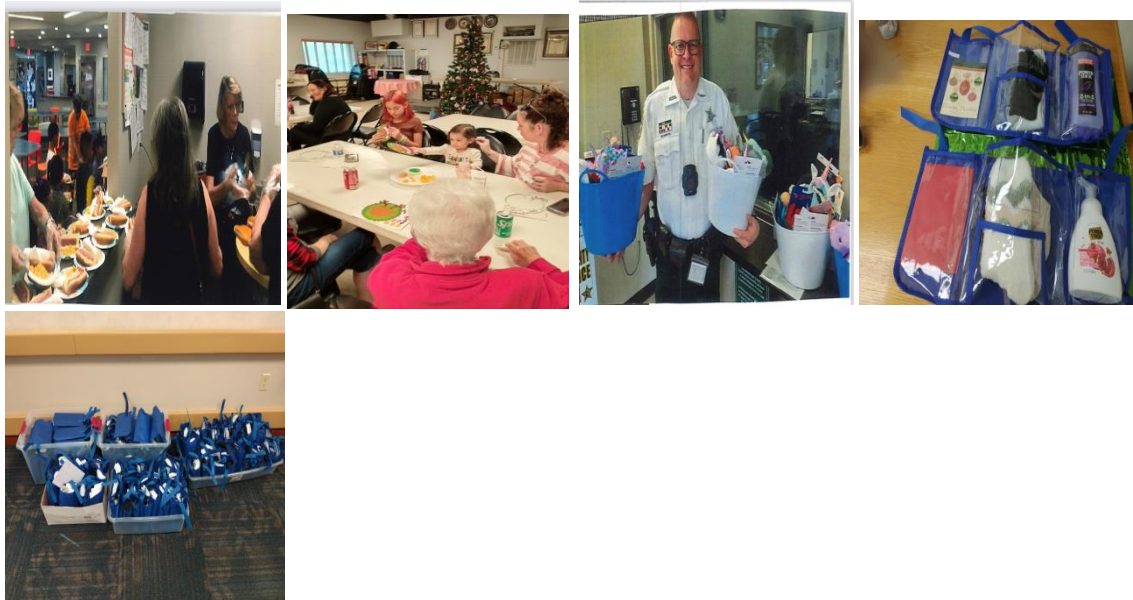
Unit 152 – Town and Country Memorial Unit 152 is extremely active within the Post family unit and community. They participate (in large numbers) in the only Veterans Day parade in Tampa and stand a flag waving line for 9/11 remembrance.

The Post family hosts the Past Commanders/Past Presidents dinner annually, as a fund raiser for Boys and Girls state transportation, and the Auxiliary is involved preparing and serving the meals. They prepared and served food for a Father's day breakfast; invited 1st responders to a free 9/11 breakfast; and 82nd Airborne Gold Star luncheon. They made donations to 82nd Airborne 'Holiday meals for troop'; Angels unaware; Hillsborough Education Foundation; Children's welfare Foundation; Camp Boggy Creek and more.

They host 3 kids' parties a year and help the local Boys and girls club. Yearly they collect school supplies with each month designated to a particular item such as hand sanitizer, crayons, tissues, etc. all going to title one schools.

They recently held a dinner to honor Female Veterans, with 21 veterans and 41 non-veterans attending; collect quarters for "Operation Dignity" to assist veterans at the Laundromat; and made Christmas stockings (for wheel chairs, with a special one for female patients) for Baldomero Lopez State Veterans Nursing Home .

This Unit also held auditions for Legions Got Talent, and sent 3 highly qualified members to the finals. During their April meeting they held their initiation of 17 new members. This Unit has a member who holds both a Department and District position.



Unit 167 – Nothing Reported. Carmicheal-Lagrange Unit 167 is a small unit, with only 15 members. The unit is patiently waiting for a permanent home to be constructed. Some members did attend Department convention, school of instruction and some District meetings. They did do an installation and during their visitation I was able to socialize with many members as they invited me to participate in some games. One of their members is the Department Commander, while another member is an active Girls State city Advisor.



Unit 186 – Charles E Murray unit 186 welcomed several new members at our November initiation ceremony. We postponed our March 2023 ceremony to November, 2023, since only one of their new members was available to attend the March Initiation. Due to circumstances existing at our Post and beyond our control, our new membership applications and member renewals are down . To assist in this effort they participated in the Weeki Wachee Swamp Fest doing a membership drive, along with other American Legion posts.

Their National Security Committee sent coupons valued at \$194,352.67 to our overseas troops and participated in the POW-MIA Ceremony. Poppies were distributed at several locations for Memorial Day and Veterans Day with donations being used to support our veteran causes. The Poppy Chair also presented Certificates of Appreciation to all the businesses that allowed us to distribute poppies at their locations.

The Education Committee awarded two \$500.00 scholarships. They assisted with preparing backpacks for veteran children. Working with the Hernando County School District, Students and Families in Transition, in May the Children & Youth Program prepared and provided baskets and backpacks containing personal items, blankets, towels and washcloths, socks and snacks to thirteen Homeless Graduating Seniors. The Program also conducted the Military Child Table Ceremony in April 2022.

They collect school supplies, which were distributed to needy students at a local elementary school and share this with the assistance of Unit 248. They also conducted their Annual Christmas Tree Project, and Food Giveaway, providing gifts and food baskets to 8 families and 33 children, by providing gifts to 26 veteran children.

They sent 3 girls to Girls state and invited them back to honor them to celebrate Veterans Day.

Community Service program volunteers provided transportation to appointments and shopping, meal preparation and delivery, dog sitting, Hospice care, volunteering with Post 186 and other non-profit organizations and cleaning and beautifying a local cemetery.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation worked closely with Unit 248 on the Veterans Pantry. In addition to collecting and donating food, cleaning and personal items, they prepared food boxes for delivery to Hernando County veterans working with HUD/VASH. Flags were placed for Memorial Day and Wreaths for Christmas at Florida National Cemetery – Bushnell.

Our Unit member, Fran Finley, chaired the Four Chaplains Ceremony held on February 19, 2023, along with donations to 4 Chaplain Foundation.

They are proud to have three of our members serve at the District Level. They were honored to host Department President Jane Hardacre at a luncheon on March 24, 2023 during her Fifteenth District visit. At the luncheon we were privileged to have President Jane present the Good Deed Award to our Girl Scout honoree, Letty Lockhart. The President also helped fill toilette bags with personal items for veterans and make pocket flags.





Unit 248 – Nothing reported. This is the smallest unit in the District but does maintain a FB book page which shows many contributions to Veterans Deport and the HUDVASH program.



Respectfully submitted

Eileen Wilson
District 15 President

District 16

**No Report
from
District 16 President**

District 17

At the previous Constitution Conference, it had been determined that District 17 will be a team. The District flourished. The following will give proof to the statement.

The veterans residing at Woodlands Towers Retirement community in Deland had a dream to provide funds for *Wreaths Across America*. They approached the Towers Director, Lori to begin the planning process. Because of their prior events and generosity, Lori contacted Donna Taylor Grimm, President and Lynn Delaney First Vice President of the **American Legion Auxiliary Unit 6 in Deland**. The dream was about to come true for their veterans. On October 29, 2022, President Donna and Vice President Lynn along with Director Lori partnered with the veterans for this event. From 2 pm to 4 pm hundreds enjoyed food, drinks, music and a raffle of over 50 baskets and gift cards. Over \$5,000 was raised and planning for the next year had already begun. The Veterans who had a dream are excited to continue this communal event with the American Legion Auxiliary. In addition, the Auxiliary hung up a lottery tree at Post 6 to raise funds for *Wreaths Across America*. The total going to WAA was a whopping \$7,000. The Unit attended the Ceremony at Deland Memorial Cemetery and laid the wreaths. In addition, Vice President Lynn Delaney represents the Auxiliary at meetings of the Deland Historic Trust and the Persimmon Hollow Women's Club. She is the Chair of the PHWC Military Appreciation Committee. ALA Unit #6 surely shows a positive presence in the community.

President Donna and Vice President Evelyn met with Jill Clark, a local author of Children's Books to receive a donation of books to be given out at Christmas time. Unit 6 was fortunate to send two delegates to Girl State. Blue Lake Elementary School received supplies with a net worth of \$500.

On December 2, Unit 6 hosted a special celebration dinner for a presentation to AFROTC and a SEA Cadet. Each Cadet received \$1000 and the entire Legion was in attendance.

Cowboy Night, Sock Hop and the July 4th Cookout helped the auxiliary purchase a motorized scooter for Post 6 Veteran, Paul Blanken. Along with a gift of love to the Legion of \$1,000, the auxiliary donated an additional \$1,000 to the Legions Homeless Veterans/Project Vet Relief fund.

Celebration of Life Events included decorating, flowers, food and whatever else was needed for the JD Stinnett family of Brenda Graham, Patricia Martin and Tami Beaudoin, all of which are families of the military.

A generous donation of \$500 went to Orlando Fisher House and \$500 to Gary Sinese Snowball Express to help military families.

On Christmas Eve, the auxiliary prepared and served a Christmas Dinner to Veterans and their families.

This unit exemplifies what an American Legion Auxiliary is about. Service not Self.

The “45 Bears from Unit 45” was a year-long Children and Youth project for **Bert Hodge Unit 45, Palatka, FL**. Headed by 1st Vice Esme Coward, 45 bears were sewn using the Camp Boggy Creek approved bear pattern. Most of the fabrics were scraps donated by wives of veterans. About \$30 were purchased and the donated value was about \$120. Stuffing was also donated by members of the Auxiliary, valued at about \$180. No money was used from the Unit’s funds to make the bears. Each bear took about six hours to make for a combined 270 hours.

On February 25, 2023, the Auxiliary held a bear stuffing party attended by eighteen people ranging in age from four to 78. Most were members and some were from the community. Florida Department President Jane Hardacre, Unit 45, and District 17 President Eleanor Amato attended and stuffed bears. Breakfast was provided by the Auxiliary for Jane, Eleanor and District 17 Commander Bruce Howe at a cost of \$15.50. Lunch was served at the end of the stuffing party, a contribution estimated to be \$45 from the members. The breakfast, bear stuffing, lunch, and short visit to Palatka’s Veteran’s Village took about four hours.

On March 27, twelve members including one prospective member, delivered all 45 bears to Camp Boggy Creek in Eustis, FL. Four members drove the carpool, with an estimated \$35 fuel cost for each driver. The group enjoyed an extensive two-hour tour of the facility by camp worker Maddie. Each member was given a Camp Boggy Creek t-shirt at the end of the tour. The group enjoyed a late lunch at Sonny’s before returning to the post. Leaving from Post 45 in Palatka, the trip took about nine hours.

The project photos and description were sent to the local newspaper, The Palatka Daily News, and was featured in the Post 45 newsletter. Summary images will be used in our advertising for future events and membership drives. Photos were also published on the Unit’s Facebook page and are made available for download on the Auxiliary Unit’s computer. Planning and public relations took an additional eight hours.

The Unit also celebrated past presidents at their Past President Parley Tea Party. They recognized ten past presidents of Unit 45.

Every third Saturday of the month the Post offers a Carry-Out Chicken dinner at the Post or BBQ Ribs dinners at Hitchcock’s Grocery. The Auxiliary had a Dessert Sale table in conjunction of the fund raiser. The desserts are donated by members and bagged for sale. At this fund raiser members, a board of activities is on display to entice customers to see what they do and how they are involved with veterans and the community.

President Pat Andries’ husband Greg handcrafted and donated a Praying Soldier and donated it to the Auxiliary for a fund raiser to benefit Honor Flight. Tickets were available and a check was donated by President Pat to First Coast Honor Flight representative Ryan Bauman.

Auxiliary members in costume supporting our community Halloween party with games and handing out candy. Christmas time, the unit decorated one of 20 Christmas trees at the Beck dealership showrooms. It is decorated with all handcrafted ornaments and topped with the Dove of Peace. The public viewed the trees and purchased tickets to vote for their favorite tree. Proceeds benefited the Heart of Putnam Christian Service Center.

Terry Cromer presented a Power Point presentation to the junior students in Crescent City. She answered questions and handed out information. This was also presented at other schools in the area. What a good way to get anxious qualified students.

Junior member Haylie and Audrey Schoolcraft handing out Valentine cards and treats to their National Guard service men and women stationed at Camp Blanding.

The Auxiliary adopted five veteran and remembered them at special events. They gave Christmas donations to each veteran. Patriotic mugs, flags and goodies were given to the adopted veterans.

How many do this? Esme Coward and Richard Bair practice lifesaving procedures after receiving a new AED.

All this is done with a total of 28 members.

Cassin Young Memorial American Legion Auxiliary Unit 267, Ormond Beach didn't stop with COVID and closed to volunteers at Emory Bennett Nursing Home. For Christmas the auxiliary made stockings for all the veterans that included cologne and a few dollars for a total of \$1,492.02. They also donated art supplies which included wooden cars, paint and brushes to keep the residence occupied and hopefully break the boredom. Now that the facility is open, the auxiliary started their visits with the well-loved Horse Racing game. They are making new friends as some of the pass attendees are no longer with us.

Memorial Day always brings out the Patriotic spirit. A remembrance service was held at Rockefeller Gardens in Ormond Beach. The Daytona Beach Concert Band played once again and dignitaries were in attendance. Auxiliary Unit 267 Patriot of the Year was Toni Ellsworth, an extremely deserving individual to always give 100% to our veterans and military.

At the Barack of Hope, located in Daytona Beach for homeless Veterans transitioning back into society, receives a monthly donation from Publix Supermarket of breads and goods brought to them by Unit 267. The unit also has a basket in the post home to collect needed items for the residents. Total amount donated was approximately \$726 with 4 volunteers.

The unit also walks the Granada Bridge and around Rockefeller Gardens and back with Ormond Strong—3 miles to make people aware of the deployed and dying for our freedom.

Deltona, Unit 255, not having a post home, started the New Year on Saturday, January 7, at the Crosswalk Church. At the meeting their junior member was present to discuss her time at Girl State. Financially the unit wasn't able to sponsor so the generosity of Unit 17, New Smyrna Beach did but as an alternate from Unit 120. This shows the team work in District 17. Happy Dollar is held at every meeting. Couldn't wait to see this! If a member wants to give an update on anything or someone, the member throws in money and then speaks. For example, "Steven is now cancer free". Any amount is acceptable. The money collected goes into the Unit auxiliary emergency fund.

There is a new medical center in Deltona that the members would like to know more about since their spouses are patients of the center. After contacting Tony Viana, the event coordinator for the VA Facility in Daytona Beach, it was established that the Deltona VAMC is in fact under his responsibility. Well the unit went to the center, set up a comfort table and handed out legion brochures and VA Benefit brochures along with snacks and drinks. Tony went there to see what the unit set up and said he was so surprised of the enthused people that manned the table. So now they have a place to call theirs and do not have to take the trip into Daytona Beach.

This group of members also meet and care for the Veterans' Museum in Deltona beach where the Post will be building a home next to the museum. Every raffle or cake sale the unit helps the Legion with funds towards a home.

One of the unit's largest events is Wreaths Across America. They spent a total of 60 hours combined on fundraising and time at the event. This 17 member unit raised \$5,870. for WAA. They had a total of 587 wreaths of which 2/3 of the wreaths were donated for the cemetery.

Several of the members attended the Hero's Honor Festival. A member donated a flag and mailed the flag to the fallen soldier's family. Members of Unit 255 help people in the community with several tasks, varying from taking them shopping, to taking some to their appointments. Some members help by donating to community services and food banks. They also attended several city commission meetings and best of all the West Volusia First Responders Valor Awards Ceremony.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 120 Holly Hill works all the programs as a family. They include SAL, Legion and Riders. On President Jane's visit the auxiliary presented her with a check for \$2500 for Snowball Express which was raised by selling tacos along with the \$1000 from the Legion and \$1000 from the S.A.L. for a total of \$4500. Jane's remarks said it all: "that's a lot of tacos".

Unit 120 came on board when they found out that so many of our veterans were now living in hotels after the two storms. The food pantry at the Daytona Beach VAMC was in desperate need of food items. They immediately responded to this need and also to the need in south west Florida. Many of the members brought in items as they wanted to

participate. Two large tables were set up in the canteen. On Taco Tuesday, a microphone was provided to tell the crowd how are veterans needed us as a Post and family. In no time the tables were filled to capacity. After several trips to the clinic, we were told that the clinic was filled but they did not stop. Cub Scout Pack 327 was also advised and the scouts did a great job collecting many more food items. Deputy Janie told event coordinator Tony Viana at the VAMC that this is who we are and what we do – helping our veterans.

The auxiliary purchased acrylic pain, brushes and art items so the residents of Emory Bennett had something to during the lockdown. Small craft items such as turkeys, Christmas ornaments that could be painted and the residents can give them to family and friends as presents.

Unit 120 can be found at Daytona Memorial Park on May 28th at 7 am sharp to place the American Flag at each every veteran's grave for Memorial Day. It is simply amazing to see the people give up sleeping in to show their patriotism and once again, done in record time. Many of us were able to climb to the very top of that huge hill while others stayed on the bottom placing flags. Cub Scout Pack 327 was also present, residents of Barracks of Hope and Gold Star Mother Cathy Heightor. The entire Legion family was there to participate. We also went back the next day to retrieve the flags for the next event.

Unit 120 has a huge presence for Wreaths Across America in Ormond Beach. The Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts participating with the ceremonial wreaths. As each wreath is placed they say the veteran's name to always remember him or her. It was a perfect day with the Florida sunshine. Auxiliary Unit 120 made a donation of \$5200 from taco Tuesday to purchase wreaths. That's a lot of tacos!

Herbert D. Gibb American Legion Auxiliary Unit 259, Debary started the year off with a Welcome Back Tea at which packets containing poppy seeds, dirt and a pot for planting were distributed to all members and guests. The unit is creating a poppy garden around the Post's flag pole to include pots of poppies and a stone walkway.

The unit ordered 250 poppies which were distributed at the Deland Veterans' Day Parade. Chairman Judi Nordaas and Secretary Penney Friedrich walked among the parade viewers distributing poppies and explained the meaning of the poppy to many people including several children. During Presidents' Week, Secretary Penney Friedrich read "The Poppy Lady; Moina Belle Michael and her Tribute to Veterans" by Barbara Elizabeth Walsh to second grade classes at Debary Elementary School.

The unit was involved at both Blood Drive held at the Post home and even donated two pints of blood. They set up the Military Child's Table for POW/MIA ceremony. Cutting out coupons wrapped up 66 hours with a value of \$50 and postage of \$100. Troop boxes were sent. Operation Homefront totaled 10 hours with an in-kind donations of \$660.

Unit members Penney along with President Carol teamed up to be the District's Legislative Chairman. They subscribed to capwiz.com and three elected officials newsletters. They sent 18 emails to National elected officials but did not receive a response. In addition to poll watching, they went to meet & greet and attended a Town Meeting. They focused on VA Benefits for National Guard & Reserves, VA Benefits for WWII veterans and the Second Amendment. These gals brought the Legislative program to District 17.

Unit 259 is working with Debary Elementary School and Joyful Noises Preschool to educate children about veterans and historical holidays. Prior to Memorial Day, the unit read to K-2 & Pre K students from the books "21 Steps", "Klinger", and "The Wall". November's read was "Veterans" and "Veteran Heroes in Our Neighborhood". In February they read "The Poppy Lady" and "Presidents Day". A Veteran went along with them to speak with the children. They also handed out small American flags to students. They collected school supplies for local schools. Unit 259 spent over ten hours and \$100 on their Education program.

Debary membership actively support the veterans. Over 60 hours were spent answering phone calls at the Post from veterans and their families as well assisting walk-ins veterans in need. Veterans were provided with contact information for help. An auxiliary service office is a great idea! They maintain a food pantry from which we can provide bags of food for veterans who come to the Post looking for assistance. The Unit works with the Volusia County Veterans' Court to provide work and supervision for veterans who must serve court ordered community service. Members have worked over 25 hours with the veterans. Members provide transportation for veterans to medical appointments, provide home meals to veterans and their caregivers, brought food to nursing homes, Volusia County Mental Health for Homeless vets and the Wellness Center for veterans' birthday parties. More than 30 hours were spent with transportation and \$212. The unit assist and supported hospitalized or nursing home veterans. Four volunteers spending ten hours and \$183.00 suppling smiles on the patient's faces. Four volunteers also assisted transitioning veterans in the community.

The unit worked with Operation Homefront to provide 660 toys to the Deland National Guard Armory families, the Volusia County Foster Care Program, Toys for Tots and children of VFW veterans. At Hanukkah, they again did storytelling regarding the origin of Hanukkah to local families. At Christmas, a local elementary school sent thank you letters to their Legion veterans written by the students.

Bingo! Bingo! Bingo – yes. The unit runs the game to help the post raise money for the upkeep of the building. What a unit - with only 25 members.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 115 Palm Coast donated 40 hours to Operation Homefront and 20 hours to Homeland Security. The poppy drive was Thursday May 26 at the Flagler Beach Publix and on Friday, May 27 at the Hammock Beach Publix from

9:00 am to 3:00. They designed a poppy cover for their homemade contribution buckets and also donned poppy aprons purchased through Flag and Emblem sales. Their table was decorated with a poppy runner. They handed out 400 poppies assembled from a poppy kit. There were 13 Auxiliary and Legion members that helped with the distribution of poppies with a huge success bringing in a total of \$2291.00. The funds were used for the VA Wellness Centers veteran's birthday party and the sponsoring of a veteran's family of five through the Veterans Giving Tree program at Christmas.

It was a sorrowful start of the year at the **Lake Helen, Casadaga American Legion Auxiliary Unit 127**. Mary Roberts a 67 year member had passed away. Mary was well loved and mentor many in the tiny town. A beautiful and solemn celebration of life was held and attended by many from the community.

During the year, the unit communicated with the Volusia County Beacon Newspaper. The Beacon wrote an article on what Unit 127 had accomplished, their goals and what the American Legion Auxiliary does for veterans and the community. The unit always wears the American Legion Auxiliary apparel in the public. Basically, they wear a patch so it can be used on more than one top.

One of the fund raisers that the unit does is the Veteran's Harvest Dinner in October. They also have an annual yard sale and collect money during the Poppy distribution. They are well received in the community.

Through ceremonies, patriotic events and annual memorials, Unit 127 reminds citizens of the many sacrifices the veterans endure.

They have upgraded their Post home by applying a new coat of paint and resurfaced the Post's floors. These improvements were made available through successful events, contributions and donations from local businesses, the community and the Lake Helen Boy Scout Troop # 590.

They truly are a force to be reckoned with.

Whenever a space is needed along with convenience, **American Legion Auxiliary Unit 17 New Smyrna Beach's** post home is accomadating. Starting with School of Instruction, a wonderful buffet of pastries, juice and coffee was served to all attendee at no charge. Then Girl State Orientation was held at the post with snacks and beverages.

When President Jane visited the district, the auxiliary provided a menu for President Jane to choose what she wanted. Of course they had karaoke and President couldn't resist. She sang her favorite Tina Turner song, President Jane received a check from the unit for her special project "Snowball Express". President spoke about this organization and the canteen was crying while putting their hands in their pocket and collected a generous amount of cash for "Snowball Express".

Alfred Uncle Bud Cowgill American Legion Auxiliary Unit 361 South Daytona received names from Atlantic High School of seven girls interested in Girl State. An email was sent to the girls outlining the program and questions so they can prepare for the interview.

The annual Pig-N-Purse event once again took place. Purses and contents were safely stored offsite. Volunteers stuffed the purses and a person independent of the Auxiliary placed a \$100 bill into 2 separate purses. Seven pigs were placed in individual purses and those winners were able to choose from door prizes. Proceeds from the event went to President's project Gary Sinise Foundation Central Florida Snowball Express charity.

Arrangements were made to make a wreath to promote Poppy Day. Also a ribbon/poppy pin will be made to help promote the program. The Trust Bank next door will be contacted to get permission to set up a table for poppy distribution.

The unit had a shadow box made to hold scratch off tickets valued at \$300. Tickets were sold at \$5.00 per ticket for a chance to win the pot. One winner gets the entire contents of the shadow box.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 285, Edgewater, received a phone call from Edgewater Public School for help with feeding students breakfast. The response was absolutely - Amazon to the rescue. Cases of nonperishable items were purchased and sent to the school. In addition, the school gave them the name of families that needed help during the holidays. The 4 volunteers spent 50 hours and \$1200 to help. They purchased items for the children including a bike and helped with the purchase of lumber to fix the damage to the house.

The ALA Unit 285 and their family participated in the Edgewater annual Christmas parade. Approximately \$200 worth of candy was tossed to the children anxiously waiting on the sidelines.

The local Dollar Tree Store customers donated over 1850 items of school supplies and over 2075 Christmas toys to distribute to military children and those in need. The Edgewater Public School and Indian River School were excited to receive the loot.

The National Guard Army armory located in Deland was given a barbeque rib lunch with the fixings by the auxiliary unit and post commander. They also received canned goods and nonperishables for their kitchen. This was the first time that we were able to get involved with the National Guard and thanks to District President for making the arrangements with the Post Commander.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 270 Port Orange found out that the National Guard did not have paper goods to serve meals on. Well, that is unacceptable. Jan, a member of the unit went to Cosco and purchased plates, napkins and flatware in bags at a total of

\$200 so they could enjoy their meals. Department President Jane and District President Eleanor delivered the paper goods to the armory. The supply sergeant greeted us and was so surprised to receive the items as he was getting ready to order what they needed.

Barracks of Hope is always in need of items because of their turnover. A unit from the west side of our state donates handmade quilts and blankets to us to give to our veterans in transition. They are so beautiful and it is like Christmas morning when we deliver the blankets to them. The unit also supplied Barracks of Hope with pillows and bed sheets and pillow cases for 24 beds. The unit supplied the barracks with an entire thanksgiving meal groceries and Christmas meal groceries so that they did not have to go eat at the soup kitchen for the holidays. They also set up their pantry with can goods and non-perishables. But of course, they like their goodies and soda. They were surprised to get a couple of gallons of milk and cereals.

Junior member raised \$70 to donate goods to her local animal shelter. The unit voted to give her an additional \$230 for a total of \$300 to go shopping for the Edgewater Animal Shelter. She had a ball shopping and then visited the animals.

Operation Homefront and Dollar Tree Store invaded Port Orange. A collection of items for Christmas and also school supplies was donated to the National Guard's children and also to Port Orange Elementary for their needed children.

Several boxes from the Dollar Tree Store went to HUDVASH (which is new) at Daytona VAMC along with a donation for the veterans giving tree. Unit 270 adopted a family of four and the kids had to be happy with the items under the tree.

An highlight of the unit's year was the nomination and presentation of a Good Deed Award to Venerina Castanza. This young lady set up a nonprofit organization for the children that were victimized from the recent hurricanes that destroyed their possessions. She knew that adults received compensation from insurance companies and FEMA for the loss of their possessions but what happens to the children that lost their pride possession, i.e. toys, books and crafts. She received help from the community and was able to supply over 100 toys to 40 children. She also provided jump time at SkyZone where the event took place and served pizza and cupcakes to the children and their parents. The families that could not attend, Venerina delivered the toys to their homes. A nomination was sent to National and was approved. The icing on the cake was when President Jane visited the District she attended the Sunday Brunch and she presented the Award to this young lady. Venerina also received a hefty check of \$500 to contribute to her organization. The Brunch was also attended by State Representative Assistant to present Venerina with a proclamation from the state.

District truly stepped up this year and did a fantastic job. There were a few hiccups but they were cured or about to be. Hard work but happy to help.

For God and Country

District 17 President Eleanor Amato

Unit Member
of the Year
2022-2023

Unit of the Year

2022-2023

Auxiliary
Emergency
Fund “AEF”



Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Department of Florida

Georgia Mackenzie

Year End Report 2022-2023

As we all know Florida has been hit hard this year with the hurricanes, flooding, and tornadoes, but we have risen above all of the disasters we have had by pulling together as units, districts and families. This is what we are all about.

The districts have done their diligence to get the information out to units about the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF). Many districts had School of Instruction about AEF and what you need to do to apply for Department and National assistance. Some have laid pamphlets out in their Post homes for information. Units also did explanations at general meetings to help get the knowledge and how the program works for their members.

Others made sure that the program was discussed throughout the whole year whether there was disaster or not so that they could keep it on top of their minds to help out in good and bad times.

During this year of working the program it was reported that approximately 1281 people had spent time in working the AEF program and helping out members of their units and others.

Florida has raised approximately \$52,503.74 with gifts in kind of \$14,000.00 of gift cards, water food, diapers and other supplies needed.

These funds were raised by doing Candy Drives/Sweet Corner in the Canteen area, Many Breakfasts, Lunches, and Dinners. There were raffles, baskets of cheers, a Sock Hop, a Kentucky Derby, and a Turkey Feather Pull. Not sure what this was but it does sound very interesting, must learn more about it.

Other things that were done to help AEF State and National were 4 Unit members purchased the Nation AEF pin.

In some Units they helped their members that were hit hard by the disasters with totally to about \$11,600.00 dollars.

One Unit knew they had members who needed help but just would not ask for help so the Executive Committee wrote a check out to pay her rent at Christmas time to help them.

Several units in District 12 had members who needed help in bills so they paid a few bills so they could make it through the trying times. One unit paid for travel arrangements for a member who had a family member dying.

As we all know District t3 was hit very hard and many pulled together to help so they could rebuild and start again. So many people come together to help this District. It just goes to show you no matter where or who we are we stand together to help out.

Our Mission:

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

With all of this said you can see we do stand up for all who are in need.

Thank you, this concludes my report for the Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Americanism

Americanism Year End Report

Department of Florida

Robin Watrous, Chairman

Florida truly showed it's red, white and blue American pride this past year! The very first official act of yours truly was to introduce the theme of the Essay "What Does Patriotism Mean to You?" As I spoke those words I could see the eyes of the entire room light up. I knew then that we were going to have a great year.

As part of the Department of Florida action plan we introduce a "tally sheet", which I have attached with this report, to help the members keep track of the number of times they did things that would apply to the Americanism Program. All I can say is WOW!!! The following numbers are truly amazing, but I am quite sure still not totally reflective of the actual numbers because on the report sometimes were ambiguous.

The Auxiliary members of the Department of Florida said The Pledge of Allegiance 20,125 times.

We sang the National Anthem 4,355 times

We flew our flags at home for a total of 65,828 days.

We attended 769 Patriotic themed parades.

We conducted 396 Education programs in Schools.

We attended 424 Flag retirement ceremonies,

We attended a total of 14,719 other Patriotic events such POW/MIA, Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, July 4th, and Patriots Day events.

We spent 1,871 hours and \$21, 267 supporting our Active Duty personnel.

We spent 6,689 hours and \$24,261 supporting military families

We spent 4,337 hours and \$3,615 promoting the American Legion Auxiliary's values on Americanism through the essay contest and educational programs.

We spent 6,478 hours and \$19,406 promoting patriotism through Unit involved community events.

We spent 4729 hours and \$3,217 promoting Auxiliary participation in American Legions Americanism Programs.

The one thing about the Americanism Program that resonates with me is that EVERYTHING we do for Americanism crosses over into another program within the

Auxiliary, and that is why I believe these numbers are truly incredible, because I know they have been divided across the board.

What exactly did we do this year you ask? Well sit right down and I will tell you.

Almost every Unit reported flying the colors of our Nation at home, wearing Red on Red Shirts Fridays, wearing our Brand when participating in events, and most importantly we VOTED!! Many Units also reported celebrating all of the Military Birthdays through out the year,

Memorial Day events included ceremonies and services honoring our servicemembers that made the ultimate sacrifice. Many Units reported working the Home Posts to place flags on the Graves of all those that served.

One of the most monumental events of the year was Hurricane Ian. One of the Districts in Florida had every Auxiliary and home Post affected and several completely destroyed. The Battle cry was sounded and before the winds and rain had ceased Units from all over the state were stepping up and asking what do you need and how can we help. Everything from water, food, clothing, household goods and plain old fashion cash were contributed. Many of our members, including our Department President Jane Hardacre were on hand to help with the clean up and deliver supplies.

One Unit in particular was featured in National Legion Auxiliary Magazine was destroyed and during the clean up their Auxiliary Bell was found covered in slime and meticulously restored to its former glory. The only other thing that remained of the post following the clean out was The American Flag that had been hung from the Rafters. Now, talk about Americanism!

Oh and by the way, Hurricane Ian did not stop a single Unit in that District from continuing the work the Auxiliary does and had 100% reporting!

Back to school season had many Units collecting school supplies and giving them to the kids, many of them included flags, coloring books and other items in red, white and blue. One unit asked the receiving children to sign thank you cards that were then sent to our deployed troops.

During football seasons many of our home Posts would have the games on the Television. Many Units reported standing and saying the Pledge or singing the National Anthem at the start of the game.

Many Units reported doing Halloween events that included passing out pocket or small flags as well as patriotic coloring books to those attending their events.

OH!! Let me tell you a little bit about some of the educational sessions that were reported.

One member wore her Marine uniform while teaching pre-school aged children about what the Flag represents and to properly care for and dispose of it.

Another classroom project had the kids making flags on canvas using the handprints. What a creative idea!

There were a number a class room lesson about the Constitution.

In conjunction with Patriots Day, one unit took time to learn about the USS New York and that fact that it is constructed out of nearly 24 tons of steel from the Twin Towers.

Veterans Day brought us parades and celebrations. One Unit in particular created a "Ring of Honor". As a fundraiser, they made bows out of red, white and blue ribbons, added a Poppy and the name of Veteran and placed around the outdoors flag pole.

Many Veteran's Stand Down events were held with our members providing breakfasts, lunch and information on our programs.

One Unit is creating a history room that contains relics, artifacts and a history of the American Soldier. They literally have their own little museum, what a great concept!

Christmas time not only gives us visions of sugar plums dancing in our heads, but gives our Members another reason to dig deep into their unconditional support of this wonder program. Many members supported and contributed to "Wreaths Across America". One of our Units in particular has a program called "Wreaths for Fallen Heroes" that has them raising funds for to purchase and place wreaths on graves that may have been overlooked. They typically do this the day following WAA ceremony.

Many Units decorated Christmas trees with American flags, and red, white and blue items. They wanted to make sure Santa knew that there were especially good this year!

Another Unit reported making Holiday meal cards with inspirational messages on them for a local VA Hospital.

The "Star Spangled Crew" from one Unit played Santa's Elves and delivered toys to over 200 kids.

Other Units donated to Toys to "Operation Homefront"

Numerous Units reporting attending farewell and welcome home celebrations for deployed service member and Honor Flights, as well as funerals of our Veterans.

The Special Olympics were not left out our endeavors as we help feed the athletes and gave them small flags on sticks that they waved proudly around the event.

I am proud to say the in Florida Americanism is strong and true. We wear our colors and brand proudly, We sing our Patriotic songs loudly, We thank, honor, frequently feed our veterans and active duty military. We step in and up to help whenever and wherever the

need arises when no one else will. We teach our youth how to honor and respect the flag, the importance of documents such as the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights. They are our future we can never let them forget the history and fundamentals that make this Nation the PROUD and PATRIOTIC Nation that it is.

Respectfully Submitted

Robin Watrous

Americanism Chairman

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Florida

Chaplain

Children & Youth

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT

Robin Burk, Chairman, 2022-2023

The purpose of this program is to protect, care and support our Youth, especially those of military families.

Many units took the time to provide Valentine's cards to the children's hospitals. Hundreds of cards were delivered by our hospital representatives and a huge thank you goes out to everyone who came together for this rewarding event.

Many units submitted nominations for the Youth Hero and Good deed awards.

Most every Unit uholiday parties for the children and donated to underprivileged children's charities. Units donated to Operation 300, which is a Florida 501C organization providing an all-expense paid week of camp for children from all 50 states who lost a parent while deployed.

There was also a huge response calling for the collection of pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House.

With 16 Districts in the the Department of Florida, we were extremely busy this year with Children & Youth projects. Below, I share some of the highlights from the Units.

District 1: Units were Purpled up for our Military Kids, celebrating with a "Purple Up Pasta Bar". Proceeds were donated to the local Tyndall Academy. Labor Day was celebrated with kids "chalking" the sidewalks with pictures, kiddie pools and squirt gun contests. Units made cards for Veterans Day and held "Trunk or Treats" at their Posts. Our members went into the schools to teach about Veterans Day and Unit # 392 sponsored youth baseball and softball teams. One of 13 Units reporting.

District #2: Unit #84 participated in the Operation Home Front program. They also made phone calls to a COTA child (Children's Organ Transplant Association), to keep her spirits up. Unit #13 in Tallahassee adopted a Veteran's family with three children for the holidays and provided them with gift cards. Unit #241 made a \$200 donation to the Sneads High School Project Graduation. The unit also held a "Safe Halloween", serving 800 people with 8 senior and 1 junior volunteer. Other units provided tutoring and training in enhanced socialization skills and assisted in art classes weekly. Three of six units reporting.

District #3: Jasper Unit #215 donated eggs to a local Community Church for their Easter program. Unit #57 in Lake City provided backpacks, school supplies and hygiene products to school children. Five of 6 units reporting.

District #4: Homosassa Unit #166 "adopted" a 3-year-old boy who was battling cancer. The unit made this their program for the year, purchasing holiday gifts and gas cards to assist with the

travel expenses of hospital visits. Unit #155 in Crystal River adopted five teenaged girls from the Resource Center for Christmas and donated \$750 towards gifts. Inverness Unit #77 held a Military Child's Table ceremony and asked all the attendees to wear purple to honor the children. Hawthorne Unit #230 adopted a special education class and committed to donating money for supplies on a monthly basis. Beverly Hills Unit # 237 held an open house for Veterans and their children. Twelve of 12 units reporting!!!

District #5: Unit #9 Jacksonville participated in the district-wide Children's presentation held on April 1st. This Unit, along with Unit #129 donated quilts, afghans and teddy bears to Camp Boggy Creek. Unit #194 used social media to spread the word "Purple Up" for Military kids on April 15th. A member from Unit #233 volunteers for a court-ordered program called "Kids' Bridge", a visitation center serving the community. A Unit in this District is the winner of the Ronald McDonald House pull-tab Challenge and collected 150 pounds of pull-tabs! Congratulations! Thirteen out of 16 units reported.

District #6: Unit members at #183 Old Glory participated in a "Tushies and Toes" Bike Run raising funds and awareness of the need in schools for socks and underwear for less fortunate children. Items such as socks, underwear, shoes, including gift cards were donated, including \$1800 in donations. Unit #330 Leesburg donated Beanie Babies, money and towels to the Florida State Elks Camp in Umatilla. It is an annual event sponsored by the Children's Burn Foundation of Florida. Unit #10, Kissimmee assists with Family Days, held at the Post where the two Reserve Units come to partake in children's events for the families. Unit #55 sent 5 members to volunteer at the annual "SnowBall Express" at Disneyworld, sponsored by Gary Sinise. Unit #347 Lady Lake worked on the Beads of Courage program by providing supplies to the Water Oaks Creative Needler Group. They sewed 450 bags which were then sent to the Beads of Courage Headquarters in Arizona. Nine of 20 Units reporting.

District #7: A Unit prepared and delivered share bags of donations to a local church to help homeless veterans and families. Monetary donations were sent to St. Jude's children's Hospital. (No Unit reports provided.)

District #8: Unit #69 Avon Park presented the Military Children's Table and assisted with the Legion's Children's Retreat held at the Post. The event provided resources for parents needing assistance with their children's mental health. There was also an author there whose book offers children assistance with day-to-day mental health struggles. Unit #113 Rotonda West visits schools monthly to provide blue-ribbon awards to honor special achievements by students. Four out of 13 units reported.

District #9: Unit #321 Cooper City presented awards to the high school RJOTC members and held a Kindness Rocks Children's project which included Juniors helping with painting projects. One of 14 units reporting.

District #11: Emails were sent to Unit Presidents/Chairmen to encourage all Units to participate in the many functions planned for Children & Youth month, April. The District recruited volunteers to assist with identifying military children, which we all know is a huge and frustrating task. Unit 64 Okeechobee sponsored a child for the 4H livestock program. Unit 65

Delray Beach contributed to a school band for their trip to D-Day ceremonies in France. What an opportunity of a lifetime! Unit #271 Tequesta provided monetary assistance to families in need and to a Stand Down House which supports children's programs. Unit # 271 supports the local Boys Scout program with fundraisers. Unit #367 Royal Palm Beach used a Military Childs' Table assembly for the children to use the colors of the military units and paint a picture to reflect how they make purple when mixed. Nine out of 13 units reporting.

District #12: Unit #39 donated \$500 to the TAPS program and provided birthday presents to homeless children. Unit #40 donated supplies and food to the Veterans relief program specifically earmarked for children. At Unit #81, Melbourne, members participated in a poker run for an elementary school's Drum Line, a Popsicle Stand Ride-In and held a Thanksgiving food drive for which they created baskets for several needy families. Unit #117, Palm Bay, a very active unit with Children's programs, held a Christmas party for children of the military and Post children. Santa arrived via a fire truck! I was honored to dress as Mrs. Claus and read "Twas the Night before Christmas" to all the children before Santa gave them their gifts. This year, Unit #163 was able to make in-roads at Patrick Air Space Force Base and provide school supplies to military children. Unit #189 in Sebastian has developed a year-round Youth Outreach which targets homeless high school children. Gifts cards were purchased and collected with value of \$2000. Donations were also provided for graduation caps and gowns. Unit #200 Satellite Beach donated breakfast food to a local hotel housing over 30 children-in-need at Christmas. Unit #318 Port St. Lucie continues their Grace Packs program whose mission is to provide food for children to take home over the weekend as many do not have sufficient nutrition if they are not in school. The unit also participates in Special Equestrians of the Treasure Coast that work with disabled children to enhance their mobility. The Unit donated \$1400 for the cause. This Unit also provided over 30 Buddy Baskets with life-supporting supplies for homeless families. And, the uses for the buckets themselves are endless! Unit #348 Cape Canaveral displayed a Military Child poem at their Post for the Month of the Military Child. The unit also provided travel money for the ROTC female state competitive team. Unit members volunteer at a "Surf Camp" for children to learn to surf in this beautiful surfside community. Unit #359 provide hand-made afghans and stuffed animals to Camp Boggy Creek. All 18 units reporting.

District #13: I must make a special mention to District #13. This District was "ground zero" from Hurricane Ian. The destruction is unimaginable. However, these Units continue the mission of the Children & Youth program. Unit #8 Fort Myers donated funds for Eva's Closet, which arranges a magical day for foster children to dress up like a princess with handmade costumes. Unit #103 teaches flag etiquette in a kindergarten and provides coloring books. Unit #192 member spoke with middle school students about cyber safety and dangers of the internet, along with keeping safe from bullying. Unit #274 made pillowcase for the Golisano Children's Hospital and bags for Beads of Courage.

District #14: At a holiday event, a unit set up brown bags filled with toys and candy, provided food and a tropical Santa Selfie-booth so the parents could take pictures of their children.

District #15: Unit #138 celebrated Month of the Military Child by passing out purple ribbons to unit members and teachers at local schools. Unit 5 Tampa held a Veteran baby shower and made baby hats and blankets. All 11 units reporting.

District #16: The District Chairman provided an excellent spread sheet for all the donations and charitable actions of all the units. This is a very valuable tool for the reporter, and it confirms activities and donations from ALL the Units in the district. Thank you! All units reporting.

District #17: Unit # 259 Debary maintains a small food bank for families in need. The unit purchased the Klinger horse and uses it to tell the story of courage. Members assisted the Legion Riders with giving disabled children motorcycle rides. The unit also reads to K through 2 school children. They provided 660 toys in coordination with Operation Home Front, to the Deland National Guard Armory families and the Volusia Foster Care program. One out of 12 units reporting.

This is by far, not all the activities or donations that the Units in the Department of Florida have provided to our children and youth. I attempted to spotlight programs and projects that were new and successful in hopes that ALL MEMBERS will take the time to read the Book of Reports for inspiration for next year's mission!

For God and Country,

Robin Burk

Robin Burk
Children & Youth Chairman 2022-2023
Department of Florida

Year-end Report – Children & Youth – Picture Guide

#1 Back to School Party at Pine Castle Memorial Unit #286, Inc., District #6, Florida



#2 Easter Bunny enjoying the festivities with one of our young guests at

Jim J Gilleo American Legion Auxiliary Unit #283 Inc, District #5, Florida



3. New School DUDS provided by Rotonda West American Legion Auxiliary Unit # #113, District



4. Hand-made Teddy Bears, quilts and comforters donated to Camp Boggy Creek by Port St. John American Legion Auxiliary Unit #359, District #12, Florida



Community Service



**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
1301 W Bell St
Avon Park, FL 33825
(863) 453-4553
COMMUNITY SERVICE 2022-2023
Terry Lee Gallagher
Department of Florida Chairman**

Community Service took on a whole new meaning here in the state of Florida with the Hurricane devastation. Many members of the Auxiliary swung right into action helping their Post, neighbors, and communities that were desperately in need. Lots of clothing, food, water, necessities, and monetary donations were collected through the whole state of Florida and then coordinated to get to those who were in need. Units spent many hours collecting, counting, driving, and pitching in to get the job done. FLORIDA STRONG.

With all but three units turning in reports we had 2,957 volunteers who spent 161,797 hours for community service. Spending a total of \$297,387.00 dollars and in-kind donations worth \$143,543.00 dollars.

District 1 provided support to an elderly widow of a deceased Veteran. Hosted the first Annual Community Arts and Crafts fair. Hosted food drives. Participated in The 14th Annual ALR Chapter 392 Mark Long Memorial Hotzee Run.

District 2 delivered baskets for Easter to the Tallahassee Foster care program and Florida Baptist Childrens Home. Volunteering for parades, music fest, and local golf outings. Donating clothes for homeless shelters along with toiletries. Worked in local cemeteries cleaning up debris. Assisted with Vacation Bible School and food pantry.

District 3 volunteering at the Local Humane Society, helping renovate the facility. Held food drives, toys for tots, Halloween party, Christmas party, and backpack supply drive. Helped with Legion Riders Chili Cook off.

District 4 provided much needed help at the post home. Helping with paint and gardening around the Post home. Had clothing and food drives. Volunteered at local animal shelters, food pantries, and churches. Hosting Halloween parties as well as Christmas parties. Volunteered at many local fundraising events. Provide snacks for Soldiers Freedom Outdoor program. Collecting items for Local Abuse shelters.

District 5 helps with food distribution in the community. Held an Easter egg hunt. As well as hosting children's Christmas parties. Had an Annual Fall Fest. Backpack drives, neighborhood clean-up, and participated in parades. Visited nursing facilities and helped with the Homeless.

District 11 volunteers at local hospitals, churches, theaters, nursing homes, and visits the elderly. Collected items for the hurricane victims. They volunteer at local libraries, thrift stores, and domestic violence shelters. Help host a local Carnival. Helping at Food banks. And taking the elderly to appointments and the store.

District 12 participated in ceremonies and parades. Helped at the post doing meals and cleaning up. Food donations and hygiene donations were collected. Donated to church thrift store, nursing homes, and hospitals. Helped with animal shelters and visited Nursing homes.

District 13 this district was extremely busy since they were the hardest hit by Hurricane Ian. They were busy trying to collaborate with many other towns and agencies to get the community what they needed to be able to clean, cook, and survive. Spent hours cleaning. Removing debris, mold, and ruined furniture. They were still able to hold Halloween Trunk or Treat. And provided much needed parties for the children. Thanksgiving was a time of giving and pulling together to provide the food and much needed help in the community. Christmas parties were held.

District 14 participates in the Cancer Walk. Held Halloween, Christmas, and Thanksgiving parties. Donates monthly to Food banks. Volunteer at their local schools. Help around the post with various needs. Volunteers at local churches. Goes to local nursing homes and hospitals.

District 15 provides transportation to local veterans for doctor appointments and to the store. Prepare and provide meals to the local community. Hospice volunteering. Clean up at commentaries. Participate in parades and ceremonies. Hold local Food and clothing drives.

District 16 volunteer with Meals on Wheels. Work with local churches, hospitals, and nursing homes. Assisted with Girl Scout projects. Volunteering accounting services to Down Syndrome Foundation. Helping with local community projects. Collecting and volunteering to help with Hurricane Ian.

District 17 provides volunteers to local food shelters. Helps in the community with beautification. Participates in parades and ceremonies. Collects school supplies and supplies for troops overseas.

I would like to take this opportunity to say I have enjoyed my year as the Department Of Florida Community Service Chair. These Units are hardworking and devoted. They tirelessly give of themselves, time, and energy. With one focus in mind Service not Self. The true meaning of Community Service can be found right here in the State of Florida. Great job done by all.

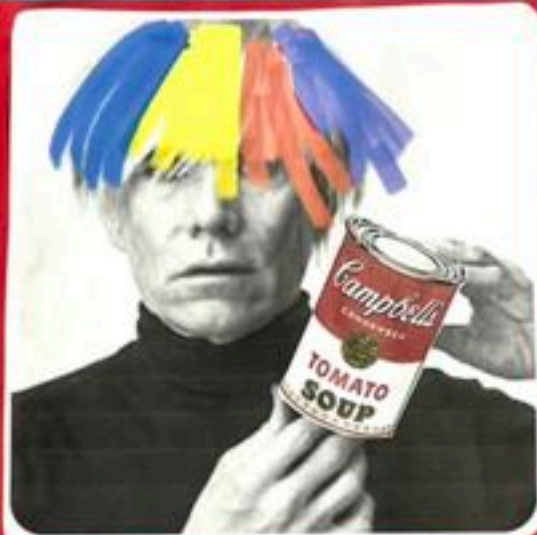
**Thank you for this Opportunity,
For God and Country,
Terry Gallagher
Community Service Chairman Department Of Florida**





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OPEN YOUR HEART



FOR OUR VETERANS



We are collecting
CAN OPENERS
to be placed in food bags
for our
Brevard County Veterans



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We CELEBRATE You



We PRAY for you







I ❤️ MY
OUTDOOR
CHURCH







To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
to maintain law and order;
to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all work;
to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
to make right the master of right;
to promote peace and good will on earth;
to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

CHALLENGER



Y
S
00





2ND ANNUAL

**SATURDAY
JANUARY 21
KICKSTANDS UP
10:30 AM**

**START:
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32730**



AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS CHAPTER 183 & AUXILIARY UNIT 183

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**\$25 PER BIKE PLUS SOCKS OR UNDIES
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POST
69
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Constitution & Bylaws

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Department of Florida

#COLORMETHERE FOR C&B's

Lisa Hoyland, Chairman 2022 – 2023

How often are your Department governing documents reviewed?

Documents here in Florida are reviewed annually.

- When was the last revision to your Department Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules?
Revised on June 19, 2022
- Do your current documents include the updated membership eligibility requirements: 2 war eras per the Legion Act; change “wife” to “spouse”; change “her/hers” to “them/their”, remove great-grandchildren & direct descendants? yes
- Have your Department documents been updated to allow electronic meetings, i.e., conference calls, Zoom meetings, etc? yes
- As Department Chairman, do you send out bulletins or publish articles on C&B? How often?
- I published articles in the September and February Department CANVAS newsletter. The committee also kept an updated ALAFL C&B Facebook page throughout the year.
- Do you feel your units have sufficient resources available to properly update their documents?
Yes
- What else would be helpful?
- Please share some of the questions that units asked about Constitution & Bylaws this year.
- Any other information that you would like to share? Please see report below.

I would like to thank President Jane for this appointment. This was a busy year for Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules in the Department of Florida due to the dues increase at both the National and Department levels. I kicked off the year by attending the Department of Florida “bootcamp” and creating the Program Action Plan along with valuable resources that our units/districts could present. We created an updated template and put that on our website so that units could use the template as a guide. This information was presented in a packet and was handed out at our Dept of Florida Workshop to each District Constitution & Bylaws Chairman and included the Constitution & Bylaws Program Action Plan for 2022-2023; various references and resources; and the newly revised sample Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules template. We also created a “Read Your Constitution” challenge for units to send in fun colorful photos of them working together on their governing documents and making unit members aware of where they can find their Unit C&B and Standing Rules on the FLALA Dept website. One unit reported that by having all units posted on the website this helped them with creating their unit’s Standing Rules. We kept in contact with our members via social media through our ALA FL Constitution & Bylaws Facebook page. Currently with have 232 members.

The committee reviewed all the Constitution and Bylaws that we had on the website and started contacting the district chairman that had units that needed to make changes to the eligibility and update changes that we made at the Department of Florida Convention by removing a Bullying clause that we

had voted on the past year and then we were advised to delete per National. One unit reported that they made changes to their Standing Rules to replace any reference to only “female” members.

District Chairman held Schools of Instruction in their district and many members attended. Chairman were able to discuss the upcoming changes and meet with any units that needed to make specific changes that had not already been made. (i.e., eligibility, gender specific) Unit 259, Debary, FL reported that they held a luncheon and invited all members to review the Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules. Several members attended made recommendations, discussed the dues increase and how the unit should accommodate. The committee then met and discussed the recommendations. Agenda was sent to all members one week prior to the meeting advising that the unit will be voting on the Standing Rules, the unit held the meeting, voted and copies of the minutes and revised Standing Rules were sent to all members.

Units in the 13th District were hit hard when Hurricane Irma came ashore and many Posts were destroyed by flooding and debris including auxiliary paperwork, charters and many homes of members were destroyed. Unit 103, Punta Gorda, FL reported that the changes were brought to the membership in September and then they finally figured out how and where to meet and in December and January the new changes to the Standing Rules were read again and motions was made to accept these changes. Unit 123, Sanibel Island took a direct hit and reported that they lost everything and didn’t have access to a computer for months including access to simple things such as white-out in their area to make changes, they worked on finding a meeting place so that members could get together and vote on the dues increase changes that were needed to reflect in their Standing Rules, this unit in Sanibel Island, Florida did not stop and in April they were able to finally get enough members to meet to get their documents approved. Unit 303, Bonita Springs included a Disaster Preparedness section in their Standing Rules. The District President, Jan Farrington worked hard with every unit making sure that they were able to get all units updated.

A Constitution & Bylaws breakout session was held in November at Fall Conference. Many members attended. Questions were answered and sample C&B templates were handed out. Newsletter articles was submitted in the CANVAS Dept Newsletter and our Department ALAFLC&B Facebook page was updated throughout the year for members to receive information and ask questions.

In January the committee reached out to all units sending emails to the district and unit presidents to see if they had any questions, sent a copy of the template and made sure that they were aware of the 2024 Dues increase, if they needed to make any updates. To date, out of 204 units in our department, 192 units made changes to their governing documents, submitted and are on file with Department.

Respectfully submitted – Lisa Hoyland, Constitution & Bylaws Chairman



Pictured: Two different Districts in the state of Florida getting together to work on governing documents.





Pictured: Lisa Hoyland, Department of Florida C&B Chairman drive to meet a newly appointed C&B district chairman for Pizza and to go over C&B. Unit Guide book is pictured as this is where the Department of Florida governing documents can be located for all members to review.

Education

Department of Florida
2022 – 2023 Education Year-End Report
Liz Close – Department Education Chairman

The Department of Florida Education Committee received reports from all 16 districts. Using the proper Give 10 to Education Tracking Form, certificates were awarded to Districts 3-#107, 4-77, 13-274, 15-152, 16-14, and 125. The Education Committee for the Department of Florida judged 7 Department Scholarships and 48 National Scholarships.

District 1 Donations of headphones and pencils along with backpacks filled with enough food to last a weekend were generously contributed. One Junior took a task on to hold a drive for Northside Elementary donating batteries to the school's STEM Club for building, coding, and operating robots. Clothing and school supplies were donated to homeless and displaced students. Volunteers at Pensacola State College participated in fundraising projects assisting the Veterans' Upward Bound Program. Several teachers at Navarre High School were financially assisted with help from their local unit which helped them with items to last them until year-end. One unit adopted a local elementary school.

District 2 Unit #12 partnered with Dollar Tree for Operation Homefront and Joanne Fabrics for much-needed items for local schools. Collection of arts and craft supplies for students aged 3-22 with intellectual disabilities. #84 donated school supplies. One of their members donated stuffed mini-animals for child incentives along with books requested by a Pre-School Teacher. #241 donated to Sneads School at the beginning of school and mid-year. 100 backpacks were donated to the Jackson County School Board, as part of the Weekend Food Backpack Program. Paper was delivered to four schools.

District 3 is included in the totals.

District 4 #27 assisted a student by giving her a baby shower, gifts, and a cake furnished by the unit. #149 purchased backpacks filled with paper, notebooks, crayons, markers, and sharpeners delivered to a local elementary school. #166 partnered with Dollar Tree and Dollar General's Operation Homefront program. The supplies were donated to CASA, Day Star, Jackie's School, and Nature Coast Day Care. #230

sponsors a class for their local elementary Special-Ed students. #237 donated school supplies for the needy in Citrus County.

District 5 Unit #129 conducted two Give 10 drives donating backpacks to military families and local students. They donated to 3 schools and adopted a school at Mayport Naval Base. 1,000 American Legion Halloween Safety coloring books were donated to 13 elementary schools. The district actively supported the Veterans' Association on campus. One unit taught a lesson to fourth-grade students on the Constitution and Constitution Day. One Junior member brought a copy of the Constitution to her history class and gave a report. Another unit gifted a Junior High School with 97 new calculators along with school supplies, laundry supplies, and items needed in the nurses' clinic. Games, duffel bags, and other classroom supplies were donated to a nonprofit organization providing housing and other needs for foster and displaced children. Through contact by social media Jacksonville Naval Air Station and local neighborhood websites were provided links regarding scholarships. Veterans Day was observed in schools with classroom education, activities, and Legion participation.

District 6 Unit #10 distributed school supplies for 100 children in downtown Kissimmee with help from Operation Homefront. #19 supported 9 schools #112 Winter Park presented Scholastic Achievement Awards to 5th-grade students at 8 elementary schools. The unit donated to a local elementary school food pantry along with books., #183 created a colorful program for a 2nd year called, "Tushies and Toes" a fundraiser for English Estates Elementary. The unit partnered with the Legion Riders raising money for 800 pairs of underwear, 1,200 pairs of socks, and gift cards for new shoes for needy children. They filled 50 backpacks with school supplies and tied them off with a poppy. They held a mid-year paper and pencil drive to help the teachers restock their supplies. The unit participated in "Trunk or Treat" events at two elementary schools. At a regularly scheduled meeting unit members voted to donate financial aid to Leesburg High School Band Parent's Association to assist band members in obtaining instruments and uniforms they couldn't afford. Unit #286 Pine Castle participated in their back-to-school drive with the

help of Operation Homefront. Backpacks filled with a membership application, a poppy, and a copy of the poem, "Flanders Fields." They were able to assist one Junior member with the collection and distribution of school supplies.

District 7 Included in totals

District 8 Included in totals

District 9 #162 provided an end-of-the-year ice cream and cake celebration for students and teachers.

Participated in Give 10 to Education. School supplies were donated to a school counselor. Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss were given out at a school block party event. 41 books were donated to a local Preschool to assist in school readiness. #220 supplied the school with supplies, cereal, milk, and uniforms. The unit adopted the International Family Academy School as part of its Education Program. They donated copy paper, writing paper, and folders. #321 partnered with a local elementary school's 4th-grade class to exchange Pen Pal letters throughout the year, the result was amazing for all. The partnership with Dollar Tree's Operation Homefront was successful. The remaining supplies were donated to Cooper City Elementary. 49 teachers were given Walmart gift cards. They partnered with a local elementary school to collect candy, snacks, and chocolate bars for Sandy Nininger Veterans State Nursing Home. This was part of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas tragedy in Broward County's "Day of Service and Love.

District 11 Participated in Back-to-School supply drives. Backpacks were donated to a local elementary school in an underserved community. Donations to the Spirit of Youth Scholarship and Memorial Scholarship in memory of passed Chaplain, Pat Moroco, were made. Member donated multiple folders, ring binders, and notebooks along with school supplies donated by members to a local domestic abuse shelter to help students return to school with much-needed items. A member assisted a local needy student with a laptop.

District 12 Collected box tops and pull tabs. #39 provided backpacks for Little Birthday Angels. #40 and #117 furnished undergarments and socks. #163 donated library books, and sneakers for a Title One school. #200 awarded a scholarship to one Girls State delegate. #318 gave 2 students financial aid toward college expenses. #344 held a gift-wrapping fundraiser at the local mall for scholarship funds. #348 Set up display tables at schools with auxiliary information. #358 delivered items. #850 donated school supplies to their adopted school.

District 13 #136 St. James City. Supplied clothes to needy school children, participated in Give 10, stuffed backpacks hosted a back-to-school carnival, replaced the destroyed American flag at Pine Island Elementary, replaced destroyed school supplies after the hurricane, and gave scholarships to deserving students. This unit was chosen for the district's Education award. #38 made donations of earbuds to Sunshine Elementary. They shared their supplies with other units. They also were featured in Auxiliary articles in their local community paper.

#90 worked with the Children's Advocacy Center to support abused children with back-to-school supplies. #103 supported JROTC. #110 collected clothing and shoes for children attending Nocatee schools for the handicapped. #174 Ft. Myers Beach also lost their building and was able to give in-kind donations to Sanibel Elementary. #192 Read to children in observance of the Great American Teach-In. They spoke to 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th graders on Cyber safety including dangers of the

internet, how to keep safe, bullying, the danger of games on the internet, being aware of your surroundings, leaving bags unattended, and sexting. and gave a Google Training class. #303 distributed school supplies. After Hurricane Ian, they were left without a building. They delivered supplies to schools, brownies for Teacher Appreciation Day, and toys to schools for incentives. #336 collected school supplies, took snacks to teachers for Teacher Appreciation Day and helped 16 families who lost all in the hurricane. #351 worked with Operation Homefront for school supplies, purchasing art supplies for children to make cards for deployed troops. Donated underwear, rulers, and bookmarks and supplied the JROTC with medals for their Awards Ceremony.

District 14 Unit #67 has a member who volunteers daily at Greynolds Park Elementary. #98 has a member who volunteers at South Florida Autism Charter School daily from 3-5 hours daily. Both members wear their auxiliary pins and hoodies when volunteering. Unit #14 donated school and art supplies and backpacks. Gift cards, herbal teas, and a plug-in teapot was given to the teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week at their local school.

District 15 #99 School uniforms were donated to local schools. #111 delivered educational items to 4 local schools. Donated school supplies twice a year. #148 donated to Department scholarships. #94 Donated school supplies and uniforms to local schools. #147 A member is a former ESL teacher who has continued to volunteer. #152 School supplies were donated to 4 Title One schools. Educational Board created for events. #138 Provided supplies for Tinker K-8 teachers. One member spoke at a Veterans Day ceremony and at a Great American Teach-In event. A new annual scholarship called the "Hugh Gilbert

Strickland-Unit #138" scholarship was created to be awarded for the first time year. Gift cards were given to graduating seniors that attended last year's Girls State. #5 School supplies were donated with assistance from Operation Home Front at MacDill AFB. #186 awarded two scholarships to seniors at Weeki Wachee High and F W Springstead High. School supplies, backpacks, socks, blankets, and snacks were donated to 4 homeless graduating seniors in Brooksville/Hernando County students. HUDVASH children of veterans received backpacks.

District 16 Unit #14 recognizes students' hard work every quarter with a Pizza Party. School uniforms were donated twice a year. Knitting looms were donated to the elementary school crochet club. #79 Operation Home Front in conjunction with Dollar Tree and Dollar General delivered enough school supplies to fill an entire SUV to three Title One schools. #104 donated school supplies to 6 schools. #125 Two school drives were held during the year with the last drive focused on underwear, shirts, and pants. #173 donated to purchase one waiting bench at their local school. Needy kids were helped with socks and underwear. #238 school supplies were donated to 5 schools.

District 17 Included in totals.

Orlando Memorial District #6 -Unit 19 Elizabeth Nelson Award for the Best year-round program.

Department of Florida
2022 - 2023 Education Report
Liz Close - Department Education Chairman

District	Unit
3	107
4	77
13	274
15	152
16	14
16	125

Give 10 to Education

Dollar spent	\$23,559.00
In-Kind donations	\$36,888.00

Veterans in Community Schools

Dollars spent	\$4,145.00
In-Kind donations	\$1,535.00
Hours served	746
# of veterans	24

**Veterans in Community
School presentations**

32

Veterans' Assn on Campus

Dollars donated	\$639.00
Hours served	366
# Veterans	19

Scholarships

Dollars spent Local	\$21,075.00
Dollars spent Department	\$2,540.00

Awarded	50
Girl State Delegate Scholarship	1

Helping Needy Students

Dollars spent	\$68,176.00
In-Kind donations	\$7,826.00
Hours served	1335
# Helped	332

Junior Service to Schools

Dollars spent	\$7,499.00
In-Kind donations	\$6,088.00
Hours served	1354
# Helped	2437

Teacher Appreciation Week

Dollars spent	\$1,100.00
Hours Served	160

Girls State

ALA FL GIRLS STATE

CONGRATULATIONS! We have 100% Reporting from ALL 16 Districts! Units have again shown their passion, dedication and support of our prestigious FL Girls State program. This is a great program and offers a great way to inform local schools and communities of the many benefits of the ALA FL Girls State program and the ALA mission of Service and Not Self.

What a Year this has Been! The Units are very serious about fund-raising for Girls State. Some of the events and activities reported include: BINGO, 50/50's, Raffles - all sorts, Luncheons and Dinners, Fish Fry's with the works, Holiday Parties, Kentucky Derby Party, Christmas Bazaar, Candy Guessing Game and don't forget the Jell-O Shots! We reported 272 Volunteers and 6,125.5 Volunteer Hours. We also have (33) SR Staff applications and (6) JR Staff applications for the upcoming 2023 Session!

How do you know your ALA FL Girls State Citizens? The 2022 FL Girls State Session had 268 Citizens from across Florida. As of this report, the Delegates for the 2023 FL Girls State Session is still being finalized. Delegates were selected from local schools with the assistance of the Guidance Counselor; working with Church and Community organizations as well as JROTC. Most Units assist their GS Chairman and others have a committee. Units vary with their selection process of Delegates. Some requirements of the Juniors are completing applications or questionnaires, providing resumes, submitting an essay on the Americanism Topic in order to be considered and interviewed for selection. Two districts also reported Units 'shared' the interview process in selecting Delegates to attend Girls State.

Do your ALA FL Girls State Citizens know you? The experience of ALA FL Girls State is truly that of a lifetime. Their energy and enthusiasm is beyond compare. All Districts reported Citizens were invited back to share her experience. Most attend a Unit General meeting and the Legionnaires and Sons are invited. Some have a social gathering at the Post home, inviting the Citizens and their families. Units look forward to receiving the letters from the Citizens and share with the members. Units also ask the Citizens to participate in other Unit activities such as assisting with Poppy Distributions, participating in Veteran's Day Parades and laying wreaths for Wreaths Across America.

GIRLS STATE IS GGRREEAATT!!!

TK

Treva Kay Wildrick

Historian

**2022-2023
History Report
American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Florida**

History is in the making – always. Members are starting to realize this statement. Once an event is done or once it's said, it is History now.

The Units have done an amazing job this past year. Unit members have participated in Wreath across America, placing flags on Veterans graves for the Memorial Day observing. Participated in the Poppy distribution during the Poppy day and Memorial Day. Delivered gift baskets, personal items and books to Veterans Nursing Homes. Collected and delivered school supplies to their local schools. At Thanksgiving and Christmas time donated food baskets to needy Families within their communities. Units had Childrens Christmas parties with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Unit members raised funds for Veterans and their families in need. Members helped with Habitat for Humanity projects. Collected items and helped with Veterans Stand downs in their community. Collected toys for Marines Toys for Tots drive. Raised funds to send Girls to Girl State, Unit members helped other members and Veterans in their Post homes.

One Unit worked on a special project that was over twenty years in the making. They created a History room for Veterans of all wars.

Another Unit honored a member for her 60 years of dedicated service to the Unit.

One Unit participated in the kick-off of their Post home and Mayo Clinic partnership to provide medical screening and education to the community.

One Unit teamed with Mays-Munroe, Inc. to provide 18 bed sets to a Veterans Village, had a luncheon to celebrate Women's History Month. One Unit raised enough money from Road Kill Bingo to 19 children at their Children's Christmas party.

One Unit donated 40 Shoe Boxes filled with needy supplies to a homeless Veterans shelter.

A Unit donated 5 Turkey Dinner baskets they were given to the Delray Beach Police Department's program for families in need.

Units participated in the Missing in America Project.

After Hurricane Ian a Unit delivered meals to Poinsettia Park residents 2 times a day for 3 weeks, collected and delivered much needed supplies. That Unit adopted an Army Infantry Platoon with 30 soldiers and they send monthly care boxes for the soldiers to enjoy.

One Unit collected and donated over 500 lbs of food.

A Unit hosted the Military Child Table Setting ceremony.

A Unit raised and donated \$4,000.00 for Fisher House and the check was presented on February 4th by the Unit President.

Every year a week before Memorial Day a Unit plants poppies in the front yard of their Post Home and invites public officials to the dedication of the field.

Two Units worked as a team to serve food and drinks to the residents of Emory Bennett Veterans Home.

From Thanksgiving to the end of December a Unit participated in the “Deck the Chairs” event. Lifeguards chairs are decorated in a specific theme. This Unit has taken several awards.

One Unit collected and donated \$993.00 worth of supplies to assist with the Hurricane Ian clean up.

A Unit worked with Dollar Tree and Operation Homefront in collecting school supplies and those supplies were delivered to local schools.

A Unit helped 15 families who had lost everything due to Hurricane Ian.

A Unit sponsored a Gold Star Mothers Day luncheon and in January held a Gold Star Mothers ceremony and presented 5 banners to the five (5) Mothers who were in attendance. Members of this Unit participated in the Breast Cancer Walk/Fundraiser.

One Unit raised and donated over \$2500.00 for Breast Cancer Awareness. The money was donated to Dollars for Mammograms which provides no cost Mammograms to the disadvantaged.

This Unit planned and executed two major events in November, assembled 217 “Goody” gift bags full of personal hygiene items and few treats. These bags were delivered to Veterans living in local assisted living facilities. Then the members prepared and served a barbecue lunch for 123 Veterans and the immediate family members.

A Unit honored local Veterans with the Quilt of Valor.

This Unit donated \$2,000.00 to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Unit members participate in a lamppost decoration competition in downtown of their hometown.

A Unit delivered kit bags and lap quilts to women veterans.

Unit members participated in wearing Red Shirts on Fridays. Taking part in Holiday parades and floats and had Easter egg hunts with a light lunch. After Hurricane Ian Unit members went above and beyond helping with gift cards, personal donations to help with Hurricane Ian relief.

The Units raised and donated funds to Florida's President Jane's project which is Gary Sinise "Snowball Express".

All of these accomplishments were on the Face Book pages and in the Department Newsletter the "Canvas". The Face Book page was used by members to get ideas, brag about their Units, and to share their successes. The Department has received 94 History Year End reports and several History narratives.

We can't change History, once done and once said, it is History.

We can learn from History, what once worked might not work now, but we can make new History.

God bless our troops and our Auxiliary!

For God and Country

Annie Anderson

Department of Florida Historian

Juniors



JUNIOR ACTIVITIES REPORT

DARAANNE B. OLIVER

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA CHAIRMAN

17776 SE 158TH COURT

WEIRSDALE, FL 32195

(321) 543-1069

ALAMEMBERDOLIVER@GMAIL.COM

This year the ALA Florida Juniors despite having some challenges, (including some of the Department being hit by Hurricane Ian) still had a positive impact and came out very well in all aspects of the Junior Activities Program. The Juniors have been remarkable and the Districts and Unit Chairman really stepped-up! This is the first time in 5-years of being this Department Chairman that we have **100% reporting**. All 16 Districts sent in a report that included some amazing work that our young members did to raise awareness, help out, work the mission and volunteer.

As of this report we have 997 paid Juniors in the Department, just shy of our personal goal of 1,000 by National close of books. So far a total of 34 Junior Patches have been earned (and more on the way) which means many of them earned the Department Color Wheel Patch Challenge Certificate, so they will be receiving their certificate at Convention, while we present them with their patches. This is one activity that we strongly promote in the Department of Florida. Many of our Juniors, live out of state, so we encourage those young members to participate in the patch program.

We have 2 (possibly 3) Junior Member of the Year submissions – which is an extremely hard decision that the committee needed to make. Two of the girls served on the Department level and are active within their Districts and Unit and the other is very active in her Unit and assists as a mentor to the younger members. We are very proud of our Junior members for we instill Leadership and mentoring in the Department of Florida. Our Honorary Department Junior President: Jasmine Harris, was also selected to serve as the National Honorary Junior Southern Division Vice President for her 3rd consecutive term. We had 2 additional Junior members make it Nashville, TN for the National Juniors Meeting. This year was also super special as “Jazzy” was selected by our Department President: Jane Hardacre, as her Personal Page, as well. Madam President Jane’s theme this year was COLOR – Continue Our Legacy Of Respect and her special project was Gary Sinise Foundation: Snowball Express. The Florida Juniors had a full slate of Officers to bring in lots of color and youthful energy. The Girls held their own elections and run their own meetings. We encourage Unit and District participation as well as Department, Convention, Workshop, Fall Conference and a designated project or event such as Juniors Camp. They are elected at Convention by their peers and as long as they are 8-years of age or older they can run for an Honorary Department Junior Office. We only allow parents in the room to help with any Junior under the age of 8 because we don’t want to discourage any Junior member.

2022-2023 Honorary Dept. of FL Junior Officers:

President: Jasmine Harris

1st Vice President: Evelyn Derouin-Davidson

2nd Vice: Emily Hemming

Secretary: Amanda Minnick

Treasurer: Jada Hemming

Chaplain: Chloe Dugazon

Historian: Anya Minnick

Sgt. at Arms: Mea Kay

Asst. Sgt. at Arms: Averl Krogh

Shortly after Convention the Juniors are invited to Department Workshop, where they can participate in learning about all of our committees and programs. This usually gets them excited about working the mission and looking at possible patches that they can earn as well as what they would like to do on the Unit or District levels. Our next Department event that the ALA FL Juniors can attend is Fall Conference. This year because of the theme, the Juniors hosting an art show and sale to benefit Snowball Express. 22 pieces of canvas artwork (completed by Juniors) and 3 from SAL members, of all ages were able to be bid on and sold to the highest bidder. The sale brought in \$1,000. which included bidding on the Best of Show, won by one of our Juniors that lives in Georgia and 2, had the highest bid of \$100. each.

They also have opportunities to help out in their communities, Post homes, with Veterans and Military Families. Some of the amazing work our Juniors did was send cards to Veterans and Snowball Express attendees as well as Birthday cards to community members. Many Juniors participated in RED shirt Friday campaign and Purple-up for Military kids. They assisted with POW/MIA Recognition Day on Sept. 16th and participated in several Military Childs tables across the state. To honor First Responders, many Juniors sent cards and filled goodie bags for the Firefighters, EMS and Police Departments in their areas. Many Juniors hosted a safe Halloween in October, some Jr's helped to decorate the Legion, passed candy out at a Trunk or Treat event, where others marched in a Halloween Parade. In District 5 they hosted a Deck the Chairs event and Unit 117 of District 12 held a Harvest Fest. There were paint parties, Membership Recruitment days, as well as craft programs. There was an outpouring of support for our ALA Units that were affected by Hurricane Ian and so many Juniors assisted in collecting supplies specifically for kids such as school supplies, games & toys as well as everyday needs. In November, many groups sent cards for Veterans Day and others helped with flag presentations, wreath laying ceremonies and flag disposals. Many Juniors participated with Wreaths across America by placing wreaths on Veterans graves as well as handed out programs or helped seat dignitaries at the cemetery's. One Junior asked for a

lemonade stand for Christmas, so that she could host fundraisers when the need arose, she also handmade bracelets and key chains. Another Junior member was installed as their Unit Honorary Jr. President as well as an American Legion Jr. Rider. We promoted Pledge of Allegiance Day, Valentines for Vets and Honoring our Service Everyday for our Veterans. In January, Post 69 of Avon Park, was hosting a Veterans Expo and invited the Department Juniors to attend to assist with Project Vet Relief. The 8 Juniors and 5 young SAL members were able to assist the Legion with PVR as well as have a booth to encourage membership for the Legion Family, bring awareness to Project Vet Relief and the Moving Wall as well as raffle a Poppy print and host a lemonade stand to benefit Snowball Express.

As the year starts to slow down we still encourage Proclamations, Poppy distribution, crafts and posters. Many of our Juniors received awards at school. We had 2 Citizenship awards, Most Respectful, Good Leadership, Most Patriotic, and Kindness to name a few. We want our Junior Auxiliary members to become active in their Units as well as Districts and Department. We ask them to write an Americanism essay, participate in the Poppy Poster or Miss Poppy contests, go to ALA Girls State (if applicable), apply for Scholarships, attend Convention and run for Honorary Jr. Office.

In all 16 Districts in Florida, there are paid Junior members.

District 1 - reported to have 45 Paid Juniors within their 13 Units and 2 are active working closely with the Poppy & Community Service committees. Their focus next year is to gain more Juniors within the Department.

District 2 - has 6 Units with 41 paid Juniors, 6 Jr's are active and involved and 10 Senior members that assisted. They have worked on safe Halloween events, flags for Veterans Day and cemeteries and assisted with school lunches spending \$250 and worked 50 volunteer hours.

As of this date **District 3** - has 7 Units and 16 paid Juniors with 8 being active. They have been busy working on patches, as well as Americanism, Community Service, Leadership and the Poppy committees. The Juniors have helped with card making & sending, a Christmas parade, handed out ice cream & socks as well as collected and donated school supplies, prepared & served a dinner at the Legion for the Department President, assisted with Toys for Tots and worked a chili cook-off to benefit a Veterans Fishing trip. They have accumulated 623 Jr. volunteer hours and 830 Senior hours.

District 4 - reported to have 12 Units and 18 paid Juniors with only 3 being active and involved. 1 Junior participated in the Dept. Presidents breakfast and paint party, another Junior attended a District meeting and both participated with VA&R and Poppy distribution. A total of 13 Junior volunteer hours were accumulated.

One of our most active and largest Districts for Juniors Activities is **District 5** – they reported to have 16 Units, 171 paid Juniors, 17 are active as well as 4 young SAL members participate. Several patches were earned and a Junior Member of the Year has been submitted. They have worked 354 Junior volunteer hours and 544 Senior hours for the Junior activities committee. Junior members of the 5th District perform the Military Child's table and are active both on the District & Unit levels. The District has an active Junior group and even have Honorary District Junior Officers. One Unit created a Juniors Corner in their Auxiliary room specifically for the young members. Some Juniors serve as Honorary Department Officers and have helped with installations, visitations, the Poppy program, Americanism, Community Service and VA&R as well as assisted with Valentines for Vets, Easter Egg Hunts, Trunk or Treat, Hurricane Relief, Thanksgiving & Christmas dinners, Polar Plunge, Florida Girls State and art work to support the Gary Sinise Foundation; Snowball Express.

District 6 – reported that they have 73 paid Juniors within their 24 Units and 7 active Juniors. 2 of these Juniors attended the National Juniors meeting and 1 serves as the Honorary Department Junior Vice President and spoke to the Convention floor last year as the Immediate Past Hon. Dept. Jr. President and National Miss Poppy. A few Juniors have earned patches and have assisted with Americanism, Community Service, National Security Poppy and Education committees. Several Juniors also participated and created artwork to be raffled to benefit the Department Presidents Project. Juniors in the 6th District have come up with their own ideas on how to promote the Auxiliary programs some include: decorated holiday tables, donated goods and filled food pantry shelves, assisted with a Military child's event at the National Guard Air Defense party, 2 modeled clothes for a benefit and 1 read to service dogs at a library, so they could learn to be patient around young children. They have accumulated 88 Jr. Vol. hours.

Our Honorary Department Jr. President comes from the **7th District**, which has 8 Units and 18 paid Juniors with 1 active member. They have volunteered on almost every program and committee with 50 Junior volunteer hours and 50 Senior, including working School of Instruction, setting up and cleaning the legion, marching in parades, completed artwork to benefit Snowball Express as well as attending Department Boot Camp, Workshop, Fall Conference, Vet Fest to benefit Project Vet Relief and both Department and National Convention. This active Junior has assisted as a runner for IT support, The Department Presidents Personal Page, Girls State Representative and holds a National title as well.

As of this writing **District 8** – reported to have 13 Units in their district with 10 active juniors out of the 60 paid Jr. members. 2 have worked on patches, several have helped with dinners and ceremonies at the Post home, they have learned Flag etiquette, helped with Children and Youth programs including a children suicide awareness day and Project Vet

Relief to raise funds and bring awareness for the POW/MIA's, the Moving Wall and 22-a-day Veteran Suicide. They earned over 300 Volunteer hours and have also including the young SAL members to participate with them.

District 9 – reported that there are 14 Units with 70 paid Juniors and 10 active. The Juniors have worked 142 volunteer hours working the Americanism Essay contest, ALA FL Girls State, Military Child's table, distribute Poppies, helped at Halloween & Christmas parties, painted kindness rocks, Flags for Veterans, organized a dance marathon, concession stand at a soup kitchen and filled shoeboxes for the homeless. We don't have a District 10, but **District 11** reported that in their 13 Units, 59 paid Juniors, 4 are active. The Juniors participate in Poppy's, Community Service, National Security and the Education committees. 2 Juniors are very active in their local church and assist with daycare. The Juniors donated emergency supplies for communities affected by Hurricane Ian, participated in Wreaths Across America, Give-10 for Education, assisted in Blood Donation drives, fund raising efforts, completed art work for Fall Conference, attended Department events and 1 Junior volunteered and participated in painting houses for Veterans. They accumulated 983 Junior volunteer hours and 1,433 for Senior members that assisted.

District 12 is another group that is very active. They have 20 Units, 111 paid Juniors and 29 of them are active. They have raised funds for several different needs including Snowball Express, Hurricane Relief, Ronald McDonald House, Placing Flags on Veterans graves, School Supplies, Poppy distribution, new books to Libraries, Bake sales, Honor Flight, cleaning & decorating the post, Lemonade stand to benefit Special Olympics, recruitment to the Auxiliary and have participated in Workshop, Fall Conference, parades, Convention and the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall. They have donated over \$1,500. in donations and earned a total of 371 Jr. Vol. hours and 121 Sr. hours. They are an amazing group of Juniors and they include their young SAL members to participate too.

District 13 - was an area that was heavily hit by Hurricane Ian. They have 14 Units, 96 Paid Juniors and 13 are active. They have worked Americanism, Community Service, attending meetings, bake sales, raffles, Aisle of Flags, First Responder donations, sending cards, Gold Star banner and formal ceremonies. This District is committed to nurturing the Junior Activities program and growing membership. They donated over \$150. with 78 Junior volunteer hours and 76 Senior hours. I would anticipate great things coming from this District in the future, once they can get things back to normal.

We have seen some patch requests coming out of **District 14** and they also include their young SAL members. They reported that they have 11 Units, 18 paid Juniors and 4 active and involved. They work Poppies, Community Service and VA&R committees as well as are active on the

Department level and have attended events. Many participated in completing artwork to benefit Snowball Express at Fall Conference, as well as recruitment into the American Legion Family.

District 15 reported they have 11 Units within the District 24 paid Juniors with 4 of them active. 2 have participated in the Patch Program and have promoted Americanism, by saying the Pledge at meetings and Children & Youth committees. They have earned 60 Junior Vol. hours and have 3 Senior members assist.

District 16 is our 2nd largest Junior membership Districts with 135 paid Juniors but only 8 are active and involved, many live out of state. The Juniors work on Poppy Program, VA&R, Children & Youth and Community Service. 1 of their members is an Honorary Department Officer and has participated in writing Prayers. This District is working on starting new activities and promoting Junior Activities in the future. They accumulated a total of 48 Junior volunteer Hours and 11 Seniors spent 50 hours assisting the Juniors.

As of this submission **District 17** reported to having only 3 active Juniors out of their 34 paid members. These girls raised funds for an animal shelter and raised over \$300. On Veterans Day certificates were given to 73 students & staff that had ties to Veterans, The Military Child's table was performed twice in 1-day in front of 250 students & faculty. They made about 600 Valentines cards, spent \$450. in baked goods and handed out 30 lbs. of candy to all First Responders & Civil Servants in their community. They also stuffed bears with Unit 45 to go to Boggy Creek. This group may be small but they are mighty!

I have been incredibly blessed to have been the Chairman for the ALA Florida Junior Activities Committee, again this year. We strive to build our membership and mentor our Juniors so that these young leaders will want to stay in the organization and lead us into the future. It has been my honor to serve this committee and please accept this narrative as The Department of Florida Juniors report. Photos will be forthcoming, as I know this is lengthy but full of information. Thank You for all you do for the ALA.

For God & Country Dara Oliver

Leadership

The 2022-23 Leadership year began immediately after our Department Convention. Our newly elected officer and appointed chairmen attended our Post Executive Committee to learn more about our Department President's theme C.O.L.O.R., Continue Our Legacy of Respect.

Immediately after our 2022 convention we went full throttle in getting our year off to a great start. We held our annual "Boot Camp" for all department chairs and district presidents. This boot camp is designed to assist our department chair in creating their Program Action Plan for the upcoming year and then presenting it to our assigned mentors for critiquing. Not only were Department Chairmen in attendance, but we also had an eight-hour informational training class for our District Presidents. Our appointed mentors for the District President class were Past Department Presidents who explained as to what is expected of the District presidents throughout the year and on how to help the Unit members. One of the areas was how to select the District chairmen from each Unit. They should try to select district chairs from each unit and invite the district chairpersons to attend.

In using the above, I have asked each member to continue our legacy of respect through mentoring our members at general meetings, District meetings and Schools of Instruction. By our continued mentoring we can assist our members to become the leaders we know they can be.

The department workshop was very well attended and quite colorful. Our Department President held a meet and greet on Friday night and this is where our department chairman had a table to set up information and an information board along with informational sheets pertaining to their program. As Leadership Chairman I had a box of 100 questions and any member who stopped at my table had the opportunity to pick a question and answer it. If they answered incorrectly this was my opportunity to mentor by thanking them and then giving the correct answer and how they could find the answer by utilizing our National and Department websites along with the different National and Department Guides.

Continuing with our Workshop on Saturday and Sunday, the Department Chairmen were able to present their program to the audience. The chairmen used PowerPoint and handouts. Since the meeting room was set up classroom style each member had the space to sit comfortably and utilize tables for taking notes. The only thing that was different from previous workshops is that you might not have been able to sit with your friends as our Sergeant at Arms and Assistant Sergeant at Arms directed everyone to just fill in the seats and meet someone new. What a concept, and it was well accepted.

Moving on from our workshop, our district presidents were responsible for holding schools of instruction where the district chairpersons were to explain the program action plan to members in their respective districts.

The Department of Florida has 16 Districts and currently 207 Units and each District President is requested to hold an Auxiliary Basic Concept School (ABC). Some Districts held two classes due to the size of the district. Currently we have ten (10) certified instructors. Collectively they traveled over 3,700 miles and we held eighteen classes throughout the state. This Auxiliary year we tried something different, which was to have two certified instructors teach the class. Even though we may have a script and plenty of information with us, we realize that we must know our audience and may have to change our plans. For example, two instructors went to one district and there were about 40 in attendance. Of those 40 members we had 32 members who never attended an ABC school, so we stopped and adjusted our agenda, which turned out to be one of the best classes we have done in that District.

Realizing that we are very much in need of more certified instructors we put into place a training program for anyone who was interested in becoming a certified instructor. Becoming a certified instructor is not an overnight process. Each candidate must complete the Senior Basic Course offered by National along with six of the ALA Academy online programs, attend three scheduled ABC schools with a certified instructor and then they assist in two or more classes and finally can teach a class on their own with supervision in the background. We currently only have one candidate who should be certified by October 2023.

The ABC classes cover everything from protocol, officer duties, members responsibilities, constitution and bylaws, programs, nomination, and elections and much more.

Mentoring was our focus for our members, so we suggested to each department chairperson to utilize social media, especially Facebook, and start a program Facebook group page. This was a tremendous success as we currently have fourteen Facebook program groups.

The Leadership group page, ALA FL Leadership has been a great teaching tool. We started the 2022-23 year with 412 members and currently have 636. As it is a Private Group all postings must be approved, and members of the group are also approved. Not only do we have Florida members but also have members from other Departments and we welcome their comments. This page is used to pass on information, answer questions etc. Each Monday this chairperson tries to do a Mentoring Monday, where I will post information on duties of officers, how to write a report and any other information that may be asked.

By using social media, we have had inquiries from other departments, on how we train our certified instructors and what is covered in an ABC class. I gladly emailed the information to them, which is included at the end of this report.

Our Leadership Program also encompasses Unit Development and Revitalization (UD&R). To say this year, we did not have any Units having problems would be an injustice to the Units. Teams were sent to Unit experiencing difficulties and we helped to the best of our ability. I am very pleased to say that 99% of the issues were solved and the Units are back on track.

Some of the tools that we use are Roberts Rule of Order, National and Department Constitution and Bylaws, Standing Rules, Department Operations Guide, National Unit Guide and Department Unit Guide. From the operations guide we produced approximately one hundred questions that we use when doing a class and find them to be extremely helpful.

In reading over the year end reports I am proud to say that we have an increase in reporting from last year. All sixteen District Chairmen submitted a year-end report and the number of Units reporting increased from 116 to 139. Members attending Mission training in Nashville brought back information and shared it with their Units. One member holds a mini mentoring class at the Unit for about 90 minutes every other month and all the surrounding Units are invited to attend. Our unit members used handouts, recommended members to sign up for the My Member Portal on the National website, to check our department website, held 5-minute mentoring sessions during membership general meetings. They followed Parliamentary procedures, did the ALA Academy and some even completed the Senior Basic Leadership course online. Additional unit training sessions were held and included but not limited

to reporting, Code of Conduct, Sergeant at Arms training, explaining the Impact forms. Members attended District meetings, Mission Training, and held American Legion Family training sessions.

As for the Department Awards that were offered, I received six District narratives and fifteen-unit narratives. Unfortunately, only 2 District Leadership chairpersons followed the criteria. Since the Unit Member of the Year is now part of the Leadership program, we received six nominations within the specified time. Our Department President will have the honor of picking the Unit Member of the Year and it will be forwarded on to National.

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Department Leadership Chairman for 2022-2023 and I look forward to continuing to be a certified instructor and to continue mentoring our members to the best of my ability.

Mary Kelly-Perkins

Department of Florida

2022-23 Leadership Chairman

leadership@alafl.org

Legislative

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE REORT 2022-2023

District 1 NO REPORT

District 2 Kathee Coughlin- Participated in veterans fair event 26 members attended townhome meetings. Numerous phone calls emails were sent to local state and national officials. They invited their local candidates to attend a Candidate Forum. They made phone calls and sent emails on issues of importance; affordable housing they had good results with calls on specific issues.

District 3- Irma Wehrli This District wrote letters and sent emails to their local, State and National Officials. They attended meet and greet the candidates, veterans advisory council Town Hall Meetings. And shared legislative issues at 30 Post Functions.

District 4- Natalie Scott reported phone calls, emails and letters, as well as, personal visits were given to local officials. Phone calls and emails to state elected officials. Emails and letters sent to National Elected Officials were also done. They had four subscriptions to capwiz.com and four subscribed to the E-newsletter. They attended events for Townhall meetings and volunteered at the polls. They attended three post family events with elected officials there. One was the mayor of Newberry who attended two of the unit meetings one unit meetings were legislative items were shared for a total of 42 hours

******District 5** Yvette Moore Members were encouraged to sign up for the legion legislative newsletter and capwiz. Cards for the American Legion Grassroots Action Center were passed out at our district meeting for ease of navigating the webpage to see the topics the Legion highly supports. This also showed how to get to votervoice.net. We had several units that showed initiative with the Legislative program-Unit 9, Unit 54, Unit 88, Unit 129, Unit 194, Unit 197 and Unit 233. Two units stood out utilizing the tools provided by the legion and acted on the action alerts Unit 283 and Unit 316. Several units took action in volunteering at the election polls and encouraging their members to vote. Signed up for capwiz and the e-newsletters of elected officials. Along with holding Legion family legislative events, coordinating "Meet the Candidate" and attending town hall meeting, their district was active in presenting local issues concerning conservation as well as local veteran charity events were presented to the mayor.

District 6 NO REPORT

District 7- NO REPORT

District 8- Elizabeth Altvalja reported no activity.

District 9 Gail Depuis-reported units held Meet-and-Greets with local officials, held Open Forums where questions could be asked and answered, and posted information on these events on unit Facebook pages. These units had members who attended town hall meetings,

and one unit had a Meet the Candidate event. These units also had members who followed their local officials on Facebook, and subscribed to their weekly legislative updates. Units also invited their local officials to visit their post homes to get to know the local community. They received a response from Senator Rick Scott. Their main focus for Legislative this year was Veteran Suicide Prevention.

District 11 – reported they sent letters and emails to local, state and national elected officials resulting in 5 responses. Volunteered at early voting polls for a total of over 130 hours. Signed up 33 throughout the district to capwiz. They shared at their Post Family functions and had elected officials attend in the Post Family functions. Attended meet and greets coordinated and attended town hall meeting.

District 12 Barbara Mennillo They made personal visits to Local and State Officials, Emailed and sent letters to National Elected Officials with responses from one of them. They attended and held Meet the Candidate and Town Hall meetings. The units used these meetings to discuss at their general meetings upcoming legislative involving our veterans. They will continue their letter and email campaigns to ensure our veterans needs are at the forefront.

District 13 June Haber- Just as district 13 members were getting ready to actively be involved with the legislative program Hurricane Ian made landfall on Southwest Florida. Not only did many of the AL posts get destroyed but many unit members even lost their homes, however, this did not prevent them from getting involved. Phone calls and emails were made to their local state and national elected officials dedicating more than 36 hours of their time. One active Auxiliary member met with Governor DeSantis in his office. Unit 110 was totally destroyed during the hurricane but the meetings were held outside they worked closely with commissioner Deutch and local officials. Unit 323 reached out to their officials and received six responses. They focused on various issues concerning VA health issues for men and women, suicide prevention and the voting rights. They focused on reaching out to Auxiliary members in the community concerning voting procedures and a used allies the community political participation by zoom, they volunteer their time to work at the voting polls. As you can see district 13 auxiliary members continue to do their best to advocate strong legislative matters to their officials

District 14 Keys NO REPORT

District 14 Midland-NO REPORT

District 15 Carolyn Anderson – reported sending emails and letters to State and National Officials and subscribed to e-newsletters to elected officials. They focused on all Veteran related issues

District 16 Sandra Allen Several units educated members about American Legion legislative issues by educating members on the use of “capwiz” by way of unit meetings, email and their Facebook pages. Some units participated in town hall meetings, while most promoted contact

information for their national, state and local officials at meetings. Several distributed the Legislative Advocacy guide to their members and utilized Facebook and emails to help educate members about Legion legislative priorities. Several unit members volunteered at polling booths. Unit members signed up for Legislative Action Alerts, joined the Legislative Facebook page, sent letters and made phone calls. They forwarded all requests for support for the American Legion Legislative Program as they were posted on the National website. Those issues included PACT Act, Strong Veteran Act, Buddy Check, Major Richard Star Act, WWII Veterans to the VA, GI Benefits for National Guard, and Protection for Camp Lejeune survivors. Members throughout the district sent communications to Senators Rick Scott, Linda Chaney and Senator Marco Rubio.

Attended local town hall meetings, and a Veterans Resource Event, some spoke to their Mayor past Mayors and candidates for offices.

District 17 Carol Ripley reported strongly urged its units to learn and participate in civic activities with a focus on veterans welfare. Units subscribe to Capwiz, subscribed to Governor DeSantis Senator Scott Senator Rubio and Congressmen Waltz e-newsletters. Sent Legislative action alerts and followed the Department of Florida ALA legislative page in order to learn and share important veterans information with their members. Alerts were sent to units to be passed on to members by email mail and presented at regular unit meetings. They focused on attempts to limit the Second Amendment through levying a tax which punishes behavior; pressing their representatives to include National Guard and Reserve members in the VA benefits to also include World War II veterans in the VA benefits. Most members voted in both the primary and general elections, members work the polls on both dates for a total of 96 hours. They attended meet the candidates attendance city Townhall meetings. Regular emails visits and calls were sent to local officials. They sent emails and letters to governor DeSantis Rick Scott, Marco Rubio and Representative Waltz in Mills on items of concern and for veterans matters. Cochairs Carol and Penny presented a trifold and handout on serving veterans throughout the local state national legislators at the February district meeting.

Respectfully submitted May 11, 2023

Shirley Fashano

Department of Florida

Legislative Chair 2022-2023

Membership

“Painting the Town for our Veterans”



Our members have been painting the town for our veterans! We currently have 41,768 Members paid for 2023! We have 1 unit that has reached over 200% in membership! We have 125 units that have reached or exceed their 100% membership goal.

Our units held MANY event across Florida. From Key West to Escambia! They held hosted initiations for new members, presented continuous years membership pins, hosted bingo, dances, talent shows and dinners. They held membership drives at their local events. They participated in Trunk or Treats, Christmas Parties and Valentines cards for children. They hosted lunches for our active duty, first responders and educators. They made bears for Camp Boggie Creek and painted Veterans House. Unit 186 hosted a membership drive during the Swamp Fest! We have had some AMAZING events.

American Legion Auxiliary Town and Country Memorial Unit 152 President Kathy Driggers reported that Children & Youth visited the Boy's & Girl's Club right in their neighborhood and found out there was a big need there. The Auxiliary members decided to throw them a Halloween Party. This club has 120 elementary age and 50 middle school students in their after-school program with a waiting list. There are over 4,000 homeless children in Hillsborough County alone. After their general meeting they spent several hours filling 170 goody bags with LOTS of candy and small prizes. Also, members filled plastic cups with candy corn for Halloween Bingo. Eight Auxiliary members went to the Boys & Girls Club to provide lunch: hot dogs, homemade mac and cheese, chips, cookies, juice boxes and water. They played Halloween bingo and gave away door prizes and of course the OVER-STUFFED goody bags. A 5th grader won a door prize that had Halloween socks and beads and had to put them right on. They even stayed and waited on the Middle Schoolers to give them goody bags, drinks & chips; of course, had door prize drawings for them too. They tend to get overlooked because they are older and don't get out until 4. One of them asked me "How much did all this cost." Told him it didn't matter it was all for them. What a rewarding day for us all and a TRUE reality check – just little things and gestures mean SO MUCH to these kids.

Elisabeth Patierno from Unit 113 reported a Fashion Show event that they had. They started out the event with a welcoming drink of Champagne. A light lunch was served with dessert to follow. Brad Pike (their host from Off the Wave) had 10 female and 3 male models from the community, school teachers, fire fighters, members of the Chamber of Commerce,

etc. They modeled the clothes from Off the Wave store and shoes from Gulf Soles. Two ushers, dressed in their uniforms from the Post seated the guests and helped the models on and off the stage. A few honorary guests were invited, Past Department President Ruth Proctor, Past Commander of Post 113 and Past South Western area Commander Jerry Faught. District 8 President, Harriet Martin, District 8 Secretary, Kathy Rudd. VIP Sponsors bought their tables for \$500. The event was sold out. They also ran a silent Auction. There were many hours of planning and organizing this whole event. The community was a big part of the fashion show with their donations and attendance as well as their own members. The fashion show brought in almost \$13,000.00. With the profit, they were able to donate to the Englewood Veterans in need after Hurricane Ian, as well as Tidewell Hospice in Englewood and AEF.

We are recruiting new members like crazy! We have recruited 5,750 new members!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacy Cusano". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Stacy" and "Cusano" being capitalized and prominent.

FL Department Membership Chairman
American Legion Auxiliary

National Security

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA AMERICAN LEGION
AUXILIARY NATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM

Linda Knoblach-Harkness

Department of Florida

National Security Chairman

The National Security Program is an important program of the American Legion Auxiliary, designed to support our Military, First Responders, Homeland Security, and other various initiatives. In this report, we will highlight the accomplishments our Department Units achieved while working this program. Each Second Tuesday of the month, we held a Zoom meeting, inviting anyone who could, to join us. The purpose was to help promote and educate our members about the many tentacles of the National Security Program and how the units can most effectively work the program in their unit. Every month we would have a special subject-matter expert to help us understand where the Auxiliary can partner with these other agencies. We had representatives from Our Military Kids, Blue Star Mothers, Operation Homefront, Family Readiness Group. A State Trooper spoke about the Youth Law Cadet Camp. The American Legion, Department of Florida and the Florida Highway Patrol have teamed up to create the Academy. This is a weeklong program that provides a hands-on learning experience with insight into the operations of law enforcement agencies. The program allows young people the opportunity to consider law enforcement as a potential career choice. Many of our membership weren't aware this program existed. A representative from the Camaraderie Foundation joined our meeting in April. This foundation's mission is to provide healing for the "invisible wounds of war" through counseling, emotional, and spiritual support for all military service members, veterans, and their families. Although we didn't have a representative from Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, I did have an opportunity to speak with her and learn a great deal about the program and how the Auxiliary can create an effective partnership with them. Of course, this information was shared on our Zoom call. The feedback I received has been positive. Our members tell me they have learned far more about the program than ever before. What I find encouraging is that they are using these calls as a "springboard" to think outside the box and come up with their own ideas or find other agencies to partner with that will work best for their unit. Not everything can be cookie cutter. That is the tell-tale sign this has been a huge success. Even if we didn't have many attendees during the meeting, an overview of the meeting was distributed, disseminating the information covered. As the department Chairman, I created a "Flat Member" Award based on the Flat Stanley premise. The members made mini replicas of themselves in a colorful way (to coincide with Department President Jane Hardacre's, theme C.O.L.O.R. (Continue Our Legacy Of Respect/ #colormethere). The members were encouraged to take pictures of the Flat Members "helping" when they were working on the National Security Program, (i.e., packing boxes to send to troops, clipping coupons, visiting fire/police stations, to name a few). At our Department Convention, the Unit that submitted a Flat Member Book/Story with pictures will receive a trophy/plaque. The members who participated really enjoyed this as a fun new way to share what the program was about, because inevitably someone asked about their "Flat Member".

Of course, FaceBook was used to keep our members informed. We loved seeing what the activities units were doing and how they were promoting the program.

Many of the members continue to make significant contributions to the TroopOn Program and this year was no different with 11861 volunteer hours. The Department of Florida members donated a combined total of \$5,422,500 worth of coupons to our Military families across the globe.

Troop Box Donations included 1,461 volunteer hours and \$11,662 in goods being sent to our troops. That doesn't include the \$7689 in postage for shipping both the coupons and the troop packages.

This year we focus on partnering with outside agencies to combine our efforts to make a greater impact. One of alliances was with the USO. Units contributed \$4041 to the USO along with \$1201 in-kind donations and 282 volunteer hours.

Operation Homefront has become one of our favorite projects. We are thinking out of the box going beyond the usual Meals for the Military at Christmas. One Unit invited 10 Military families to their Trunk-or-Treat and teamed up with Operation Homefront to give the families a \$25 gift card, Auxiliary Halloween coloring books, crayons, candy, family membership applications and of course a thank you card thanking the entire family for their service.

Madeira Beach Unit 273 collected 54 meal kits with all the "fixings" for a family Thanksgiving Dinner for the National Guard in the Pinellas Park National Guard Armory. The total value of donations was \$4,937. This also included gift cards for the families.

Military Children were included on a Unit's Angel Tree. One new mother's child (a young sailor) was still in the NICU when the gifts were dropped off. The gratitude from this sailor reminds us why we are members of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The Department of Florida continued to work with Operation Homefront and Dollar Tree Stores for the "Back to School Brigade" and "Holiday Toys" programs. In all, we had 2289 volunteer hours and \$33,165 in donations including the in-kind donations from the Dollar Tree stores.

Our Units understand that the Blue Star Mothers are an important part of the National Security Program. They worked 196 hours by having packing parties with Blue Star Mothers to send packages to deployed children and donated \$14,580 in monetary and in-kind donations. We also had the honor of providing 13 Blue Star Banners. American Legion Auxiliary of Southwest Florida Unit 90 partnered with the local Blue Star Mother Chapter to support their efforts with Wreaths Across America. They held bake sales and 50/50 raffles allowing them to present the Chapter a check for \$1200.

Of course, it is always a heart-felt privilege to honor our Gold Star Mothers. Although this is a very elite group, it is a group those of us who have children who are serving never want to be a part of. Our membership volunteered 465 hours to support these elite women. Tampa Unit 5 had a Formal Tea to pay tribute to 13 Gold Star Mothers. Each Mother received a gift basket worth over \$100. Several Units in the Tampa area participate in a quarterly ceremony held at Veterans Memorial Park Tampa, Florida. This event is to remember the fallen and to show reverence to Blue Star Mothers who have sadly become Gold Star Mothers. A special banner is presented to each Mother along with a pale-yellow rose. Tribute is paid to the fallen firefighters, police officers and POW/MIAs as well. 14 Gold Star Banners were presented to these brave women. The Unit members were able to raise \$9,379 on behalf of the Gold Star Mothers both monetary and in-kind donations. Six (6) volunteers from Felix Poppell Unit 39 participated in the Gold Star Mother Walk-a-Thon and the unit donated \$1,140 towards the event.

Safety Harbor Unit 238 adopted the Shadow Hawks Navy Aviation Squadron aboard the USS Ronald Reagan, currently stationed in Japan. The request came in for snacks and letters from children so, the unit jumped into action and asked the local schools to help. The snacks and letters from 2nd, 5th and 7th graders arrive in time for Christmas.

USS Tampa Unit 5 hosts a “Dress for Success” event for Military Spouses. This affair allows spouses to pick out gently used business clothes at no cost. Getting back into the work force can be a challenge for spouses who move as much as the military and then having the added expense of proper attire can be daunting. This event is designed to alleviate some of that anxiety. The total hours for the Department of Florida are 322 and \$2,368.

Our Military families benefitted from 1,405 volunteer hours and \$20,459. Many of our Units adopted Military families. By adopting a family, they would provide Holiday Dinners, presents, school supplies, clothing, gift cards or other needs throughout the year. American Legion Unit 138 works very closely with Family Readiness Group at MacDill Air Force Base. Not only do they donate the usual, but always appreciated toys, coloring books, crayons etc., they donate handmade crochet matching baby blankets with hats to expecting Military Families. What a great way to use our talents.

Dunedin Memorial Unit 275 held their “Operation Toy Soldier” in December. This event is to provide Christmas stockings STUFFED to local military families who have parents who are not going to be home for the holidays.

We dedicated 176 hours to our Military Children by having Military Children’s Tables across the state of Florida. Many of our units included Jr. members in the ceremony.

The Department of Florida put in 1,925 volunteer hours dedicated to our First Responders including the 911 Operators and donating \$23,432 combined monetary and in-kind donations. Many Units honored these heroes on 9/11 by stopping by their local firehouses with baskets of goodies because snacks are always appropriate. There were breakfasts and luncheons galore! Our members couldn’t show their appreciation for these Hometown Heroes enough. Lake Wales Memorial Unit 71 make “1st Responder Survival Kits” using assorted candies that are fitting for the job such as Payday candy bars (because they are not paid enough) and Life Savers for obvious reasons).

Town and Country Memorial Unit 152 collected and delivered 47 toys to the Hillsboro County Sheriff’s Office. Deputy Lord who was there to receive the gifts was so excited to have them. He inspected each one for safety and he couldn’t stop his inner child from showing. Not only did they deliver the toys, but they also had the opportunity to stay and learn the importance of why these toys are so important. When law enforcement responds to a call, particularly domestic violence calls, the children are often the innocent victims of the situation. There are times when the children will see one or both parents being arrested, clearly a frightening sight for an already traumatized youngster. That’s where the toys come into play. It helps refocus the child and hopefully builds a better rapport between the police and the young person.

American Legion Unit 138 put their crocheting talents to work by making sleeping mats out of plastic grocery bags and taking them to their local law enforcement. As officers encounter the homeless, they can offer them a sleeping mat as a barrier from the damp ground.

Our Post homes love inviting the local First Responders to the Post for free breakfast and/or lunch. What a fantastic way of showing our appreciation for the work they do for all of us!

Challenger 7 Unit 348 didn't forget the local elementary School Resource Officer. The unit checks in weekly to ensure the officer has whatever they need. Not once and done for this unit!

Panama City Beach Unit 402 spent time interviewing 911 dispatchers. Through this they learned that these frontline operators do not have the same benefits as First Responders in the State of Florida. This unit has taken on the task of petitioning for new legislation that would include 911 Dispatchers. Linda Bowers of Unit 402 says "We need to contact our State and National Representatives to let them know that, while 911 Operators don't risk their lives every day, they are the most important part of directing Police, Firefighters, Paramedics, and all other First Responders. When we hear, see, and read about National Disasters, local tragedies, we praise those we see helping others. None of this would be possible without our invisible, unsung heroes!"

Hurricane Ian couldn't keep the Units in District 13 from the mission at hand. As the National Guard arrived, via helicopter because the roads were closed or bridges were gone, to help law enforcement stand guard against looters and vandals, the American Legion Post 136 family was there to make sure hot meals were available for lunch and dinner.

Members from other units were handing out water and food, offering hot meals and a place to sit and just rest, assisting local and FEMA officials in doing damage surveys and were on standby to help any way possible. Many of these same members experienced their own losses because of Ian.

It is a source of pride to work with the JROTC/ROTC. Our Units volunteered 653 hours, \$5,658 and helped with 66 medals. Pensacola Unit 340 included University of West Florida's ROTC in their POW/MIA ceremony.

D.N. McQueen Unit 103 helped with the JROTC dinner and awards night by serving 275 people and of course cleaning up afterwards. This year the Auxiliary presented a check for \$1,000 and 6 medals. This donation will help support the JROTC in competitions throughout the state of Florida.

The Department of Florida membership is a giving group. They even donate blood! A total of 620 volunteer hours were reported for 109 blood drives across the Department of Florida yielding 581 pints of blood.

Certainly, POW/MIA ceremonies were held across the state of Florida honoring not only those who are still missing, but the families who await their return.

It would be impossible to include everything the hard-working members of the Department of Florida did in this one report. I believe it would take volumes!

It has been my great pleasure to be the Department of Florida's National Security Chairman. I have learned a great deal about the program and my desire is continue to learn more.

Thank you, President Jane Hardacre, for this excellent opportunity!



Pensacola Unit 340 delivered a bunch of goodies and a handmade wreath to the local fire department on 9/11



Susan Witmer from Melbourne Unit 281 has the coupons ready to mail.



Mary Fish and Flat Mary of Unit 348 Cape Canaveral with Spirit of Service Member Award winner Julia T Coleman of Army National Guard.



University of West Florida ROTC participating in Pensacola Unit 340 POW/MIA Ceremony



Lake City Unit 57 made sure the 1st responders knew they are appreciated.



Linda Bowers from Panama City Beach
Unit 402 interviewed the local EMTs.



Trunk or Treat.

Operation Homefront was on hand at Pensacola Unit 340



The auxiliary at Rabe O Wilkison Unit 38, Fort Myers Florida is backing the Badge. They stuffed backpacks full of necessities for our homeless population. Our local liaison, officer Beiner distributed the supplies.



It must be R.E.D. Shirt Friday!



Rhonda Brailey-Mauer supporting the troops
volunteering at the USO.



Toni Gross from USS Tampa Unit 5 (a Gold Star Mother) and Rhonda Brailey-Mauer from St. Pete Unit 14 are representing the Blue Star Mothers and Gold Star Mothers and sharing information about the symbols of service and sacrifice.



Dara Oliver from made sure the Lake County Sheriff stayed alert with 4 Starbucks Frappuccinos and Lady Lake Police Department also received 4!





What a great way to kick off the month of the military child. St. Pete Unit 14 hosted an Operation Homefront "Star-Spangled Baby Shower" for a military families, what a fun filled day. Many thanks to all the volunteers and donors, your hard work and generosity certainly paid off, just look at the smiles.



Unit 348 gifting the Cape Canaveral Firefighters with Easter treats! All three stations received bags!



Because of the work of DPAA American Legion Family Post 69 had the honor to host a small meet & greet with the family of 2nd Lt Pharis E Weekly a WWII MIA who's remains are to arrive in Orlando.



Cape Coral Unit 90 delivering Valentine goodies to our first responders.



Unit 348 Cape Canaveral bringing Valentine bags for members of the Coast Guard of Port Canaveral.



Haylie, Abigail, and Noah
Schoolcraft handing out over 150 Valentine's Day cards and treats to the Palatka Army Reserve at Camp Blanding.



Sina & Isabella, from Alton Green Unit 194 cut, sorted and tallied up coupons for the Troopons for Troops.



Unit 108, one of our newest units,

held a gathering to clip coupons for National security.



Flat Linda from Pensacola Unit 340 was out delivering Christmas presents to a couple of Military families on NAS Pensacola.



Tammy O'Donnell from Riverview Unit 148 had dropped off gifts for Military children.



Tallahassee Unit 13 hard at

work sorting toys. Thank you, Operation Homefront, the Dollar Tree, and the Tallahassee community, for your generosity.

Past Presidents Parley

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Florida

Past Presidents Parley

2022-2023

President: Jane Hardacre

Chairman: Kim Oaks

Madam President Jane, it truly has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as your Department Past President Parley Chairman for 2022-2023. The purpose of the Past Presidents Parley committee is to utilize the experience and knowledge of past Auxiliary leaders for training and encouragement of future Auxiliary leaders. Through the Past Presidents Parley committee, members who have served as Unit, District, Department and National Presidents have an opportunity to continue in active service to the Auxiliary, helping to ensure strong future leadership for the organization.

As formers leaders, past Presidents at all levels are encouraged to continue their support to the organization by accepting responsibility to contribute their experience, knowledge and wisdom.

There is so much information to share in achieving a stronger organization, at each level, by sustaining growth through positive actions. Past Presidents should always make themselves available to current officers as well as potential candidates for office. Their guidance and constructive feedback should help maintain continuity and good cooperation.

On November 19, 2022 and during our fall conference we held a Past Department President Luncheon. Committee member Mary Tarnowski from District 5 and I made chicken marsala with fettuccini alfredo and roasted garlic parmesan green beans. Dara Oliver brought a beautiful cake. We had the honor of two special guests join us at our luncheon, our National President Vickie Koutz and Past National President Janet Jefford. I gifted National President a framed personalized Mentor saying and I gifted each PDP a tea mug with a flowering tea bud and thanked them for their service. To the ALA.

Let's take a look at what the Units reported doing this year.

District 1

Unit 296 reported having worked with the District Chairman in setting up a luncheon for all Past Presidents, unfortunately due to covid and spring break, the luncheon was cancelled. The Canva and the National magazine are always brought to the meetings.

Unit 356 reported having paid the dues of a Veterans wife and Past President. She and her husband had several medical concerns and the Unit honored her by paying her dues.

Unit 378 reported recognizing their Past President, Ammie Brunner at every meeting and she is very active in mentoring the Unit.

Unit 382 reported recognizes all Past Presidents at every meeting and rely on the mentorship from their years of experience.

Unit 392 reports they have several new members asking to shadow officers to gather more knowledge.

District 2

Unit 241 reports calls upon a Past Department President for Parliamentary direction and adherence to rules. Utilization of a past Unit President of 8 years helps maintain the Units compliance to rules and a smooth running operation. Advised members of past presidents on Unit and District levels. Contact with such who advised they are available.

District 3

Unit 57 reports teach proper ways of making motions to get the topic on a motion so you can discuss on the floor. Members request they want the meetings to move smoothly. The Unit gives a nursing scholarship in memory of a former member Pauline Collins Nursing Scholarship. The Unit also gives a scholarship at Girls State.

District 4 (100% Reporting)

Unit 16 Pat Report has helped with many issues that have come up.

Unit 58 reports District 4 President helped the Unit President and other officers.

Unit 77 discussed the value of using experienced ALA members as resources and many members are newer (less than 3 years) so they mentor one another as they gain knowledge and experience.

Unit 149 reports their new President is asking for guidance.

Unit 155 reports learning about the PPP program through presentations at school of instruction. The Unit mentors new members by explaining Auxiliary programs such as Girls State and assisting members with the year end reporting.

Unit 166 reports the PPP program was presented to the members by the ALA President of Unit 166.

Unit 210 requested assistance from District 4 President and Unit 27 President. Mary Kelly Perkins represented UD&R providing mentoring to Unit 210 President.

Unit 236 requested help from UD&R for revitalization.

Unit 237 Karon Roby says although being a past President was quite a while back, my experience not only allowed me to be a sounding board for past Presidents in addition to the current President, but also to support the various programs being promoted. Being a past President, as well as functioning in other officer related positions, enabled me to share those experiences, ideas and suggestions

District 5

Unit 9 says they discussed the PPP program at a Unit meeting

Unit 54 reports all members were made aware of the action plan and programs. Members asked many questions and past presidents always try to answer or give the member advice on finding the answer. Unit 54 has 3 active past presidents and 2 are currently serving as officers. All 3 are always willing to jump in and help when asked. Our PPs are great sources of information. During our meetings and planning sessions we rely on their experiences in the past to guide us as we move to the future.

Unit 233 says We discussed PPP at our Unit meeting and they have 2 new officers this year that were mentored by other members.

District 6 The Units that reported, educates their members at meetings, mentored members after meetings and helped members with questions whenever they were asked. They also explained programs and how they could volunteer. One Unit Past President welcomes new members and explains our mission.

District 7 no reporting.

District 8 Two units made presentations at Unit meetings about the PPP program. One unit educated officers on conduction an orientation of new members by past presidents. Units continually try to mentor new members, officers and especially presidents by past presidents. One unit provided 2 scholarships.

District 9 contact numbers were offered to members of some past presidents and Unit program Chairmen. Unit presidents offer themselves to members for guidance. Those unit presidents had to rely on internet. There were questions about membership, C&B reaching out to District chairman.

Unit 321 At each meeting, the Auxiliary board members offered themselves as mentors to any new members seeking more information about a committee or topic. In June 2022, our Unit held an Auxiliary Meet & Greet Social Hour. We thought it would be nice to invite our General Membership to visit with our Board members socially with drinks and appetizers. Our post kitchen donated food and the bar offered happy hour prices to Auxiliary members. This allowed people to introduce themselves without the formality of a meeting and a full agenda where they may feel overwhelmed or embarrassed to ask questions. We had a large two-fold board with Auxiliary committee descriptions and encouraged each attendee to pair up with someone to assist with a new committee so we could have more members involved in our day-to-day planning of activities and events. As a newer president to Unit 321, I reached out to our former president (she has moved out of our District and is no longer close to our Post home) and the District 9 President very often. Tasked with assisting members who need guidance in their committee, seeking advice from my predecessors allowed me to gain a better understanding of the Auxiliary and how to explain proper procedure to others. As the President I was the contact person when a member needed mentoring...from scheduling an event, to creating flyers, to advertising our activities, to finding appropriate resources to share at our meetings.

Unit 365 Provided phone numbers for past Department President Pearl McIntyre and several past district presidents. As current president I offered help and gave phone numbers of Department chair people and District and got assistance from past department President Pearl McIntyre.

District 11

Unit 62 shares they recognized past president Shirley Frazier as part of this year's COLOR ME THERE program. The current vice president is new to the Auxiliary and needed help understanding the organization and what we do.

Unit 65 said they introduce past presidents in Unit. Educate members on past experiences. Let members know they are mentors. New members asked questions and help.

Unit 271 Educating on past experiences. Educated new members on the emblem, Auxiliary programs and fundamentals of what the Auxiliary stands for.

District 12

Unit 1 Educated members about PPP and reviewed program at meetings.

Unit 39 Educated members about PPP at meetings. Instructed to lean on past presidents for information.

Unit 40 Gave overview of committee's at Unit meetings. A unit member attended a District 12 Past Presidents Parley luncheon held at Unit 81 in Melbourne. The attendees included Past Unit Oresidents, District Presidents, a past area president and a past Department President. The hostess was Dara Oliver.

Unit 117 shared with members how we support the program. Unit 117 hosted a brunch in honor of our female veterans and gold Star Mothers. Attending were 21 women veterans including Oast Department Commander Diane Boland, 3 Gold Star Mothers, Department President Jane Hardacre, Past Department Mary Perkins and Past Department President Michele Degennaro. Our past treasurer spent several hours mentoring our new treasurer.

Unit 189 educated members about PPP

Unit 200 goes over all Chairman positions and programs plans. Information was given to all members on the program. Tracked down all information on all past presidents and updated the plaque displayed at the post. New members were given mentors to assist them in learning the programs.

Unit 318 Susan Pfohl explained how she is a past president and what her duties were and what the PPP program means. Talked to the 124 new members about Chairman positions and what officers are supposed to do.

Unit 344 Information received was shared with members. Hosted a female veterans fishing day. Adopted a female veteran from Viera VA Clinic provided clothing and a bicycle.

Unit 358 Always contact District or State officers with questions.

District 13

Unit 38 held discussions at their meeting and requested suggestions for fund raisers.

Unit 90 have 4 past presidents that are active.

Unit 110 continues to help the veterans nursing home by sending cards for the holidays and birthdays to the residents. They continue to support a female deployed in the navy. They presented a \$3,000 nursing scholarship to one of the members who is in final year if nursing school. They had an interesting year with the results of hurricane Ian. One of the past presidents had to move out of her condo as it was condemned from the storm. The unit pulled together along with the riders and moved her to her sister's then had to move her again to a assisted living facility. Unfortunately, she passed away in March so they will be honoring her in May at a memorial service.

Unit 130 explained what PPP is during one of their meetings.

Unit 136 awarded their past President with her pin and honored their outgoing treasurer by presenting her with a watch and honorary membership.

Unit 192 their past president is residing in a nursing home but offers suggestions to the unit.

Unit 274 has past presidents that help teach writing of reports.

Unit 303 their past presidents help support and mentor new members on various committees and community projects. They unfortunately lost 2 prestigious awards that hung in the post from hurricane Ian.

Unit 323 held discussions at meetings and raised money to help with the women veterans forum.

Unit 336 mentored small sessions with newer members. They also nominated Dee Sims for the Past President of the Year Award.

District 14 as District President, Nancy Casquarelli has communicated with several past district presidents and past Department presidents for guidance and information. District 14 is honoring Past Department President Edie Harrington and we honored her "Let The Good Times Roll" New Orleans themed lunch for our District meeting held at Post 9898.

Unit 133 tries to explain everything at all of the meetings for new members.

Unit 154 shares through discussion at meetings and school.

District 15

Unit 111 discussed the mentoring program, give all details of various functioning so someone will be able to easily step into the president position as well as any other elected position. The Chaplain reaches out regularly to the District Chair.

Unit 147 the new president has requested help from past presidents to run meetings. There are only 3 past presidents in our unit. One currently lives out of state. Margaret P and Maria B meet on a monthly basis and look for fabric and yarn for our veterans blankets program.

Unit 148 explained to members what the past President Parley program is and what that person's role is at meetings. Several members were interested in becoming officers and were interested in what the position required.

Unit 152 The unit happily explains what our past presidents do, their main focus for the past few years has been honoring our female veterans. They host an annual luncheon for female veterans on February 11, 2023 there were 23 female veterans and 41 guests in attendance with Honor Flights Peter Frey as guest speaker.

Unit 186 at every meeting and every time they get together, their past Presidents mentor and encourage other Unit members. As a recipient of last years past president of the year, the unit took the \$100.00 reward and used it to hold a special luncheon to honor all Past President. The Unit President held a class for completing program reports.

District 16

Unit 14 has several members who have been long time officers. The unit refers to the Department and the National websites to compile information to their members. Bonnie Carter says "Being able to point people in the right direction to find the information they need is very rewarding. From the Poppy Program, AEF and even teaching a member how to make a raffle basket is very rewarding."

Unit 79 spoke about the PPP program at a meeting. They had a new transfer member ask about the differences between the Florida Auxiliary and the Georgia Auxiliary. Three of their members utilized online information.

Unit 104 three members used the website's. PPP was available to current president for whatever needs were needed to best serve the unit.

Unit 119 educated their members about PPP with the action plan.

Unit 125 Unit members are encouraged to attend District school of instruction, ABC school, convention, fall conference and participate in the Department Presidents tour of the District. The 2 past presidents of the Unit both mentor and inspire all the members to reach a further goal. Seven members used the websites.

Unit 158 explanation of the PPP was discussed at monthly meetings.

Unit 173 one of their past presidents has 59 years continuous years of membership. Three new members were informed how protocol is used.

Unit 273 their PR and Leadership chairmen developed a training program the call ALA 101. Over a 6 month period, Unit chairmen made presentations to new members explaining the mission of the ALA programs. The PPs talk about programs with the members all the time. There are 4 members that utilized the website.

Unit 275 at 2 different meetings, several past presidents there and they were introduced and they talked about the program. They assign a mentor to their new members and they also participate in the nursing scholarship program with USF School of Nursing.

District 17

Unit 115 discussed special projects such as Gary Sinise Foundation and causes of Past Presidents. Made available magazines and pamphlets.

To be a mentor is an honor, and it comes with great responsibility. It means you are being recognized for your wisdom and expertise, and it obligates you to share those things with your mentee. The right mentor can change lives and inspire success.

Remember that most of mentoring is "caught not taught" meaning that many mentors don't realize their lasting imprint on a mentee is often how they conduct their life, whether at work, home or other settings. How you serve as a role model is as important as your face to face meetings. Actions create the most lasting impressions.

Yours in service,

Kim Oaks

Poppies



Department of Florida Poppy Report 2022-2023

For the 2022-2023 Poppy reporting year twelve (12) of the sixteen (16) districts submitted a report. Poppy distribution and any poppy fundraisers help provide monetary assistance to Veterans, their families and active-duty military.

This year's reporting included how units worked together as a team to distribute poppies. Some units had poppy paint party fundraisers. Units placed poppy cans at their post canteen area and local restaurants that would allow them. One unit came up with a Veteran's Day "Light Up the Post" fundraiser where they sold bag kits that were placed around their Post laminating during the Memorial Day holiday weekend. District 1 (unit 392 president) was asked to provide robotic companion pets for Clifford C. Sim Veterans Nursing Home. The pets are used for therapy pets for Alzheimer and PTSD patients and those suffering from loneliness. Two units reported they held a "Little Miss Poppy" Contest. Most units reported they use social media to promote Poppy Day. During poppy distribution members wore the American Legion Auxiliary branding. Members attended Town Hall meetings to discuss the poppy and what it stood for. Several units connected with members by sending our mailings about the poppy in hopes of receiving a donation. Poppy material of coloring books and the Flanders Field poem was displayed and handed out to the community. Several Poppy Ambassadors wore the poppy sash while attending meetings and memorial service events. At Department Fall Conference the Poppy Program held a raffle which raised \$2,300.00 for Madam President Jane Hardacre's project Snowball Express. Overall, the ALA Poppy program is thriving in the state of Florida.

Poppy Funds Raised	Number of Poppies Distributed	Poppy Volunteer Hours
\$94,638.45	54,324	624

Service Not Self
#colormethere

Submitted by:
Bridgette Greene
American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida Poppy Chairman 2022-2023

Public Relations

Public Relations promotes who we are, what we do, and why we matter to our members, community, and the public. This year (2022-2023), American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida President, Jane Hardacre, chose the theme Continue Our Legacy of Respect C.O.L.O.R. Hardacre started the year off, with the message "Respect starts with every one of us. We must respect ourselves before we can respect others. As members of this great organization, we must remember why we joined. Our mission of Service, Not Self is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of our veterans, and their families."

And the units in the Department of Florida echoed Color Me There! Sharing their positivity, branding of the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA), with their 31,116 followers across Facebook (FB), 420 followers on Instagram, and 6 followers on TikTok. They created 306 event flyers, that they shared on social media, inside their post homes, newspaper, digital media, and in their community. Units across Florida had radio broadcast advertisements for patriotic holidays, 18 television interviews, and 270 news articles published in the newspaper and some duplicates on digital media. You can view social media postings on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok using #ColorMeThere.

For the ALA Department of Florida, it has its own FB page [ALAFL Department](#) with 396 members, and also FB pages for programs: ALAFL Americanism, ALAFL Chaplain, ALA FL Children & Youth, ALAFL Community Service, ALA FL Constitution & Bylaws, ALAFL Education Program, ALAFL Emergency Fund, Florida Girls-State, ALAFL History, American Legion Auxiliary Florida Juniors, ALAFL LEADERSHIP, ALAFL Legislative, ALAFL National Security, ALAFL Past Presidents Parley, ALA FL Treasurers' Info. These groups provide collaboration of knowledge to their members.

The Department of Florida Public Relations FB page ([ALAFL Public Relations](#)) currently has 923 members (last year 758). We are on Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok – user name @ALAuxFlorida. PR Dept FB page has daily postings from districts and units sharing their events, flyers, news media reports, and pictures. The monthly newsletter from Southern Division PR is shared and added to the files tab on FB. Also, information from ALA National and American Legion National social media sites are shared: ALA Blog, ALA Academy Training, Legislative Action Alerts, and YouTube videos. Similar information is also shared on our other social media platforms.



Instagram



alauxflorida
Orlando, Florida



alauxflorida Orlando, Fla. – @alaforveterans American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Department of Florida announces Auxiliary member Jane Hardacre became the Department President of Florida during the organization's 100th Department Convention held from June 16-19, 2022, in Orlando, Fla.

Hardacre's theme is "Continue Our Legacy Of Respect." The ALA will focus on C.O.L.O.R. throughout the year. Special project is the Gary Sinise Foundation Central Florida. When asked of her choice, Hardacre states "Gary's willingness to devote his life to giving back to our veterans, first responders, and the children of fallen heroes touched my heart. Our organization, and his, are a perfect match" www.garysinisefoundation.org/florida #ColorMeThere #americanlegionauxiliary

44w



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 user6637494700880

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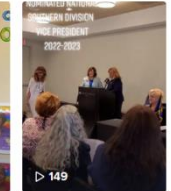
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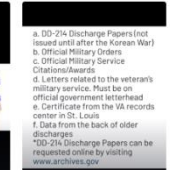
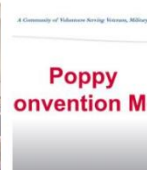
American Legion Depart...



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ALAFL Public Relations

Great information, share with your members...Military Appreciation Month, National Poppy Day, Memorial Day, and more!



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Military Appreciation Month, National Poppy Day, Memorial Day, and more!

Connecting with you monthly - May 2023 eNews (View as Webpage) Share This Email Share T...



ALAFL Public Relations

May Newsletter from Pam Eckler
National Public Relations Committee
Southern Division Chairman

REMINDER: Our national website, alaforveterans.org, contains a variety of resources for your Public Relations team. As we enter the season of patriotic holidays and observances, take advantage of the flyers and media templates available. News releases and letters to the editor can be customized to share local information about activities sponsored by your unit. Increasing your media presence will increase your visibility and the public's awareness of who you are as an organization, what you do, and why you matter.



PDF

May 2023 Newsletter.pdf



ALAFL Public Relations

Admin Group expert in Social Apps +2 · April 1 ·

All members at all levels are invited to take ALA Academy Courses. These courses can be found in the MyAuxiliary portal of ALAFORVETERANS.ORG. Self-paced courses can be taken from any device and on your schedule. Most are about 30-40 minutes.

Take one today:

- ALA 101: introductory course, who we are, what we do and why we matter.
- ALA Branding and Why it Matters to Me: Branding is more than just a logo – it's also how the public perceives our organization and our values.
- ALA Communication Methods: about using social media.
- Establishing an ALA Culture of Goodwill: help ALA members better understand how our attitudes, beliefs and behaviors impact ALA membership and the ALA's ability to serve our mission.

The ALA Fundraising: course teaches members about the four different ALA Foundation grants and how to apply, how to plan and market a fundraiser.

- How to Deal with Conflict: how you handle conflict towards a positive relationship.
- ALA Leadership: Living Our Motto of Service Not Self: reviews what it means to be a leader.
- ALA Juniors E-Learning Course is designed with younger members in mind. Juniors will learn about the purpose of the program, how to excel as leaders, tips for speaking to groups, and much more.



ALA FL Public Relations @ALAuxFlorida · Feb 2

Support our Afghan Allies

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.

The American Legion @AmericanLegion · Jan 31

2023 legislative prior: Support Our Afghan Allies

The United States must honor its promises & provide genuine, lasting protection for the Afghans who have made it safely to the U.S. & for those who were left behind.

More: legion.org/sites/legion.o...

Out of the 16 districts in Florida, 12 have their own Facebook group, two share the page with the Legion Family. This provides a place for members and potential members to view events, happenings, news, and to learn more about the American Legion Family. Also, a great tool, for those units that need to help to grow their own FB or that do not have a FB page to share their information.

District 8 (Manatee, Sarasota, Hardee, Desoto, and Highlands Counties) and District 13 (Charlotte, Lee, Collier, Glades, and Hendry Counties) were affected by Hurricane Ian, made land fall on September 28, 2022 at 3:05pm, high-end Category 4 with sustained winds of 155mph. Several posts were damaged or destroyed. The Department of Florida mobilized quickly to help those affected by Ian, and so did the whole American Legion Family across the nation, and organizations and people in the community. Even for those affected, they continued to work the mission of the ALA, by volunteering to receive, house, and distribute hurricane supplies. Units worked within their community to be a source of help and information. Updates, photos, and news were shared on District 13 FB page [FLALADistrict13](#). Several news interviews, articles, and The American Legion media shared news reports to all their members.

<https://www.legion.org/emergency/257031/legion-family-begins-address-ian%E2%80%99s-aftermath>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqjATQKpQrg>

<https://www.legion.org/emergency/257001/departement-florida-mobilizes-help-those-affected-hurricane-ian>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBHkCCMc_M4



ALA FL Public Relations @ALAuxFlorida · Oct 9, 2022

...

District 8 ~ Lake Placid, Fla.

American Legion Family from District 16 Pinellas County, delivering hurricane supplies to help Veterans and families in the community.

[#ColorMeThere](#) @theamericanlegion

Vid by Eric Nestler District 16 Commander

Music: bensound.com





alauxflorida
Fort Myers Shores, Florida



alauxflorida District 13 ~ Ft. Myers Shores, Fla.
On Tuesday, \$20,000 of supplies were delivered from the American Legion in Illinois and Indiana! It only took 5 days for them to collect and buy much needed items for our community and another couple of days to drive them down. A great team was present to help unload. We appreciate the support!
#ColorMeThere #AmericanLegionFamily @alaforveterans @theamericanlegion

28w



alauxflorida
Suncoast Community Center



alauxflorida District 13 ~ North Ft. Myers, Fla.
Chris Hamrick, 2nd Vice CMDR American Legion Department of Florida delivering hurricane relief supplies to Suncoast Community Center. Thank you to all the American Legion Family that helped to unload the supplies. #ColorMeThere

28w



alauxflorida
Fort Myers, Florida

alauxflorida District 13 ~ Ft Myers Shores, Fla. American Legion Auxiliary Unit 351 distributed care packages to children in their community on Friday, Oct. 14. The care packages included: coloring books, crayons, small toys and candy. Bringing smiles to children, after they endured much losses due to Hurricane Ian! #ColorMeThere @alaforveterans

30w

District 11 (Okeechobee and Palm Beach Counties) Unit members have participated as Pall Bearer for several Missing in America Project (MIAP) internments at South Florida National Cemetery, carried by multiple local and national news channels WPBF, WPLG, and NBC News Now. Several house painting events for Veterans and their widows. News report with President Jane Hardacre also working hand in hand with the Legion Family. News reports click below:

<https://news.yahoo.com/veterans-group-honors-thousands-unclaimed-201622271.html>

<https://www.wpbf.com/article/veteran-home-paint-help-good-florida/42122242>

<https://www.local10.com/news/local/2022/12/02/act-of-kindness-organization-steps-in-to-help-93-year-old-veteran-in-need/>



WPLG Local 10 · Follow

December 2, 2022 · 🌐

HELPING HAND: An act of kindness from a local organization helps a Korean War veteran in need.



LOCAL10.COM

Act of kindness: Organization steps in to help 93-year-old veteran in need

An act of kindness from the American Legion Auxiliary, helps a Korean War veteran in need.





Alafldistrict 11

December 5, 2022 · 🌐

...

Department President Jane Hardacre visit to District 11 was successful. We worked and we played. I want to thank all the members of District 11 that participated in her visit. It could not have been successful if it wasn't for all of you. Thank you to The Legion Family for working together. Thank you to the District 11 Officers who helped. District Commander Harry Malecki, 2nd vice Commander & District Riders Chair, Stan Brown, SAL Commander Michael Mathias, Southern Area Commander Johnny Castro. We even got her on the news. During her visit we were able present to her \$5002. towards her project. The Gary Sinise Foundation of Central Florida Snowball Express. We still have five more months to raise money for her project I'd like to see District 11 hit \$10,000 we're halfway there. We can do this. [#colormethere](#) ❤️💜💛🧡💚💙.





Alafldistrict 11

March 13 · 🌐

...

District 11 Family Painting a veteran's half way house in Loxahatchee on February 25 2023. Painting the town of our Veterans!! [#colormethere](#)



Alafldistrict 11

March 13 · 🌐

...

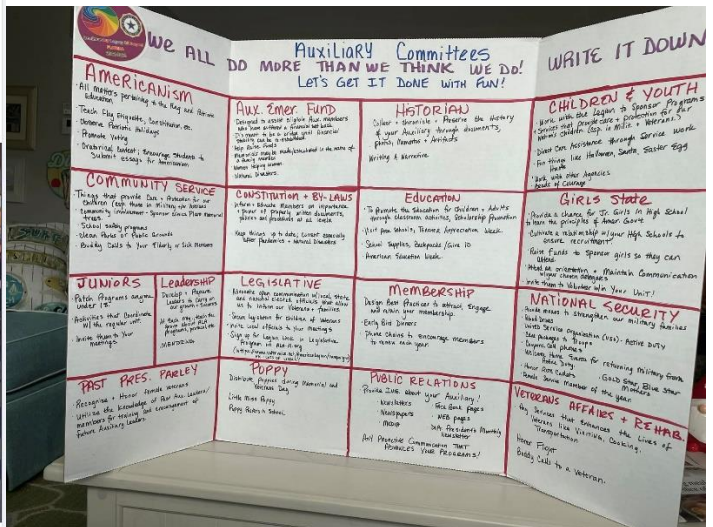
District 11 President painted another home. This one was a widow of a veteran. Done on March 11, 2023 with the help from Unit 271 and 1 member of post 271 Legionnaires. And JL Cares group. A big Thank you to Joann with the SWA for donating the paint and supplies. District 11 is painting the Town for our Veterans and their family. [#colormethere](#)



At the Fall Conference on November 18, 2022 there were two training sessions for PR. The topics were “Why is PR important?” “How easy social media is”, and “Everyone can do PR.” We also held other program training sessions, President Jane Hardacre and Past Department President Michele DeGennaro presented the C.O.L.O.R. Continue Our Legacy of Respect & Conflict Resolution. Another great topic was “How to write reports,” that was recently featured by ALA National. Both were live sessions on Facebook and available on YouTube. The members that attended ALA Department of Florida Fall Conference 2022, thoroughly enjoyed the classes, they also were able to share their experiences.



How do you take proper minutes? What are the duties of a unit secretary? A district treasurer? And what's in the American Legion Auxiliary's Constitution & Bylaws? As with many other organizations, understanding all aspects of ALA membership engagement can take time. ALA's Department of Florida, recognizing that there's a lot to digest about membership, launched an annual leadership training program, Auxiliary Basic Concept School, or ABC School for short, to make sure all ... See more



Members contributed and enjoyed reading “the Florida Canvas”, ALA Department of Florida newsletter (<https://alaf1.org>). Units and districts sent in articles of working the mission. The newsletter includes reports, ideas, tips, and information from Department Leadership and Programs Chairman.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

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Featured News

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ARE YOU READY FOR A COLORFUL CONVENTION?
- Convention Hotel Booking
- Workshop Rooming (Group Code: ALA23)
- Love For Chris Hamrick (click here for details)
- Store Inventory: *Please Submit Survey*
- All Year End Impact Reports are on Forms & Resources under "Unit Forms"
- All ACH info has been moved to Forms & Resources under "Resources for Unit Treasurer"
- Any poppy orders for Memorial Day distribution time frame cannot be filled, as the deadline has now passed. Please do not send any poppy orders at this time. We will

Upcoming Events

may 20

District 1 Constitutional Conference

may 20

District 13 Constitutional Conference

may 20

District 15 Constitutional Conference

Current Newsletter

Members wore their ALA branded attire in their post and outside in the community for parades, membership drives, patriotic holidays, ceremonies, and events.

Here are some highlights of units across the state of Florida.

Unit 9, Jacksonville - Wear branded attire and name tags. Active in the community and adopted Pickett Elementary School, gifting students with 10 for 10 (school supplies), holiday baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas for families in need, for the children, provided 23 bicycles. At their unit Christmas Party, open to the community, 147 children received toys. The Unit 9 awarded a Good Deed Award to Mea Kay (Unit 233, Ponte Vedra), for helping at the said event.



ALA FL Public Relations @ALAuxFlorida · May 10

On Sunday, May 7 at 5th District Constitutional Conference (Jacksonville, Florida) the District Junior Vice President was awarded the Good Deed Award by District Chaplain and Unit 9 President Karen Marks.

#ColorMeThere #GoodDeed @ALAforVeterans #ALAFLJuniors #ALAJuniors



Unit 10, Kissimmee - Community engagement, and building a good rapport with local Police Department. They support the Hunters Creek Sewing Angels (gained two new members through them), donated \$300 for materials, helped make cooled headbands for active military. They now meet monthly and added seasonal crafts for the Veterans.

Unit 13, Tallahassee - Is utilizing the "CASH APP" to receive donations, the information is displayed at all fundraisers. Auxiliary articles were published in the Tallahassee Democrat newspaper.

<https://www.tallahassee.com/story/life/chronicle/2022/04/05/american-legion-auxiliary-donates-easter-baskets-foster-children/7263814001/>

<https://www.tallahassee.com/story/life/chronicle/2022/07/19/tallahassee-high-school-seniors-meet-leaders-florida-girls-state/10074371002/>

<https://www.tallahassee.com/story/life/chronicle/2022/09/13/american-legion-teams-mays-munroe-supply-beds-veterans/8059259001/>

American Legion Auxiliary partners with Mays-Munroe to supply beds for veterans

Marjorie McNeill Special to the Chronicle

Published 9:30 a.m. ET Sept. 13, 2022



American Legion teams with Mays-Munroe to supply beds to Tallahassee Veterans Village. *Provided*

The American Legion Auxiliary Sauls-Bridges Unit 13 teamed with Mays-Munroe, Inc. of Tallahassee to provide 18 bed sets to Tallahassee Veterans Village. This donation has now completed the task of replacing every bed, including mattress and box spring, at Veterans Village.

Unit 14, St. Petersburg - Wear branded attire while distributing poppies, while volunteering at fundraiser for Jump for Kids (a group that provides sports equipment for underprivileged kids). Auxiliary shirts are worn while shopping and delivering food to the Bay Pines Food Pantry, school supplies and toys to Lakewood Elementary School, cooking meals at the Bay Pines Fisher House and while teaching kids at Perkins Elementary to knit.

Unit 16, Gainesville - Held their Annual Blessing Bucket event that provides essential to homeless Veterans. WCJB was there to cover the event and broadcast on national television (link below). Unit started an Instagram account (american_legionaux16), started an ALA website, held zoom meetings for members that were not able to attend their monthly meeting. The unit is attending more community festivals with their branding attire, set up an information table for those to learn more about the ALA.

<https://www.wcjb.com/2022/11/07/american-legion-auxiliary-hosted-its-10th-annual-blessing-bucket-giveaway/>

American Legion Auxiliary hosted its 10th annual "Blessing bucket giveaway"



By [WCJB Staff](#)

Published: Nov. 7, 2022 at 1:11 AM EST



GAINESVILLE, Fla. (WCJB) - With the holiday season approaching, the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 16 wanted to bless some North Central Florida veterans.

Unit 28, Key West – Held their annual cancer walk, raised over \$5,000 for the Cancer Foundation of Florida Keys.



Unit 38, Ft. Myers - had two articles published in the newspaper, highlighting their collaborative hurricane relief efforts.

Unit 55, Clermont – Sponsored a few community fun events such as Trunk or Treat, a Thank You Pizza & Ice Cream Party for the Girl Scouts, and a very special yard sale for the Gary Sinise Foundation Snowball Express.

Unit 57, Lake City - Used radio broadcasting (102.1) to promote their Auxiliary Yard Sale. They have a good relationship with their local media and chamber of commerce. They share their American Legion Post 57 Family Facebook page. They support the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans Domiciliary and take care of First Responders in the community, by providing free lunches.



Unit 62, Stuart – has its own ALA newsletter with updates, reminders, ways to volunteer/donate, recent accomplishments with pictures embedded.

Unit 75, Crestview - Head a Christmas parade float every year, the city chooses the theme, the unit added gingerbread men in military service uniforms. Held a teddy bear drive for the Okaloosa County Sheriff's department to comfort children taken from homes due to neglect or abuse. Presented National Youth Hero Award to Xanai Lock who helped an individual who fell off a roof that suffered a compound fracture. While waiting, Xanai stopped the bleed while waiting for emergency medical service to arrive.

Unit 88, Jacksonville - holds two annual events "Fall Fest" & the "Easter Egg Hunt" where members' children attend along with children from neighboring schools attend, great community visibility. This year the unit awarded one of the Volunteers from the Englewood ROTC a plaque recognizing his leadership skills during the Fall Fest.



alauflorida
Jacksonville, Florida

alauflorida District 5 ~ Jacksonville, Fla.
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 88 had their annual "Fall Festival" yesterday. There were games, prizes, crafts, a bouncy house, food, bake sale, awesome decorations, a visit from the Star Wars 501st Legion - Squad 7 & volunteers from the Englewood High School Army JROTC. A BIG THANK YOU to everyone that participated in this event! #ColorMeThere @alaforveterans
Edited · 30w

Unit 90, Cape Coral - advertise their events in the local paper, which has brought more attendance, and growth in the ALA. They wear their branded attire to all functions, including working the Red Sox Training games, local art fairs, Cape Coral Bike Night, Poppy distribution, Children's Christmas party, membership drives, and local events. They have two articles that were published this year.

Unit 98, Coral Gables - Post on Facebook meeting reminders, events, education about the ALA, and military history. They work closely with the Legion family, and every year, the post will pay for their hotel rooms for the Department Fall Conference and Convention, providing the unit an opportunity to learn.



Unit 103, Punta Gorda - Team Rubicon, a disaster management team was housed in their post home for three months. During this time, many media surrounded their post. Television and newspaper articles were written, they had Governor DeSantis visit them a couple of times, with pictures taken with members. The unit held a First Responders Luncheon, that was printed in the newspaper.

https://youtu.be/5_xF5esk2JA

Unit 108, Lutz – were featured in an article with their ALA attire and discussing coupons for our troops overseas.

ALA FL Public Relations @ALAuxFlorida · Apr 21

District 15 ~ Lutz, Florida
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 108 sending coupon sales overseas.
[#ColorMeThere @ALAforVeterans](#)

The Laker/Lutz News @LakerLutzNews · Jan 18

It's not Wednesday until you read the @LakerLutzNews!!! There's copies for everyone available in #landolakes, #lutz, #wesleychapel, #dadedcity and #zephyrhills! Or check out our online e-edition at buff.ly/3AIOCG0 #journalism #localnews

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Pasco board wants better design
County board members want better, alternative neighborhoods and they're pushing for regulation to make that happen.
By B.C. Hines
Pasco County's board of commissioners is considering the idea of creating a new type of neighborhood design, one that would be more walkable and bikeable than the current suburban-style developments. The board is also considering a new type of development, one that would be more walkable and bikeable than the current suburban-style developments. The board is also considering a new type of development, one that would be more walkable and bikeable than the current suburban-style developments.

Coupon clippers ship savings overseas
Members of the Lutz-based American Legion Auxiliary Unit 108 are clipping coupons to ship overseas to help troops and their families. The unit has been clipping coupons for a long time and the coupons are being shipped overseas to be used by the troops. The unit has been clipping coupons for a long time and the coupons are being shipped overseas to be used by the troops.

Unit 110, Port Charlotte - Post home was destroyed by Hurricane Ian. They wear their branded attire when they are out and about. Their Facebook page has followers from 15 different cities in Florida, and one from North Carolina.

Unit 112, Winter Park – Have an amazing bi-monthly newsletter, pages of jam-packed news and events. This newsletter had specified board spots such as the Commander, Auxiliary President, Membership, Adjutants Desk, Fundraiser, Reminders, even advertising opportunities, Great idea! Active on the website and Facebook pages. They recently had a few unit members present to the local Rotary Club where they had to opportunity to share out programs, how they support the community and included the full American Legion Family in the presentation. During Veterans Day, unit members attended a local elementary school where they could have Auxiliary information packets, applications ready for the full family of the Legion and gave away Poppies.

Unit 113, Rotunda West – Had 19 articles published, from Cornhole game every Saturday and their monthly dinners to their special events, including their New School Supply Drive and their Odd Ball Party. Articles published in Englewood Review and the Englewood Sun.

Unit 130, La Belle - Held several events that welcomed community involvement, blood drive, free lunch serving over 60 people, Pancake Breakfast with Santa that served over 200 children in the community with free breakfast and gift. They have Sunday Breakfast Buffets that are open to the public, has been very successful.

Unit 136, St. James City - Great working relationship with the newspaper Pine Island Eagle, special events are covered by the paper. Upcoming functions are publicized in the community, so to no surprise, when the island was destroyed by Hurricane Ian, the community knew where to go for information, food, supplies, and help.

<https://www.legion.org/news/257584/american-legion-family-again-brings-thanksgiving-joy-others-across-nation>



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(Stephanie Ruhle Twitter photo)

American Legion Family again brings Thanksgiving joy to others across the nation

The American Legion

NOV 30, 2022

Unit 138, Tampa – On Instagram @unit138auxiliary and TikTok @alaunit138tampa. They use smore.com to send out the digital ALA monthly newsletter, reaching 1,200 people in the year. The smore platform provides interactive features from calendar, events flyers, link to download pictures, logging volunteer hours, or sign up to volunteer. Because of this, membership renewal is over 113%. Very active on social media.

Unit 148, Riverview - They do not miss an opportunity to engage with the community by sharing what the ALA does and how everyone has time to volunteer from baking, making a side dish, or by simply donating. On holiday cookouts, open to the public, they set up a table with the Family Post Newsletter and applications for those that want to join.

Unit 154, Marathon – Have two online and YouTube video reports for Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day.

https://youtu.be/nmfYKq0_IQ

<https://youtu.be/eapuLJLmZ-4>

Unit 155, Crystal River - Started a Facebook page this term, with over 152 followers. They use newspaper media to share their events.

Unit 159, Venice – Had five articles published in the Gondolier Newspaper and Eastside Neighbors Venice. They used their local paper to advertise their events from Country Western Dinner Dance, Holiday Dinner Dance, USO Dinner Dance, Elvis Show, Mardi Gras Dinner Dance, to Evening Fun Dinner.

https://www.yoursun.com/northport/news/veterans-receive-quilts-of-valor/article_c19d68c6-66a8-11ed-9155-97952a16e06e.html



Unit 166, Homosassa Springs - Shares their American Legion Post Family Facebook, with over 1,500 followers. The unit creates "EVENTS" on Facebook which is shared and increases exposure. They have several press releases that were published by local newspaper sharing upcoming holidays and events. The unit contributes to the Post Family newsletter and has its own newsletter which is used to educate members about the ALA programs.

Unit 183, Fern Park - Proudly wears the Auxiliary emblem at all events in the post and away. One of the fun events was the colorful night dancing and raising money with a purse action and \$1,500 was donated to the Gary Sinise Foundation, Snowball Express.

Unit 186, Spring Hill - had 10 articles published in The Hernando Sun (Hernandosun.com). Provided a "Good Deed Award" to Letty Lockhart, the article was published, see link below.

<https://www.hernandosun.com/2023/04/17/letty-lockhart-wins-the-good-deed-award/>



ALAFL Public Relations



Virna Luke

Admin Group expert in Social Apps +2 · April 26 at 5:35 AM · 🌐

District 15 ~ Spring Hill

When Patti Motzer told Letty that she would be the recipient of the auxiliary's prestigious "Good Deed Award," she expressed a keen interest in helping more. Motzer is the Children & Youth Chairman for American Legion Post 186 in Brooksville as well as District 15 of the American Legion Auxiliary Dept of Florida.

Also present for this event was Florida Department President of the American Legion Auxiliary Jane Hardacre. "I love what Letty has done," Hardacre said. "She is a role model for other kids."



HERNANDOSUN.COM

Letty Lockhart wins the "Good Deed Award"

Hernando Sun Newspaper covers Brooksville, Masaryktown, Spring Hill, Ridge Manor, Weeki ...

Unit 192, Ft. Myers - Helped with the preparation, serving, and clean up after a Christmas Dinner at the Renaissance Apartment for Seniors. The event included a wellness check-up for each resident, and an attorney was available to explain living wills.

Unit 194, St. Augustine – Has a good relationship with their community, their post home is used for Post 194 Kids Safe Zone, (<https://www.facebook.com/KidsSafeZone>) an after-school program for children. Several unit members volunteer their time in feeding and mentoring the children. They also take care of our First Responders by having lunches and dinners in house and delivering care packages.



Kids Safe Zone

October 29, 2022 · 🌐

KSZ thank you cards made it to the Hurricane Isn First Responders



Patricia Kaczynski Grayshaw ▶ ALAFL National Security

October 23, 2022 · 🌐



ALA FL Public Relations @ALAuxFlorida · Sep 14, 2022

District 5 ~ St. Augustine, Fla.

Sunday, Sept 11 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 194 surprised St Johns Fire Rescue #14 with a Publix Gift Card & goodies. We thank all first responders for their service 🇺🇸 @ALAforVeterans #Neverforget #ForGodandCountry #ColorMeThere



Unit 219, Fruitland Park – Involved with the Dave Robey Memorial VetFest which has a huge impact on not only our Veteran families but the whole community. The local Villages Daily Sun Reporter caught up with some of the board members and highlighted all the great things the American Legion family do with their community. Posters, Auxiliary brochures, merchandise, and Red Shirts are readily available at the post to help promote the ALA brand, plus each unit meeting a few readings are done from the Florida Canvas.

https://www.thevillagesdailysun.com/news/in_todays_daily_sun/american-legion-auxiliary-s-vetfest-coming-up-in-fruitland-park/article_0de2f860-a83d-11ed-9b57-c797806395ba.html

American Legion Auxiliary's Vetfest coming up in Fruitland Park

By ABBY BITTNER, Daily Sun Staff Writer Feb 9, 2023



The American Legion Auxiliary works with American Legion Post 219 in Fruitland Park to host events in the community. In December, the auxiliary put on Wreaths Across America, which remembers veterans who have passed at Shiloh Cemetery in Fruitland Park.



WVLG Radio



Unit 237, Beverly Hills - Designed tie-dye shirts and wore them to many functions in the community, post, and district meetings. Related ALA mission through newspaper articles in the Citrus County Chronicle, and Community Villager. The unit redesigned their facebook page, now have 392 followers.

Unit 238, Safety Harbor - Joins the American Legion Family on the third Friday of the month for a community meet & greet, tent is set up on 900 Main, this brings awareness to the community, and they have successfully signed up over 20 members during this event. For the past 15 years, Unit 238 has sponsored the Annual Safety Harbor Main Street Parade (4th of July) that has grown considerable in size. The unit has partnered with Safety Harbor Chamber of Commerce and multiple flyers and events have appeared on their Facebook page and lobby monitor. Excellent networking with local merchants and businesses.

Unit 241, Sneads - Had 11 articles published in the Jackson County Floridan newspaper from Quilt of Valor presentation (the recipient passed away about two months after, and the family requested any memorial contributions, to be sent to ALA Unit 241), Memorial Day, Flag retirement, Auxiliary meeting, treats for Marianna Veteran Outpatient Clinic, School of Instruction, Hometown Hero, Veterans Day, flag education, to school staff appreciation luncheon.

https://dothaneagle.com/community/jcfloridan/news/local/tank-plaque-re-dedicated-during-sneads-veterans-day-event/article_9355fe80-639a-11ed-82f5-133975f6cc0a.html

<https://jacksoncountytimes.net/dillon-burton-kilpatrick/>

A4 | Jackson County Times | Thursday, March 31, 2022 #1

Quilt of Valor presented to Dillon Kilpatrick



Photo by Mike Sowers



Photo by Mike Sowers

By SHELIA MADER

Last Saturday, Dillon Kilpatrick was presented the Quilt of Valor from Roberta Granville with the Quilt of Valor Foundation. They have given out more than 300,000 quilts nationwide. None was more deserved as Kilpatrick is a veteran of the Korean War.

Rural counties and small towns have always given a disproportionate number of its young to the armed forces and to the service of the country. A monument stands on the courthouse square in Marianna because of Dillon Kilpatrick.

Kilpatrick has been an active member of the Sneads American Legion Post 241 for a long time. One day he decided that the absence of a memorial dedicated to those who died under hostile fire dishonors those who gave their lives, so he began working to raise the money and to have it designed. "Really, it should have started after World War I and I just felt like it was time," he said. With backing from the veterans' organizations and citizens, he got together with Pete Comerford of Comerford Memorials and soon the stone was here and in place, in time to dedicate it on Veterans' Day, November 11, 2003.

Dillon Kilpatrick's dedication through his active service, his service since his discharge and his dedication to veterans everywhere continue to make a



Unit 252, Seminole - Sends a monthly Auxiliary newsletter with a message from the President, last meeting highlights, membership information, Chaplain's Corner, upcoming events, donations, updates, education of patriotic holidays, humor, recipe, and much more. The American Legion Family donated \$2,700 in Publix (grocery store) gift cards to the Seminole Fire Department for the holidays.



ALA FL Public Relations @ALAuxFlorida · Dec 25, 2022

District 16 ~ Seminole, Fla.

What an amazing American Legion Post 252 Family. The Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons donated \$2,700 in Publix gift cards to the Seminole Fire Department for the holidays! [#ColorMeThere](#) [#firstresponders](#)
[@theamericanlegion](#) [@alaforveterans](#)



Unit 254, Northport - Unit received a grant from a local community foundation – LightSpeed Gives – to purchase two branded tablecloths. Purchased one specifically for Auxiliary and another for the entire American Legion Post 254 family (with four logos). They were used at various events, annual Poppy Drive, community events, and more. Participates in a local event North Port Newcomer Day hosted the City of North Port's Parks and Recreation Division, that is held four times a year, with 150-300 people in attendance. Created a written instructions on how to find their unit Facebook and PR information, attached to the end of this report.

Outreach & Branding

Branding and telling our story are important strategies for our Unit. Not only does it help foster awareness of our activities and programs, but internally it can help create a stronger sense of pride among our members (which ultimately assists in recruitment and retainment).



Grant for Tablecloths

This year, our Unit received a grant from a local community foundation – LightSpeed Gives – to purchase two branded tablecloths. We purchased one specifically for our Auxiliary (with just our logo) and another for the entire American Legion Post 254 family (with all four logos). We used these tablecloths at various events, including

our annual Poppy Drive, community events and more.

Unit 273, Madeira Beach – Started an Instagram account (alaf273), they created colorful flyers for all their events. They volunteer with their Legion Family in Adopt A Highway Program.



ALA FL Public Relations @ALAAuxFlorida · Apr 18

District 16 ~ Madeira Bch, Florida

On Sunday, April 16 American Legion Post 273, Unit 273, and Boy Scouts come together for Post 273 Adopt A Highway program! @AmericanLegion @ALAforVeterans #ColorMeThere #LegionFamily



Unit 275, Dunedin - Shares the American Legion Family Facebook page, a unit member is an administrator. They have over 4,900 followers. A unit member coordinated a contest for a new shirt design for RED shirt Fridays. The winner received a gift certificate, the red shirts were printed, and they're sold continuously.

Unit 277, Boca Raton – members wear their branded attire while out in the community. Auxiliary First Vice was on a television report participating in the Missing in America Project (MIAP), link below. The unit makes colorful flyers to advertise their meals and events, they distribute them to their neighbors around their post home.

<https://news.yahoo.com/veterans-group-honors-thousands-unclaimed-201622271.html>

Group honors thousands of unclaimed U.S. soldiers on Veteran's Day



Unit 283, Jacksonville - Posted flyers of events and put reminders on. Participated in Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk for the American Cancer Society, with branded attire in the community. Also, contributed a donation for the fight against cancer.

Unit 286, Pine Castle - Had 19 articles published in the local newspaper (conwaynews.com). The articles touched on sponsored programs such as Children & Youth, Cancer Awareness, and Poppy Distribution. Always wearing their auxiliary apparel, they rock their red shirts for RED Shirt Fridays. The unit raffled off a quilt a member made to raise funds for the Gary Sinise Foundation, Snowball Express.

NATIONAL POPPY DAY

As the granddaughter of a WWII veteran, I hold a special place in my heart for the parents, siblings, spouses, and friends of those who served. I can't help but think of all the men and women who have gone to fight for this great nation and didn't return home.

While we are all guilty of celebrating the unofficial start of summer and encouraging each other to "have a good weekend," it is important to remember the reason for the holiday: Memorial Day is the day Americans set aside to honor those brave men and women who met tragic ends while defending our freedom. It is our duty to honor their sacrifices, to pray for their families, and to bow our heads in recognition of their service.

On National Poppy Day*, May 27, 2022, American Legion Auxiliary Pinecastle Memorial Unit 286 will be distributing poppies as a tribute to our fallen warriors. We invite Orlando residents to stop by and see us from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm at Navy Exchange, 8717 Avenue C, Orlando or Clemons Produce, 3325 Curryford Road, Orlando, to receive a poppy in exchange for a donation to wear in remembrance of those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. We must never forget. The poppy, which bloomed on the battlefields of France after World War I, has grown to become an internationally known and recognized symbol of the lives sacrificed in war and the hope that none died in vain. One hundred percent of donations received will go directly to help veterans, military, and their families. The United States Congress has declared the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day.



The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families. Our members also support the mission of The American Legion in improving the quality of life for our nation's veterans. Proud sponsor of ALA Girls Nation, National Poppy Day* and recognized for advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the more than 600,000 ALA members across the country volunteer millions of hours annually and raise millions of dollars in service to veterans, military, and their families. Founded in 1919, the ALA is one of the oldest patriotic membership organizations in the U.S.A. To learn more and to volunteer, join, and donate, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

For More information contact 407-859-1460

Unit 296, Destin - Started at Facebook page which has helped with meeting reminders and spike interest in what they do.

Unit 303, Bonita Springs - their post home destroyed by Hurricane Ian. However, they post daily on social media. A unit member took over the website, reworked to site. Advertised and promoted events to help raise money. The member updates the unit database, that allows the President to send announcements to 380+ members at once. While they're currently housed at the VFW they continue to post their accomplishments on their private Facebook page with 329 members and also their District 13 page (ALAD-13).

Unit 316, Atlantic Beach - they share and promote unit events and happenings on the American Legion Post 316 Facebook page with over 897 followers (last year 784). The unit contributes to the post family newsletter, which is sent by email and regular mail to those without email addresses. Maintaining one social media page shows FAMILY, and the followers of the page, can simply go to one page to view all the happenings and successes of the Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders.

Unit 323, Lehigh Acres - affected by Hurricane Ian, the unit and post family rose above and beyond to help in the community, the community knows who they are and why they matter. The post home became a staging area to receive and distribute donations of hurricane relief supplies. They continually post on Facebook and had three articles published in the Lehigh Citizen.

Unit 325, Ellenton - had 23 articles in various publications, articles were published in North River News and the Parrish Village News. This unit also received a proclamation by the City of Palmetto. The City Council proclaimed Wreaths Across America Day on Saturday, December 17. The proclamation encouraged media coverage of the unit's activities with Wreaths Across America. Received coverage of Department President Jane Hardacre's unit visit. The story, which appeared in the Jan. 26-Feb. 1 edition of North River News, included a photograph and mention of this year's C.O.L.O.R. Me There theme. The unit also had an article about the Gary Sinise Foundation.

North River News

MAY 19-25, 2022



Members of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 325, along with Honor Flight Girls, were there to welcome home Commander Wells, and all 80 Honor Flight Veterans. *Related photo, Page 8.*

Honor Flight veterans welcomed home

North River News

December 22, 2022-January 4, 2023 3

Wreaths Across America day at Mansion Memorial Park in Ellenton



JROTC Parrish Community High School posted Colors



Cookie Aguin, local WAA coordinator, introduces honored guest Eddie Shannon.



Wreaths ready for laying.

Wreaths Across America, a nationwide event remembering our veterans, was held at Mansion Memorial Park in Ellenton on Saturday, December 17. Hosted by the American Legion Post and Auxiliary Unit 325, WAA Location Coordinator Cookie Aguin along with many organizations and individual guests laid over 1700 wreaths on the veterans' graves.

The Guest of Honor for the event was WWII Navy veteran and life-long resident of Palmetto, Eddie Shannon. The 100-year-old Shannon was also the recipient of a quilt presented to him by Tangled Threads, a group within the Quilts of Valor organization.

The JROTC from Parrish Community High School posted Colors for the event which included the laying of ceremonial wreaths for each branch of service as well as one for the POW/MIA.



Veterans placed ceremonial wreaths to represent each branch of service. Each veteran was escorted by a member of the JROTC PCHS. At left, the wreath for the Army was placed by Kevin Wright, Lt. Col. Ret.

Service club members, Scout troops, Manatee JrCongress, family, and citizens attending the event helped to place the more than 1700 wreaths on the veterans' graves. Among them, at right, were Palmetto High School FFA members Chelsea Black (left) and Aribeth Finch.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA
REMEMBER | HONOR | TEACH



North River News

American Legion Auxiliary welcomes President Jane Hardacre

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 325, Ellenton, welcomed ALA Dept. of Florida President, Jane Hardacre, to a Painting Pour Party and a Meet and Greet at Post 325 on January 21. Unit officers and members participated in a painting event that coincides with President Hardacre's theme, C. O. L. O. R., Continuing Our Legacy Of Respect. Members discussed how they can continue to support our veterans, the military and their families. Unit President, Kathy Rose, presented a \$500 check to President Hardacre to support her project, The Gary Sinise Foundation, Snowball Express, which serves the children of our fallen military heroes.



Above, ALA Unit 325 members greet ALA Dept. of Florida President, Jane Hardacre (center right).



At left, ALA Unit 325 President Kathy Rose (right) presents a \$500 check to ALA Dept. of Florida Preseident Jane Hardacre (left). Joining them is ALA Dist 8 President Harriett Martin (center).

Unit 336, North Ft. Myers - Shares the American Legion Post 336 Facebook page, all the family shares one page, which allows members to know the happenings in one spot. The unit has become more active in the community and developed a partnership with Suncoast Community Center, which is where donations of hurricane supplies were unloaded and distributed to the community.

Unit 340, Pensacola - Started a Facebook page which has helped to reach out to the community and share their accomplishments. They provided Thanksgiving dinner to Veterans and active-duty sailors.



Unit 351, Tice - Promotes events through newsletter, Facebook pages and groups, Poinsettia Park, Ft. Myers Shores, and local media. The unit designs all the flyers for events, dinners, and updates.

Unit 356, Lynn Haven - raised over \$5,200 for Fisher House in Ft. Walton Beach. They wear their branded attire when they volunteer at Clifford Chester Sims State Veterans Nursing home.



Unit 372, Mandarin – while they do not have a post home, they contribute their time in their community, wearing their branding. They visit Discovery Village at Deerwood (Senior Home), on a recent visit, they decorated Easter Trees, while hearing stories of Vietnam and WWII Army wives.



Unit 392, Panama City - Donated electronic pets to every Veteran in the Clifford Chester Sims Veterans Nursing Home.



The Department of Florida Public Relations Committee will continue to promote in a positive manner who we are, what we do, and why we matter to our members, community, and the public. Units in Florida truly embraced C.O.L.O.R. Continue Our Legacy of Respect on social media platforms, news media, in their communities, and inside their post homes. We are proud to be part of this amazing organization that upholds the values of God and Country. The ALA makes a difference in the community, advocates and supports our Veterans and military, cares for the education and well-being of children, honors our fallen by caring for their loved ones, and does not forget our Prisoners of War and Missing in Action.

ColorMeThere!

Virna Luke

Public Relations Chairman

American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida

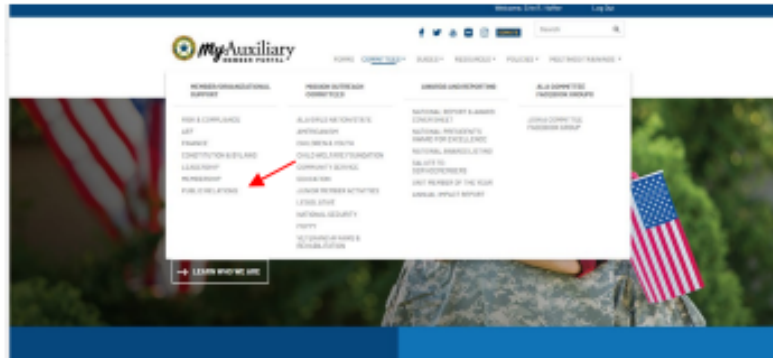


The below instruction sheet was created by Erin Hoffer Public Relations Chairman from Unit 254, North Port.

Locating National American Legion Auxiliary Public Relations Resources

From a computer, visit <https://member.legion-aux.org/>

Login. Click on **Committees** in the main menu and select **Public Relations**



Click on **Public Relations Toolkit** on the bottom left of your screen.

Public Relations Committee

Program Awards

- Public Relations Committee Awards
- National & Department Officers & Committees Directory (Red Book)

Key Program Stats

- Spread the word
- Military and 10
- Encourage AL
- Share the love

Public Relations Key Resources

- Public Relations Toolkit

Lookin'

ALA Committee For share about broad c discussions about yu awareness.

Visit the Public Rel

<https://www.facebook.com/ALACommitteeForShareAboutBroadCDiscussionsAboutYuAwareness/>

Here you will find a variety of resources to assist you throughout the year.

Public Relations Toolkit

American Legion Auxiliary Public Relations Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment,

PR Toolkit Downloads
PR Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment
ALA Declaration Flyer
ALA Declaration Color Sign
Media templates and samples to promote your events and patriotic holidays.
ALA Emblem Use Approval Request Form
ALA Branding Game

Explore this entire website. Public Relations is about supporting Auxiliary programs and initiatives. The more you know, the better you can help your fellow committee chairs in your unit.

Locating Department American Legion Auxiliary Public Relations Resources

From a computer, visit <https://alafli.org>

Click on **Programs** in the top menu and select **Public Relations** from the drop down menu.



Here you will find a variety of resources, including the **2022-2023 Public Relations Program Action Plan** and the **2022-2023 Public Relations Unit Year End Reporting**.

Public Relations

Home



Virna Luke

publicrelations@alafli.org

[2022-2023 Public Relations Program Action Plan](#)

[2022-2023 Public Relations Awards Information](#)

[2022-2023 Public Relations Unit Year End Reporting](#)

[2022-2023 Public Relations District Year End Reporting](#)

[ALA How to Utilize Facebook for Your Unit and District](#)

[ALA How to Write a News Release](#)

[ALA Program Facebook Pages and Hashtags](#)

[ALA Social Media Policy](#)

[ALA Minor Release Form](#)

American Legion Auxiliary Academy Public Relations Courses

ALA Branding and Why It Matters to Me!

FULL URL

<https://alaacademy.alaforveterans.org/topclass/topclass.do?expand=OfferingDetails-Offeringid=159049>

SHORTENED URL

https://bit.ly/ALA-Academy_Branding

QR CODE

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How to Deal with Conflict

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<https://alaacademy.alaforveterans.org/topclass/topclass.do?expand=OfferingDetails-Offeringid=263443>

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<https://bit.ly/ALA-Academy-Conflict>

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Using Social Media to your Unit's Advantage

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ALA Communication Methods

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ALA 101

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<https://alaacademy.alaforveterans.org/topclass/topclass.do?expand=OfferingDetails-Offeringid=762>

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<https://bit.ly/ALA-Academy-ALA101>

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End of Report for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida

NATIONAL POPPY DAY

As the granddaughter of a WWII veteran, I hold a special place in my heart for the parents, siblings, spouses, and friends of those who served. I can't help but think of all the men and women who have gone to fight for this great nation and didn't return home.

While we are all guilty of celebrating the unofficial start of summer and encouraging each other to "have a good weekend," it is important to remember the reason for the holiday: Memorial Day is the day Americans set aside to honor those brave men and women who met tragic ends while defending our freedom. It is our duty to honor their sacrifices, to pray for their families, and to bow our heads in recognition of their service.

On National Poppy Day®, May 27, 2022, American Legion Auxiliary Pinecastle Memorial Unit 286 will be distributing poppies as a tribute to our fallen warriors. We invite Orlando residents to stop by and see us from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm at Navy Exchange, 8717 Avenue C, Orlando or Clemons Produce, 3325 Curryford Road, Orlando, to receive a poppy in exchange for a donation to wear in remembrance of those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. We must never forget. The poppy, which bloomed on the battlefields of France after World War I, has grown to become an internationally known and recognized symbol of the lives sacrificed in war and the hope that none died in vain. One hundred percent of donations received will go directly to help veterans, military, and their families. The United States Congress has declared the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day.



The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families. Our members also support the mission of The American Legion in improving the quality of life for our nation's veterans. Proud sponsor of ALA Girls Nation, National Poppy Day® and recognized for advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the more than 600,000 ALA members across the country volunteer millions of hours annually and raise millions of dollars in service to veterans, military, and their families. Founded in 1919, the ALA is one of the oldest patriotic membership organizations in the U.S.A. To learn more and to volunteer, join, and donate, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

For More information contact 407-859-1460



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA PUBLIC RELATIONS

PAINTING THE TOWN FOR OUR VETERANS!
#COLORMETHERE

Edit



ALAFL Public Relations

May Newsletter from Pam Eckler
National Public Relations Committee
Southern Division Chairman

REMINDER: Our national website, alaforveterans.org, contains a variety of resources for your Public Relations team. As we enter the season of patriotic holidays and observances, take advantage of the flyers and media templates available. News releases and letters to the editor can be customized to share local information about activities sponsored by your unit. Increasing your media presence will increase your visibility and the public's awareness of who you are as an organization, what you do, and why you matter.



PDF

May 2023 Newsletter.pdf



alauxflorida
Fort Myers Shores, Florida



alauxflorida District 13 ~ Ft. Myers Shores, Fla.
On Tuesday, \$20,000 of supplies were delivered from the American Legion in Illinois and Indiana! It only took 5 days for them to collect and buy much needed items for our community and another couple of days to drive them down. A great team was present to help unload. We appreciate the support!
#ColorMeThere #AmericanLegionFamily @alafornveterans @theamericanlegion

20m



alauxflorida
Key West, Florida



alauxflorida District 14 - Key West, Fla.
Annual American Legion Auxiliary Unit 28 Walk for Cancer on Saturday, Oct. 15! Raised over \$K to be donated to the Cancer Foundation of the Florida Keys. All the money stays local and helps cancer patients and their families! #ColorMeThere @alaforveterans

30w





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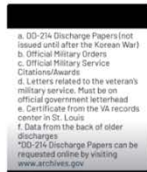
American Legion Depar...



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Veterans receive 'Quilts of Valor'

STAFF REPORT

VENICE — Quilts of Valor were presented to three veterans at the American Legion NO-VEL Post 159 on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

The three recipients were Joe Marchione, a World War II veteran who was a part of the Normandy invasion, and Vietnam veterans Wayne Hill and Bill Connors.

The quilts were sewn by volunteers of the post and presented by Sherry Buffington and Susan Roberts-Brennan, headed by Susan Knueven.

Joe Marchione, who is a WWII veteran and survivor of Normandy Invasion, and Vietnam veterans Wayne Hill and Bill Connors receive quilts on Veterans Day.

PHOTO PROVIDED



Quilt of Valor presented to Dillon Kilpatrick



Photo by Mark Skinner



Photo by Mark Skinner

By SHELIA MADER

Last Saturday, Dillon Kilpatrick was presented the Quilt of Valor from Roberta Granville with the Quilt of Valor Foundation. They have given out more than 300,000 quilts nationwide. None was more deserved as Kilpatrick is a veteran of the Korean War.

Rural counties and small towns have always given a disproportionate number of its young to the armed forces and to the service of the country. A monument stands on the courthouse square in Marianna because of Dillon Kilpatrick.

Kilpatrick has been an active member of the Sneads American Legion Post 241 for a long time. One day he decided that the absence of a memorial dedicated to those who died under hostile fire dishonors those who gave their lives, so he began working to raise the money and to have it designed. "Really, it should have started after World War I and I just felt like it was time," he said. With backing from the veterans' organizations and citizens, he got together with Pete Comerford of Comerford Memorials and soon the stone was here and in place, in time to dedicate it on Veterans' Day, November 11, 2003.

Dillon Kilpatrick's dedication through his active service, his service since his discharge and his dedication to veterans everywhere continue to make a



Outreach & Branding

Branding and telling our story are important strategies for our Unit. Not only does it help foster awareness of our activities and programs, but internally it can help create a stronger sense of pride among our members (which ultimately assists in recruitment and retainment).



Grant for Tablecloths

This year, our Unit received a grant from a local community foundation – LightSpeed Gives – to purchase two branded tablecloths. We purchased one specifically for our Auxiliary (with just our logo) and another for the entire American Legion Post 254 family (with all four logos). We used these tablecloths at various events, including

our annual Poppy Drive, community events and more.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

“VA&R”

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Florida

VA&R Report

Charlotte Bass

Chairman

We have had challenges this year with the VA Hospitals being closed or limited amount visitors and volunteers due to COVID restrictions still in place, and then came Hurricane Ian but our Units were true to Continuing Our Legacy Respect and said, “**Color Me There!**” They still worked the program. A total of 800 Volunteers with 102,395 hours, \$142,677 in monetary and in-kind donations. We served 14,075 Veterans. This was just reported figures. I am pleased to announce that VA Hospitals are beginning to left all COVID restrictions.

District 1

Unit 221 Clifford-Chester Sims VA Nursing home, selected Christmas presents for the residents and donated \$1000 cash. (Volunteers-8). Also celebrated a Veteran who turned 100. Total hours volunteered 5407, money \$4433.00.

Unit 229 donated \$200.00 to Clifford-Chester Sims (5 Volunteers 20 hours for a luncheon)

Unit 378 Gulf Breeze assisted a Legion Member whose wife had a stroke by stopping by daily and making sure she had eaten. \$386.00 money and \$2,309 in-kind donations.

Unit 356 Lynn Haven- Held fundraisers and Raffles for Fischer House located in the Eglin Airforce Base. Raised \$4,000 for the foundation. Served breakfast at St. Andrews Methodist Church to homeless Veterans. (36 hrs.) Made meals for disabled Veterans. Total of 825hrs \$2,000 cash, \$4,000 in kind donations.

Unit 340 Pensacola-Donated gently used clothing, jackets, shoes, blankets, socks, jeans, and shorts to H.E.R. House Volunteers of America Veterans Village.

They also put together 55 backpacks containing toiletry items, socks, underwear, gloves, beanies, and blankets. \$1500.00.

Unit 75 Crestview Caregivers 2 Volunteers 75 hours. Participated in a standdown. They purchased \$228.00 worth of underwear and socks. 4 volunteers 4 hours. Some Unit members contributed to Crestview Manor which houses quite a few veterans. They purchase snacks and drinks. 3 Volunteers 25 hours.

Unit 75 also raffled off a crocheted blanket and did raffle baskets once a month to raise enough money to purchase animated stuff animals (cats, dogs, and birds) and sent them to Clifford-Chester Sims State Nursing Home. These animated pets comfort those who don't have anyone to visit them and calms patients with PTSD. The total amount raised \$635.00 and 35 hours.

They participate in serving our Veterans by preparing Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. 8 volunteers and 48 hours.

Unit 296 Destin supported Clifford-Chester Sims State Nursing Home by donating Christmas Presents and donated \$1,000 cash, 8 volunteers 125 volunteers, purchased 2 animated pets (\$260.00). They also donated \$200.00 for a luncheon. (5 volunteers and 20 hours).

Unit 402, Panama City Beach, participated in the grand reopening of the Military Welcome Center at Florida Beaches International Airport. (2 Volunteers, 8 members). They also donated money to help purchase robotic pets for Clifford-Chester Sims State Nursing Home, in kind donation of \$75.00. (4 volunteers, 8 hours.)

District 2

A Donation of furniture by purchase & delivery of 12 Bed Frames, 22 Bed Frames in total and forty-two (42) mattress sets for a coordinated delivery of the Mattress sets and bed frames for the turnover of 52 sets for 52 apartments of the Tallahassee Veterans Village through Tallahassee Furniture Direct, with two fund raisers. Other funds were raised by the American Legion Sauls-Bridges Unit 13, through Texas Roadhouse and other community projects, for buddy baskets at the Veterans Village. Links are provided below for the pictures of the events:

I have attached the article, can't do the 2nd link because it is a video.

<https://www.legion.org/homelessveterans/255988/florida-auxiliary-unit-continues-strong-support-homeless-veterans-facility#.ZCMa4nfqwo.gmail>

<https://www.wctv.tv/2022/06/04/tallahassee-veterans-village-receives-new-mattresses-through-community-donations/>

For Unit 13, \$2,397.00 was spent, \$19,099.00 received as in-kind donations. Hours of volunteer service – 754, and 447 Veterans benefitted from this project.

District 3

Unit 57, Lake City, assisted with a standdown with 10 volunteers and 180 hours. on November 8th and 9th, 2022. They assisted in organizing the staging area, unpacked items and assisted with restocking. Also helped with cleanup and taking leftover items to local Veteran agencies. An Auxiliary member donates cat food to the Domiciliary mascot cat. 2-3 members volunteer each month to assist with the Domiciliary monthly bingo and the unit has donated \$2,800.00 for the bingo prizes.

The members of Unit 57 assisted their local VA Hospital and Jenkins Domiciliary by purchasing 12 mechanical cats and dogs for the VA Alzheimer patients, donated \$1,000 to the hospice unit, donated \$1,250.00 to use for necessities for patient care and activities. They also purchased music and radio shows from the 1949's and 50's for the VA Activities Department.

Unit 291, Steinahatchee, on November 11th honored our Veterans with an appreciation celebration. Each Veteran was greeted and given a Veterans. A large arrangement of food was set up along with a dessert table full of treats and all deceased Post members' names were read. A

double Purple Heart Veteran was presented with a handmade quilt, so a 50-year legion member was recognized, and a World War II Veteran was also recognized. Over 60 Veterans attended.

District 4

Unit 16, Gainesville, did Blessing Buckets for homeless Veterans, the buckets contained items that the Veterans would need. Besides the Blessing Buckets, Veterans could get haircuts, and were able to pick out clothing and shoes. They were also provided with a wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner. (Volunteers 25, 4,500 hours)

Unit 149, Newberry, had 7 volunteers with a total of 5 hours visiting Veterans that were hospitalized or in nursing homes.

Unit 155, Crystal River, has 3 volunteers with 12hrs in support of caregivers. Two (2) volunteers with a total of 5 hours. assisting hospitalized and nursing home veterans. They also had 6 members assisting a veteran get a car.

Unit 166, Homosassa Springs participated in the support of caregivers for a total of 1,270 hrs. They also collected socks, clothes, and personal hygiene items, \$240.00 in kind donations. They transported 16 veterans to Unit 16 for Blessing of the Buckets

Unit 230, Hawthorne, had 8 members with a total of 454 hours in support of caregivers. One (1) member feeds a homeless vet in their community. 14 Volunteers with 320 hours.

Unit 237, Hawthorne, had 23 volunteers with 2,760hrs in support of caregivers. One member cleans a house for one of the caregivers. They have also served lunch to Veterans on Thanksgiving, Veteran's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and also one Thursday a month.

Some members teamed up and spent 68 hours hosting a food drive for Citrus County Veterans' Coalition. With the help of the Legion Family they collected and delivered 1,506 food and personal items totaling \$523.79.

District 5

The District had 45 volunteers and spent \$5,011 for Service to Veterans in their area assisting approximately 557 Veterans. They also volunteered 182 hours for military families assisting 108 families. Units 129, Jacksonville Beach, Unit 283, Jacksonville, and Unit 54, Fernandina Beach, worked on earning their Service to Veterans Hours by helping their Veterans, especially the homeless Veterans in their area. A member of Unit 194, St. Augustine took a Veteran escorted a Purple Heart Veteran to a Purple Heart Event. The Units have assisted in a standdown and delivered items to the Lake City VA Hospital.

Unit 88, Jacksonville, delivered 14 Baskets of food at Thanksgiving to the VAVC in Jacksonville for transitioning Veterans.

District 6

Unit 10, Kissimmee has been actively working with the community, homeless and Veterans. They have held a back-to-school drive, made headbands for active military, and donated blankets

and quilts as well as clothes and food to help the homeless outreach project. They work with the Reserves and have Family Days on Saturday. The ROTC is another project they work on.

Unit 55, Clermont, did 1820hrs with 7 members participating in the caregiving program. They spent 30 hours making baskets for Veterans in nursing homes. They clocked in 60 hours cooking, attending and donating items for Veterans at the Post.

Unit 80 St. Cloud is one of the most active units we have, they have dinners, fundraisers, work with veterans,

Unit 112 Winter Park, they have a member that is a practicing Psychologist and donates between \$100.00 to \$400.00 in pro bono counseling services to Veterans. They have volunteered approximately 400 hours and \$1,500.00 in service to our Veterans.

Unit 183 Fern Park packed hero bags for the homeless Veterans with various items. They handed out 129 bags and continue to do so for the rest of the year. They stuffed 50 laundry baskets full of non-perishable food items as well as gift cards to give to the needy Veterans for holiday dinners, \$300 was spent and \$700.00 in in-kind donations.

Unit 219 Fruitland Park reported 66 hours for Service to Veterans and donated \$25.00 to National Creative Arts Festival and \$25.00 to the Florida Creative Arts, also \$25.00 to each of the VAMC Facilities on the Department Donation Remittance Forms.

Unit 286 Pinecastle made 113 pillowcases as Christmas gifts spent \$565.00 and 116 volunteer hours. They also collected \$142.50 for items for the Female Veterans Baby Shower Orlando VAMC. One member volunteered at the National Creative Arts Festival with approximately 40 volunteer hours. The Unit has visited nursing homes with treats etc. They spent an additional \$1955.20 and 2 hours to collect and give VA many games, puzzles, magazines, Etc.

Unit 330 Mid-Florida Lakes crocheted 14 blankets that are waiting to be delivered. A total of 840 volunteers. Throughout the year, they collected donations for the Veterans living in the Ocala National Forest. All donations were sorted and packed, then taken to the Benevolent Center in Leesburg to be picked up and taken to the Veterans. This totaled 19 hours.

Unit 347 Lady Lakes is one of the largest units in Florida with many giving them the opportunity to have money and help with working the mission. Some of the highlights are as follows:

A total of 2,125 Goody bags were delivered to shut in Veterans at assisted living facilities, also served lunch to 123 Veterans on Veteran Day. Participated in Toys for Tots serving 65 Veterans a spaghetti dinner as well as collecting toys. These projects earned the Unit 140 hours and spent \$2,833.00.

They have donated clothing, and personal items in the amount \$1655 to the homeless Veterans living in the Ocala Forrest, they contributed \$1638.00 to Female Transition House being built for Women Vets and \$5,500 the VAMC and Outpatient Clinic. Unit 347 has had 98 volunteers with 1,030 hours serving 1503 Veterans with \$33,938.00.

District 8

- The District/Units participated in the caregiver support program with 4 volunteers, 353 hours and one unit paid Dental bill assistance of \$250.00 for a caregiver.
- Describe any exceptional efforts members made in earning their Service to Veterans' hours. One member volunteered at the Sarasota Vet Center—VA hours plus driving time 96 hours, 2,400 miles, served 576 Vets.
- What assistance did your district/units give at a standdown? 7 volunteers, 23 hours—Manatee County Standdown.
- How did your District/Units assist, or support hospitalized or nursing home veterans? 83 volunteers, 2,256 hours—goody bags, lap robes, visits, t-shirt and underwear drive, Bingo, bus transportation to Post for luncheons, Christmas gifts to 35 Veterans, sending Birthday cards.
- How did your District/Units assist transitioning veterans, military and their veterans in your community? 7 volunteers, 66 hours
- Also helped Arcadia Unit with Hurricane Damage--\$600.00, 5 volunteers, 164 hours, 6 families assisted.
- Salvation Army Welcome baskets for Veterans moving out--\$231.00, 4 volunteers, 7 hours, Donation of \$300.00 to Turning Points for homeless.
- How did your District/Units assist or recognize caregivers of veterans. 5 volunteers, 50 hours

Additional Projects and Donations of District 8:

Honor Flight Donations--\$1000.00, 6 volunteers, 36 hours, 224 Vets served.

Holiday Gifts for VA homebound Veterans and female Veterans--\$812.00, 13 volunteers, 17 hours, 12 Veterans served

Manatee Veterans Village Donations—

Housewares--\$358.00

Bedding donation--\$502.00

Welcome Baskets--\$295.00.

Holiday Gift Boxes--\$380.00

33 Volunteers, 104 hours, 47 Veterans served.

Donations to Veterans Service Center, Placid--\$500.00, 8 Volunteers, 8 hours.

2 Units participate in Quilts of Valor—12 Veterans honored, 3 volunteers, donations of \$1,037.00.

Unit 159 has started to participate in the Veteran Bench Project—benches made from plastic bottle caps. Soon the project will include plastic caps used in making prosthetics for Veterans. 225 boxes of caps donated.

Canines for Heroes--\$1000.00 donation by Unit 325.

District 12

District 12 assisted caregivers by transporting Veterans to Dr. appointments, cleaning their houses grocery and personal shopping, 51 Volunteers and 2,342 hours.

In earning Service to Veterans hours, members provided laundry items and coins to homeless Veterans, worked with NVHS and supplied food, clothing, blankets, tent and other needs for the homeless Veterans in their area. They honored Vietnam Veterans by pinning them. They help Veterans with housing and financial assistance. After Hurricane Ian, a member and her husband packed a truck and trailer with water, food, clothing, and personal care items and took them to District 13.

On January 20th and 21st a “Stand Down to Stand UP” was held at the Cocoa Armory. Units packed bags with toilet paper, and personal care items to give to the Veterans attending the Standdown. They provided clothing and “Purse with a Purpose” for female Veterans at the Standdown. 21 Volunteers and 520 hours spending \$500.00.

Units provided transportation to and from hospitals, VA Medical Centers and Dr. appointments. Units went to nursing homes to talk, play games, visit on holidays giving out candy, and singing Christmas Carols. 50 volunteers, and 620 hours.

District 13

Unit 38 Fort Meyers works with Legion members in providing service to any Veteran in need. It is responsible for the food pantry. A local food pantry donates to this cause weekly. They also have partnered with Lee Mental Health in its support to enhance the life of veterans in the community. A letter and brochure are sent to Veterans discharged from the hospital to explain the resources in the area. The Unit participated in Community Homeless Standdown and Veteran Event and served as escorts through the venue.

Unit 90 Cape Coral gave a donation for bus passes to help local Veterans with medical and financial needs. They also distributed 15 Thanksgiving baskets as well as Christmas dinners to local Veterans.

Unit 103 Punta Gorda has a transitional facility near their Post for Veterans that they supply everyday items to the residents. The Unit made lap robes and gave gift bags to the women at the Veteran’s home. They also gave stockings filled with quarters for laundry.

Unit 110 Port Charlotte following Hurricane Ian was busy assisting helping Veterans and their families. Personal care items were given to the local Veteran's nursing home. A food pantry was set up for the families. Groceries and meals were delivered to those unable to get to the Post.

Volunteers provided transportation to Dr. appointments as well as trips to Bay Pines VAMC. They assisted several Veterans and organized their prescriptions, and one member is a live in caregiver.

Unit 130 LaBelle gave support to Veterans and their families throughout the year with as much assistance as possible.

Unit 136 St. James City was devastated by Hurricane Ian but still fed the community and helped get supplies to Veterans and others in need.

Unit 192 Fort Meyers has a caregiver that took care of a Korean War Veteran until he passed.

Unit 303 Bonita Springs had their Post home destroyed by Hurricane Ian has been able to continue its mission with the help of the VFW. They are allowed to meet there while their Post is being rebuilt. One member assists a Veteran by providing him dinners and visiting him at the nursing homes, another member makes sure a Veteran gets to his Dr. appointments, cooks his meals, and assists with insurance issues. Even with all the devastation they continue to work the mission assist the Veterans and families in their area.

Unit 336 North Ft. Meyers helps Project Suds by helping with donations to assist with doing laundry, food, and clothing. Members also assist with getting Veterans to their Dr. appointments.

District 17

Unit 120 Holly Hill, after finding out that many of their Veterans were displaced and living in hotels due to flooding stepped up to assist however they could. The food pantry at the clinic was in need of food, tables were set up at the Post and members brought in items.

They have a member that is a caregiver of her World War II Veteran, she is a retired nurse so her dad is in great hands.

Unit 120 is also active in Veteran Court and graduates with a Quilt of Valor. They have a member that also makes patriotic quilts.

Unit 259 Debary actively supports their Veterans and their families. Over 60 hours have been spent answering phone calls and taking care of walk-ins to help those in need. They also provide them with contact information for assistance. Members volunteer at Volusia Count Veterans Court with approximately 25 hours in volunteer hours.

Unit 267 Ormand Beach volunteers for Barracks of Hope. Barracks of Hope is an organization for homeless Veterans transitioning back into society. The Unit receives monthly donations from Publix of breads and goodies to be taken to the Barracks. The Unit also has a bucket at the Post where they collect all kinds of items needed from their wish list. This might cover anything laundry needs to computer paper, also feminine needs for the female Veterans. The turnover rate for these Veterans to move in, get a job, and back into society is 98%. Emory Bennnett Nursing

Home in Daytona has benefited from the Unit 267 volunteers, the Unit has been able to get back into the home and plan activities with them. They also made up Christmas stockings for all of the Veterans. Art Supplies, wooden cars, and paintbrushes were delivered to the facility when they could come in because of the Covid shutdown.

“Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause.”

— **Abraham Lincoln**