

NEW MEMBER KIT



Thank you for becoming part of the exciting and rewarding American Legion Auxiliary. Included in this kit is information about being a member of the Auxiliary. Much of this guide, along with additional information, can be found in the Department of Florida Unit Handbook on the website: www.alafll.org

WHAT IS A VOLUNTEER?

A volunteer is someone who gives time, energy, and talents to others, expecting nothing in return. Volunteers must have an open mind, be willing to embrace wisdom learned from others and let the experience of volunteering lead to personal inner growth. Volunteers realize the importance of time and kindness.

- A volunteer is someone who gives their time, energy and talent.
- A volunteer is someone who is willing to learn,
- A volunteer is someone who has the freedom to choose.
- A volunteer is someone who makes a difference.



WHAT WE DO!

MISSION STATEMENT

In the spirit of service, not self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

WHO WE ARE

For more than a century, we've been serving, educating, and giving to America's finest — our military. We answer the call of *Service Not Self*. We are the male and female spouses, grandmothers, mothers, sisters, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion. Some of us are veterans ourselves.

We are the American Legion Auxiliary and we make a difference. You'll find us in local communities around the USA and in foreign countries. Founded in 1919 during the first National Convention of The American Legion, the ALA has grown to be one of the largest veteran's support organizations. We would love for you to be part of our mission outreach.

PREAMBLE TO THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY CONSTITUTION

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

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 wars;
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 might; to promote peace and goodwill on Earth;
To safeguard and transmit to posterity, the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy;
To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion;
To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Explanation of the Preamble to the ALA Constitution

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America..."

The first of the 10 principles of The American Legion and Auxiliary is a sacred pledge of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. It is most appropriate that the first ideas presented in the Preamble be dedicated to the continued defense of our nation by those very persons who have either served in wartime or had a close relative who served. The pledge to uphold and defend America is the first obligation of every Legionnaire and Auxiliary member.

To maintain law and order..."

Law and order must be maintained if freedom is to be maintained. Liberty is not a license. Good government means that all citizens are secure in their lives and property. To this, the Legion and Auxiliary are pledged by the second principle stated in the Preamble.

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism..."

The term "Americanism" covers all of the things that have made the American nation great and the American people free. It implies qualities of character as well as principles of government. Under this Constitution's principles, the Legion and Auxiliary have worked, and are continuing to work, to defeat the attempts of subversive organizations to undermine our system. We attempt to build loyalty to and confidence in American ideals, and to develop an American citizenship capable of making America's free form of government a constantly greater success.

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during all Wars..."

Every member of the Auxiliary has close personal associations with the sacrifice of war, be it World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada/Lebanon, Panama, Persian Gulf, Operation Desert Shield/Storm or the Gulf War/War on Terrorism. The associations and incidents of these struggles are to be remembered not only for their heroes, their victories for freedom, but also to remind us of the awful implications and inevitable tragedies accompanying war.

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation..."

The individual is the basis of the American nation. Unlike other ideas of government, the American ideal places the individual first. The nation belongs to the individual, not the individual to the nation. The government exists for the purpose of serving the individual, not the individual for the purpose of serving the nation. If this ideal is to survive, there must be a voluntary sense of obligation of the individual to the nation and its component parts, the community and state. The American citizen serves his community, state and nation, not as a driven slave, but as a free man guided by his own sense of duty. To inculcate this feeling among all Americans is one of the great purposes of the Legion and Auxiliary.

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses..."

If America is to remain "the land of the free," the government must always be a government of all the people and for all the people. No classes are recognized in America. No masses of downtrodden people exist. Neither must be permitted to develop, but America must be kept the country of opportunity for all, where every citizen's first allegiance is to the nation, not to some social or economic class or mass. Dominance must not be gained by any such grouping of Americans. This is another basic pledge of the Legion and Auxiliary.

To make right the master of might..."

The American form of government guarantees equal rights to all citizens. The American Legion Auxiliary, born from a struggle against ruthless might, pledges their strength to a continued struggle to prevent invasion of the rights of any citizen by any force, no matter of what character.

To promote peace and goodwill on earth..."

The men and women of the Legion and the women of the Auxiliary know well the ghastly futility of war. We know that war brings only misery to any nation, which engages in it, to the victor as well as the vanquished. With the lessons of war constantly in mind, we pledge ourselves to promote peace and goodwill among nations. We have worked steadily in the cause in the face of forces, which have sought to sow enmity and war throughout the world.

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy..."

These were the principles that inspired America's great war efforts over the decades, and the Legion and Auxiliary stand determined that these principles should not be lost to America in time of peace. Following this pledge, the Legion and Auxiliary work to safeguard justice,

freedom and democracy against the dangers of indifferent citizenship and undermining by their enemies. It strives to give understanding of and devotion to these principles to the younger generations of Americans so that they will endure for the future of the country.

To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion...”

Thus, the Auxiliary pledges its full strength to the support of The American Legion, and affirm its character as an auxiliary to the Legion. It has always been faithful to this pledge, never developing programs or policies of its own, but directing all of its activities towards the “accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion.”

To consecrate and sanctify our association by devotion to mutual helpfulness.”

In this final phrase of the Preamble is set forth the purpose which has guided the Legion and Auxiliary in all of their vast rehabilitation and youth work; in everything they have done to lighten the burden for those suffering from the results of wars; and to bring full justice to those paying the human price for America’s victory. In this work of mercy and relief, the Auxiliary has made great contributions toward the achievement of the Legion’s purpose.

Obtaining Proof of Your Eligibility.

Note: If the person who provides your eligibility is living, they must be a current member of [The American Legion](#) and eligibility documentation is likely not necessary; however you do need to provide his or her American Legion member ID number and Post information on your application.

If the person who provides your eligibility is deceased, acceptable eligibility documents include:

- a. DD-214 Discharge Papers (not issued until after the Korean War)**
- b. Official Military Orders**
- c. Official Military Service Citations/Awards**
- d. Letters related to the veteran’s military service. Must be on official government letterhead**
- e. Certificate from the VA records center in St. Louis**
- f. Data from the back of older discharges**

***DD-214 Discharge Papers can be requested online by visiting www.archives.gov**

SOCIAL MEDIA

There are many social media account from National, Department, Districts, Units and Committees. Listed below are some main accounts. Scan the QR Code below to go directly to the links.

Social Media Site	National	Department of Florida
Website	www.ALAforVeterans.org	www.ALAFL.org
 Facebook	@alaforveterans	@ALAFL Department
 Instagram	@alaforveterans	@ALAuxFlorida
 Twitter	@alaforveterans	@ALAuxFlorida
 Tik Tok		@ALAuxFlorida
 YouTube	AmericanLegionAux	



WHO CAN JOIN? Eligibility for membership in the ALA is determined by the American Legion.

- Membership in The American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the: Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion; and
- Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who served in either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918 and any time after December 7, 1941 who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge;
- Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941 who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge;
- And to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.*

* A woman who is eligible for American Legion membership is eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary regardless of whether or not she is a member of The American Legion. However, eligibility of her female relatives (sister, mother, direct descendants) and/or spouse depends upon her membership in The American Legion.

A qualified veteran is a service member, who served at least one day of active duty during the dates listed on the application on the next page, was discharged honorably AND, if living, is a current American Legion member. If the veteran is deceased, provide a copy of his/her DD-214 to show proof of veteran status during the dates listed on the application. If you need to obtain a DD-214, go to <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records> and follow the instructions to request the DD-214. If you are under age 18, you can join as an Auxiliary Junior member.

Descendants of veterans often are presented with Junior memberships at birth or during childhood through the generosity of an older relative and Auxiliary member. Many of these young women continue their membership as Senior members once they reach age 18. Our voting strength at Department Conferences and Conventions is determined by our membership.

NOTE: Once you are accepted as an Auxiliary member the veteran under whom you are eligible does not need to maintain his/her Legion membership for you to remain in the Auxiliary as long as there is no lapse in your dues payments.

American Legion Auxiliary Governance Structure

National

The name “American Legion Auxiliary” and the emblem are nationally owned registered trademarks. The National organization, the highest level of the American Legion Auxiliary, provides Federal Group Tax Exemption for departments and units, and provides leadership for Auxiliary long-range planning, strategy and mission delivery. At the annual National Convention, new National Officers are elected by delegates from each State. Each State has a certain number of delegates/votes based on the number of members in that state. The national leaders of the American Legion Auxiliary consist of the National President, National Vice President, Five (5) National Division Vice Presidents, National Secretary, National Treasurer, National Chaplain and National Historian.

Department

The Department (State) level is our leadership for all the Auxiliary units in Florida. Each year there is a State Convention where the new Department (state) Officers are elected by the units. Each unit has a certain number of votes based upon their membership strength (the reason why membership in a unit is so very important – to have a voice in State elections).

Unit

The Unit is where the grassroots work of the Auxiliary takes place. There are nearly 10,500 units located in every state and some foreign countries. At the local level, the Legion is called a Post and our Auxiliary is called a Unit. A unit is attached to a Legion Post, taking its name, location and number, but we don’t have to meet at the Legion Post. If the Post is no longer active, a unit may continue to function as a “widow” unit.

A note about membership dues

A member’s dues are made up of three portions, the National, Department and Unit portion. The national dues amount is \$18.00 for seniors and \$2.50 for juniors. Each department and unit determine their own senior and junior rates. The Department of Florida dues amounts is \$12.00 for seniors and \$1.75 for juniors. The amount shown on a members’ dues renewal notice is the total amount the member owes for the year. Dues are paid to the unit, who collect their portion and submit the department and national portion to their department. The department is responsible for paying the member online through the national database, ALAMIS.

UNIT OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

(Any member in good standing can run for office)

Duties of the Unit President

The Unit President must be an able and qualified leader for the Auxiliary in their community . The Unit’s success or failure depends largely upon them. The Unit President should act in a leadership capacity, be familiar with the duties of all officers and committee chairmen and encourage and inspire them in their work. It is the responsibility of the President to see that all officers are supplied with all available information and material from Department and National Headquarters for efficient promotion of their

various activities. The Unit President has many duties. The President presides at all Unit meetings and those of the Unit Executive Committee; adheres to the Constitution and Bylaws, and rules and regulations established by the Unit, National and Department Conventions, and National and Department Executive Committees; appoints members of standing committees; and may appoint members to other committees she/he deems advisable to further the mission of the Auxiliary; appoints non-elected officers and officials; and performs other duties as are usually incident to the office.

Duties of the Unit Vice President

The Unit Vice President is to preside at meetings in the absence of the President and assume such other duties as assigned by the Unit President.

Duties of the Unit Secretary

The Unit Secretary occupies a pivotal position around which all activities of the Unit revolve. They should be efficient and well informed on all Unit, Department and National activities and requirements, and be capable of giving authentic information on organization matters. Duties of the Unit Secretary include:

- Makes a record of all business transacted at each meeting, including executive board meetings, and presents minutes for approval at the next meeting.
- Counts a standing vote when requested by the President.
- Prepares a statement of unfinished business for the presiding officer's use at the next meeting.
- Has for reference at each meeting a list of all standing committee members, a copy of the Unit Bylaws, and correspondence sorted for reading.
- Forwards all name and address changes to Department Headquarters. Receipt of the national magazine by Unit members is dependent upon her efficiency in keeping membership contact information current.

Duties of the Unit Treasurer

An efficient Unit Treasurer is essential to the smooth functioning of the Unit and to ensure that proper accounting practices and internal controls are maintained. The Unit Treasurer is responsible for handling all Unit funds, including the collection of dues from members and donations to special funds.

Department and National dues, as well as special fund donations, should be remitted to Department Headquarters at least monthly. The Unit's Constitution and Bylaws should specify that the Treasurer is responsible for providing a monthly financial report to the Unit executive board and others as required. The Treasurer should work with the Finance Committee to engage a professional to conduct an annual financial review or audit. Upon completion of the annual audit, the Finance Committee and/or Treasurer should submit the audited financials to the Unit executive board for acceptance. The Treasurer is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate tax forms are completed and filed in a timely manner.

Duties of the Unit Chaplain

The Unit Chaplain will express, by word and action, our founding principal of service to God and Country. Encourage the Unit to celebrate the diversity among its members and their faiths. The Unit Chaplain will respectfully and confidentially provide spiritual and emotional guidance to members and their families as needed or requested. The Unit Chaplain is responsible for the invocation and benediction at Auxiliary meetings, and such other acts as would fall within the realm of spiritual leader for the Unit including, but not limited to: installation of officers and initiation of new members; dedication of halls, monuments or colors; Chaplain Services; POW/MIA recognition programs; and the memorial service of a member,

always lending dignity and respect to the occasion. The Chaplain should stay in close contact with the President and other Unit officers and should attend all meetings of the Unit and Unit Executive Committee.

Duties of the Unit Historian

The Unit Historian is charged with recording the activities and accomplishments of the Unit during the term of office. Writing a Unit or Department history is a very important assignment. Through the years the recorded experiences of those who have served before us have guided the footsteps of those who follow. Unit Historians are encouraged to present the factual running story of the accomplishments in each program. The description should be simple and concise. The quality and artistic value of the work depends upon the enthusiasm of the individual historian. Upon the Unit records, the history of a Department is written; Department records contribute to the history of the National organization.

Duties of the Sergeant-at-Arms

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for keeping order at Unit meetings, for the advancement and retirement of the Unit colors and their proper care, and for such other duties as may be assigned by the Unit President

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY COMMITTEES / PROGRAMS

The National Organization has the following core standing committees: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation; Children and Youth; Americanism; National Security; Membership; Constitution and Bylaws; Finance; and Risk and Compliance.

Additional national committees are: Auxiliary Emergency Fund; Community Service; Education; Girls State; Junior Activities; Leadership; Legislative; Liaison with Child Welfare Foundation; Poppy; and Public Relations.

Most Departments follow this plan of committee organization. Units are encouraged to follow this plan to facilitate the coordination of Unit programs with Department and National programs. Some units however may find it difficult to fully implement each program well and choose to undertake only the core committees, or the core committees along with one or two of the committees associated with the core committees. For example, a unit may not have the resources to carry out the mission of the Education Committee, but can be successful with Children & Youth and Junior Activities. The key is to conduct mission outreach suitable to the interests, skills and experience of Unit members.

Each year the National Chairman of each standing committee publishes a Program Engagement Plan (PEP) outlining the mission, goals and “best practices” of each program. The National PEP, along with the Department Plan, should be used as a guideline for the Unit. Each Department PEP is available for download on the Department of Florida Auxiliary website at www.alafIL.org.

Duties of Unit Committees

The Unit President should appoint a chairman for each committee, recognizing that varying conditions and circumstances will determine which committees best suit the Unit’s plan of action. It is the duty of the chairman to become familiar with their respective program/committee and to encourage Unit members to participate in program related activities.

PURPOSE AND MISSION OF COMMITTEES

Americanism: The purpose of the Americanism program is to promote patriotism and responsible citizenship.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund: The mission of the Auxiliary Emergency Fund Committee is to raise funds for and awareness of the AEF, to promote knowledge about the program, to disseminate information to members about the application process, and to assist members in need.

Children & Youth: The purpose of the Children & Youth Committee is to work collaboratively with the American Legion to promote programs that protect, care for, and support children and youth, especially those of our military and veterans.

Community Service: The mission of the Community Service Committee is to mobilize and work in cooperation with the American Legion family, the veteran and military community, and the general population to provide service to benefit veterans, service members and their families.

Constitution & Bylaws: The purpose of the Constitution & Bylaws is to inform members about having proper governing documents at all levels

Education: The mission of the Education Committee is to promote quality education for children and adults through classroom activities, literacy programs, scholarship promotion and support of education beyond high school.

Girls State: The mission of the Girls State Committee is to provide an outstanding, unique, and coveted educational opportunity to the young women of our nation that instills the basic ideals and principles of American government through the Girls State and Girls Nation citizenship training programs.

Junior Activities: The mission of the Junior Activities Committee is to promote volunteerism through community-based programs and services that involve veterans and to teach the principals of loyalty to God and country, justice, freedom, and democracy to our young members.

Leadership: The mission of the Leadership Committee is to develop and prepare knowledgeable and capable leaders to carry on the growth and success of the Auxiliary by promoting activities and resources that educate, motivate and mentor members of all ages on all levels and phases of our programs.

Legislative: The mission of the Legislative Committee is to advocate open communication with local, state, and nationally elected officials, to ensure our members are aware of and informed on issues central to the support and well-being of our veterans and their families and to promote grass-roots levels of advocacy and action.

Membership: The purpose of the Membership Committee is to promote the benefits of membership and to promote retaining and recruiting a diverse, active membership to carry out the American Legion Auxiliary mission and programs.

National Security: The mission of the National Security Committee is to maintain and promote a strong national defense by providing the necessary means to strengthen our military families and prepare our citizenry for response to natural and man-made disasters.

Past Presidents Parley: (This is not a National program, but Florida still participates.) The mission of the Past Presidents Parley Committee is to recognize and honor veterans and to utilize the experience and knowledge of past Auxiliary leaders for the training and encouragement of future Auxiliary leaders. Through the Past Presidents Parley Committee, the members who have served as Unit, Department, and National President can continue in active service in the Auxiliary.

Poppy: The mission of the Poppy Committee is to educate our membership and the public concerning the Poppy's significance and the financial benefit realized by our nation's veterans because of its distribution.

Public Relations: The mission of the Public Relations Committee is to work collaboratively with all levels of the organization to create, implement and support a proactive communication network that advances the objectives and programs of the American Legion Auxiliary and positively projects our image and programs to the public and our communities.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: The purpose of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee is to promote programs and services that assist and enhance the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring restoration and/or transition to normally functioning lives.

Finance: The mission of the Finance Committee is to oversee the general financial policy of the organization and to prepare and monitor the annual budget and its expenditures.

Audit: The purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide oversight assistance to the National Executive Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding accounting and reporting practices, reliable systems of internal control, the corporate responsibility program, and the quality and integrity of the Auxiliary's financial reporting. Audit Committee members shall be financially literate, and the chairman shall have the necessary background to be considered an "audit committee financial expert" in matters of accounting and auditing.

For more information about Unit Committees/Programs of the American Legion Auxiliary, please consult the American Legion Auxiliary Unit Handbook. A copy may be downloaded from alafl.org. Bound copies of the Unit Handbook can be ordered from the Store found on alafl.org

Glossary of Terms

A

AEF: Auxiliary Emergency Fund. Created in 1969, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund assists eligible members with food, shelter and utilities. Grants are also disbursed for emergency needs due to weather-related catastrophes and educational training. See the AEF brochure for further information on how to apply.

ALA: American Legion Auxiliary. We have over 10,500 local communities in the USA and in foreign countries. Founded in 1919 during the first National Convention of The American Legion, the ALA has grown to be one of the largest veteran's support organizations

ALA Girls State: The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program has provided high school Juniors all across the country the opportunity to participate in a hands-on citizenship training program. These young women learn about local, state and federal government by actually creating their own policy through the election of public officials on local, county, and state levels and then by carrying out the duties of these respective offices. A continuation of Girls State is Girls Nation where two “senators” from each state are selected to participate in a simulated National government program in Washington, D.C.

ALAMIS: American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System. It is currently in use by ALA Departments and many units.

C

C&Y: Children and Youth Committee

C&B: Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Chairman: Members may be selected to serve as a committee chairman on the unit, department or national level. The incoming National President prior to the start of the next administrative year selects national chairmen.

Charter: A Charter is, essentially, an application to start a new unit within a department. It also serves as a piece of history. Charters may be cancelled and revoked. See Unit Handbook for more information.

D

DEC: Department Executive Committee. The Board of Directors for the Department.

Department: Within the Auxiliary, each state (as well as Puerto Rico and District of Columbia) is known as a “Department.” Each Department has their own constitution and is governed by a department executive committee. Department Presidents change annually; however, each department has a Department Secretary who typically handles day-to-day business and is usually the first point of contact for the Department.

E

Emblem: The Auxiliary’s symbol is referred to as an emblem, not a logo. Contact the Department of Florida Secretary for guidance if you are going to use it on products.

G

Girls State / Girls Nation: See ALA Girls State

Gold Star Mothers: The biological mothers of sons or daughters who died while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States of America or its Allies, or died as a result of injuries sustained in such service, are eligible for membership in the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. An adoptive mother or stepmother who parented the child, whose biological mother is deceased, from the age of five years is also eligible under the above conditions.

J

Junior Auxiliary: Members who have not yet reached the age of 18.

L

Legion Family: Members of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and Legion Riders comprise the Legion family.

N

NEC: The National Executive Committee is the governing body for the national organization. The NEC meets preceding National Convention, immediately following National Convention and also at mid-year.

P

PDP: Past Department President. Once a department president completes her annual term, she becomes a past department president. Most continue serving, particularly as mentors to future leaders at the unit, district and department levels. Many go on to serve on national committees and other national leadership positions.

Poppy: The poppy became a symbol of the sacrifice of lives in war and represented the hope that none had died in vain. The American Legion Auxiliary poppy has continued to bloom for the casualties of wars, its petals of paper bound together for veterans, reminding America each year that the men and women who have served and died for their country deserve to be remembered. (see Poppy Story at end)

Post: The American Legion's equivalent to an Auxiliary unit. Auxiliary members belong to a unit, not a post.

PNP: Past National President. Once a national president's annual term ends, she is referred to as a past national president. A PNP will typically continue to remain active in the Auxiliary, serving on committees and as a mentor to future leaders at all levels.

PUFL: Paid Up for Life membership. Members who are current on dues may complete a PUFL application and pay a one-time fee, based upon the member's age and total dues at the time of application, to become a member for life. The one-time payment is placed in a trust to pay the member's dues each year.

R

Roster: A list of members in a specific department or unit, available via ALAMIS.

S

SAL: Sons of The American Legion. Founded in 1932, SAL members include males of all ages who are dependents of those who served in the U.S. military and eligible for American Legion membership.

Senior: A member aged 18 or older.

T

TAL: The American Legion, also called The Legion. Members are referred to as Legionnaires.

U

Unit: A unit is the grass roots level of membership. Each unit has its own constitution, bylaws and officers.

V

VA&R: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee

MEETINGS

At the beginning of each meeting, the President calls the meeting to order. The Chaplain leads in prayer; the Pledge of Allegiance is recited; and the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary is recited. The Preamble can also be found on the back of your membership card.

INFORMATION TO REMEMBER

1. By attending Unit meetings, you have a voice in how the Unit operates and how you can help deliver our mission.
2. Proudly wear your Auxiliary pin/shirt at meetings. Branding is a wonderful way to advertise us.
3. Try to attend conferences, various workshops and district meetings to learn more about Auxiliary programs and activities and how you can contribute.
4. The Auxiliary's membership year is from January 1 to December 31. Dues are paid in advance, starting in September. You are considered delinquent if your dues are not paid by December 31 of the year preceding the membership year.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AUXILIARY

What is the primary purpose of the Auxiliary organization? The American Legion Auxiliary was formed to aid The American Legion in carrying out the great program of peacetime service to America to which The American Legion is dedicated. All the Auxiliary's activities are designed to promote the work of The American Legion and to help The American Legion reach its objectives. The first words of the Auxiliary preamble are "For God and Country." Members believe in the ideals and principles of America's founding fathers and pledge to foster patriotism, preserve and defend the Constitution, promote allegiance to God and Country, and uphold the basic principles of freedom of religion, freedom of expression and freedom of choice. Auxiliary programs were created to provide assistance, education and financial support for veterans and their families; in the community, the organization focuses on helping to create a better society, particularly for the nation's future citizens -- our children and young people.

What is the relationship between The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary? The Auxiliary is a part of The Legion family of service affiliates which also includes the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Riders. Local Auxiliary Units are affiliated with an American Legion Post and support Legion-sponsored activities through volunteer service and fundraising activities. While the Auxiliary has sometimes expanded its programs to meet the special needs of families, particularly military families, most programs augment or complement Legion programs.

What is the difference between the Auxiliary and other veterans' service organizations? The American Legion Auxiliary was formed by The American Legion in 1919. The Auxiliary is a veterans' service organization with volunteer representation in VA Medical Centers. Members provide a rich and varied resource pool of ability, talent and leadership experience.

What do Auxiliary members have in common? Auxiliary members are all ages and from all walks of life. They are service-oriented with a variety of outside interests, activities, and lifestyles. Their primary goals are to serve our veterans, to safeguard and nurture our nation's children and to educate all citizens, young and old, about the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities of American citizenship.

What are the advantages of Auxiliary membership? The Auxiliary is a remarkable organization with nearly 105 proud years of service to veterans and the nation's communities. In addition to the personal gratification and rewards gained in voluntary service, there are many tangible benefits for members of the Auxiliary. Members receive a complimentary subscription to the Auxiliary's national magazine and have exclusive access to a wide variety of discount services, insurance products, and professional financial services. Low-cost insurance products include life, health, dental, vision, Medicare supplement, and pet insurance. Auxiliary members who find themselves without other resources can obtain temporary, emergency financial assistance or money for schooling to re-enter the job market through the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.

What types of membership are available? Membership applications can be obtained from units, department offices or National Headquarters. Members can renew their membership each year or purchase a lifetime membership called "PUFL" (Paid Up For Life). Some units present "Honorary Life Memberships" to outstanding members, which means the unit will pay the member's dues for as long as the member is a member of that unit.

THE POPPY STORY



From the battlefields of World War I, weary soldiers brought home the memory of a barren landscape transformed by wild poppies, red as the blood that had soaked the soil. By that miracle of nature, the spirit of their lost comrades lived on. The poppy became a symbol of the sacrifice of lives in war and represented the hope that none had died in vain. The American Legion Auxiliary Poppy has continued to bloom for the casualties of four wars, its petals of paper bound together for veterans, reminding America each year that the men and women who have served and died for their country deserve to be remembered. Poppy Day has become a familiar tradition in almost every American community. This distribution of the bright red memorial flower to the public is one of the oldest and most widely recognized programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. This poppy, as a memorial flower to the war dead, can be traced to a single individual, Miss Moina Michael. She was so moved by Col. McCrae's poem that she wrote a response: ...the blood of heroes never dies But lends a luster to

the red Of the flower that blooms above the dead In Flanders' Fields. On impulse, she bought a bouquet of poppies – all that New York City's Wanamaker's Department Store had – and handed them to businessmen meeting at the New York YMCA where she worked. She asked them to wear the poppy as a tribute to the fallen. That was November 1918. World War I was over, but America's sons would rest forever 'in Flanders' Fields.' Later, she would spearhead a campaign that would result in the adoption of the poppy as the national symbol of sacrifice.

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow Between the crosses row on row, That mark our place; and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below. We are the Dead. Short days ago We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved, and now we lie In Flanders fields. Take up our quarrel with the foe; To you from failing hands we throw The torch; be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die We shall not sleep, though poppies grow In Flanders fields.