



ALA CHATTER

Your source for all things Maine American Legion Auxiliary



American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Maine

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March 29, 2023

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT

Promoting our mission, and values in everything we do

Everything American Legion Auxiliary members promote, publish, post, etc., should always come back to the mission. Whether it's posting the mission statement on your website or promotional materials tied to your fundraising and community events, it's important to share what our organization is all about.

While it is always important to communicate the ALA's mission, it can sometimes be hard because we are all so busy. Sometimes, our day-to-day grind of activities and processes can become all-consuming and prevent us from devoting time to promoting the mission in everything we do.

In addition, our current members, and the community members we are trying to reach, are just as busy. When everything just seems to blend into each other, a reminder about *why* our members joined and the *reasons* we do what we do, is a good idea that can yield impactful outcomes and possibly deeper, more meaningful relationships.

In a blog article for the Ambition Institute, Aimee Monteith, operations director at Grebot Donnelly Education Marketing Consultants, offers some tips on how to communicate your mission and values more effectively.

Keep it visible

Don't let your mission become a statement that sits on a memo in a desk drawer. Instead, it should be included in all key messages, and in both internal and external documents. Is the ALA's tagline — "A community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families" — visible on your unit's Facebook page, for example?

Use a variety of channels

In addition, Monteith says to communicate your mission, and values through as many channels as possible. Promoting an upcoming event or activity hosted by your ALA unit? Your marketing campaigns need to utilize all channels available, such as newsletters, website, recruitment packs, press releases, social media, and your front-of-house team.

In addition to Monteith's suggestions, Brown writes that communication theory suggests we must tell others what we want them to know a minimum of eight times before our message is really heard and understood. Brown advises putting the mission in your email signature, flyers, and on your website or

social media accounts. Consider as well the value of putting your mission on the walls of your post home and in various locations such as the lobby, bar rooms, meeting rooms, common areas, hallways, etc.

Speak with one voice

Monteith recommends taking internal measures to get everyone on board and ensure everyone speaks with one voice about your mission. Communicating the ALA's "who we are" in a positive, excited manner will ensure everyone involved engages positively with what you have set out for the organization to achieve.

Share success stories

Choose success stories wisely and keep repeating those stories and moments that demonstrate your mission and values. It's as important to do this internally as it is externally so that everyone is well-versed in the stories that have the biggest impact.

For God and Country,

Debra Rumery, 215 Rabbit Road, Durham 04222 (894-4584) debrarumery@gmail.com

EASTERN DIVISION NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

Happy spring everyone, hopefully the weather will soon catch up with the calendar. I have been busy! I had been traveling these final weeks of winter. We had a new grandson born January 27th and it was off to Pennsylvania to meet him. The last week in February NEC, Joan Caron and I attended the Washington D.C. conference with four of our Legionnaires. Thank you, Matt, Andrew, Richard, and Gene for being the Legion family we are in Maine! This was my third trip to this conference, formerly known as the Awareness Assembly. In my opinion, the conference was well structured as a Legion Family. Having the opportunity to be in the meeting(s) with the Legionnaires and hearing their presentations was most beneficial. Sunday evening Auxiliary members had a chance to mingle and meet with our "team leaders" to prepare for Monday's commission meetings. I was assigned to the National Security commission meeting.

Take away from meeting. There are 22 million veterans. What can the American Legion family do? Advocate by coming to Washington D.C. Hearing it from the ground visit, calls and emails to our representatives. Tell them what's going on, having our voices heard is what matters. Continue to engage with our lawmakers all year long on issues. Voices and votes matter.

Brief highlights of the meeting: Border security. VA Healthcare should not be treating immigrants. U.S. people first. Legislation is in effect, no funding for it. Issues need to be addressed, enforce and get control of the numbers coming over, legally not illegally. Secure first, laws need to be enforced and then decide to what to do.

Career development, Health care and affordable day care. Base housing. Address and find out for each branch the worse barracks and address the quality of life for our service members. The need for affordable day care. Yes, some are working from home but to have a day or two without the children to actually be able to concentrate solely on work would be a plus. Insure quality of life for our servicemembers and their family. Pay raises for military retirees who served twenty years plus. It has been ten to twelve years since retirees have received a raise, need proper compensation. Northern border. There

has been a 700% increase in crossing from the north (Canada). Falls on the Homeland Security Committee Senators. Make contact. American partnerships. NATO alliance is being tested. The U.S. must be active, actions not words. We have an 8 billion world population, food and water shortages. No one claims to want a world conflict but look at what is currently going on. Insure the Coast Guard is paid if government shuts down. We have given 100 billion so far to the Ukraine, wants oversite committee to show how it was spent.

We went to Capitol Hill to meet with our Maine representatives, Senator Angus King, Congressional representatives Chellie Pingree and Jared Golden. The following week, Senator Susan Collins held a meeting, via zoom.

This month I visited the Department of Delaware. It was a very busy and exciting three days. I attended events at four different Posts. We literally went from one end of the state to the other. First was a banquet at Post 30 for TAL National Commander. Saturday was the ALA DEC meeting and lunch at Post 17. We were then off to the first of two huge fundraisers. A chicken wing contest at Paradise Pub where \$20,000.00 plus was raised for Home of the Brave (a transitional home for homeless veterans). On Sunday we went to brunch, sightseeing, and maybe a little shopping on the beach. Then we headed to one of the smallest (building size) Post homes, Post 5, which was absolutely adorable, and located one block from the beach. In the evening was the second fundraiser. It was to benefit the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) at Post 28, one of the largest Posts nationwide. They had a dinner and variety show, the house was packed. They sure showed off their talents in Delaware.

This weekend I am traveling to the Department of Connecticut, and Pennsylvania in April. The Department of New York visit will be via zoom in April. New Hampshire visit is scheduled in May, and Maine in June. The Departments of Maryland, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Vermont, and Delaware are in the books, each holding wonderful memories. Pictures of events and travel can be found on Facebook, the page is [ALA Eastern Division 2022](#).

Remember our veterans and honor them each day, albeit in any way you can.

Yours in Service,
Veronica Gurney, 3 Mount Pleasant St., Waterville 04901 (692-3417) polka58@roadrunner.com

DEPARTMENT VICE PRESIDENT/MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Hello All Units,

Thank you to everyone for all your recruiting efforts, phone calls, emails, postcards, letters, etc., to get our members to pay their dues! GREAT JOB!! APPRECIATE ALL YOUR HARD WORK!! But we do have some Units that need a little help.

Do you wonder what their secret is? I know I do! But I bet the members in each of these units are out there asking and recruiting and working hard to provide their members with meaningful, mission-based opportunities to be involved in and feel they are contributing to the cause that brought them into our organization.

It is amazing that so many of us that are from small towns to large cities find there are still people that have never heard of the American Legion Auxiliary. We need to get out there and increase the expo-

sure of our ALA emblem by wearing our pins, and branded apparel to show everyone who we are and what organization we belong to.

1. Does the Legionnaire have a wife, husband, daughter, granddaughter, mother, or sister?
2. Are there female Legionnaires that might be interested in also being involved with the Auxiliary?

Imagine if each Legionnaire had just one of his or her relatives join the Auxiliary....we'd double our membership in a short time! When I read the obituaries and see that a person was a veteran, I wonder if they and their wives, husbands, sisters, daughters, or mothers knew about our great Legion Family. Just as important as finding new members is improving their experience so we can keep them. They may be bursting with new ideas or different ways to do things. Listen to them. Too often a new member is told, "that is not how we do it here" or "we tried that and it didn't work." Statements such as these will turn an *enthusiastic* and *valuable* new member away. There are no rules or restrictions about how long a person has to be a member to serve in *any* position. Willingness and enthusiasm, along with some basic organizational skills, is all that is required for most unit leadership roles. Let's welcome and invite fresh new faces and ideas and be open to *everyone* that wants to be a part of our organization in whatever capacity they are capable of or interested in.

Thank You all, for all you do.

Yours in Service,

Pat Grant, 784 Parker Farm Road, Buxton 04093 (400-0107) grant6952@roadrunner.com

WHITE FLAG AWARD RECIPIENTS

District reaching or exceeding 95% membership by April 10, 2023

6th District

Units reaching or exceeding 95% paid membership by April 10, 2023

Gardiner 4	Pembroke 59	Standish 128
Livermore Falls 10	Kingfield 61	Peaks Island 142
Portland 17	Lubec 65	Windham 148
Brunswick 20	South Paris 72	Waldoboro 149
Dover-Foxcroft 29	Berwick 79	Headquarters 178
Boothbay Harbor 36	Gray 86	Westbrook 197
Thomaston 37	North Berwick 87	
Houlton 47	Brownville 92	

DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

It's that time of year ... getting busy, busy, busy. Annual reports are starting to trickle in. **MOST IMPORTANT** – make sure you send your Unit dues rate form in ASAP.

New members! We continue to have constant issues with new member applications. All information on the veteran the potential member is joining through must be completed. We cannot add members without all necessary information.

Proud to serve our organization,
Michelle McRae, 5 Verti Dr., Suite B, Winslow 04901
(465-4966; Fax: 465-4967) mcrae.mls@gmail.com

2024 DUES INCREASE

Beginning with 2024 dues, rates are increasing. Currently Units send \$22.00 per member to Department for each member. The \$22.00 is \$10.00 for the Department and \$12.00 that goes to National for each member.

In 2024 that rate will be **\$31.00 per member (a \$9.00 per member increase, \$6.00 for National and \$3.00 for the Department)** for senior members. Junior dues are going from \$4.25 per member to \$7.25 per member in 2024.

For those Units who have Constitution and Bylaws that read something like this, you are covered.

ARTICLE III – DUES

Section 1. The annual membership dues of this Unit shall be \$4.00 for Senior and \$2.75 for Juniors, above the Department and National per capita, paid annually or for life.

If your Unit's Constitution and Bylaws specifically read that your Units dues will be "X" number of dollars, you will need to vote to change your Constitution and Bylaws to reflect the increase, by April of 2023 as you will need to send your new rate to us by **May 1, 2023. FORMS ARE IN THE REPORTS PACKET.**

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Department Headquarters. We will continue to remind you of this increase throughout the year.

DONATIONS NEEDED

During the National President's visit on May 13th, we are planning a Gifts of Gratitude event, to pack boxes to ship to Maine deployed troops. In order to purchase items for the boxes and cover shipping, Units are asked to send monetary donations to Department Headquarters, earmarked Gifts of Gratitude.

Please show your support for Maine troops by sending a donation to Headquarters prior to May 1st.

DISTRICT 6

Happy Spring to All,

Finally Spring has arrived and we look forward to better weather. We have a District Meeting coming up May 21 at Woodland Post 23- save the date. Hope you can attend.

Lubec:

Bingo Sundays, doors open 1pm, game at 2pm.

March 31, 7-10pm - Music with Alan Cook

Machias:

March 28 Deliver coffee and Donuts to the Veterans

April 1 Spaghetti Dinner and Dessert Auction by SAL and Boy Scouts, proceeds to the Boy Scouts.

Third Wednesday of the month Nursing Homes' Luncheon and Activity.

Second Thursday of the month Auction at Eastpoint 10am.

Third Thursday of the month 11am Bingo at Marshall's.

Fourth Thursday of the month 1pm Bingo at Eastpoint.

April and May order forms available for Remembrance Hill - \$10 each and include a yellow ribbon with the name of the honoree of your choice. The flags will be displayed on the hillside of Unit 9 until June 2023.

Woodland:

Bingo Tuesdays, doors open, game starts at 6pm.

May 13, 5-7 pm Free Spaghetti Supper for Veterans

May 21 District 6 Meeting

Pembroke

Bingo Mondays, doors open at 5pm, Early Bird at 6pm

April 8, 8-10am Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

April 8, 5-6:30pm Baked Bean Supper \$10 Adults, free from children under 12

Post 59 had a Thank you Supper for those who support the Post and gave awards in appreciation.

Muriel Leighton gave a beautiful patriotic quilt she made to Dale Shannon in appreciation for all he does to support the Auxiliary. It was a great event.

Thank you everyone for all you do in support of our veterans. You make a difference in the lives of so many veterans and in our communities.

Milley Smith, P.O. Box 333, Pembroke 04666 (214-2994) milderado@yahoo.com

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Hello Auxiliary Members

1. April is the month of the Military Child, celebrating children of our military members who cannot be home to celebrate birthdays, graduations, and other special events. April 15 is designated as "Purple Up!" Day.

How “Purple Up!” started: The awareness initiative started in 1986 by Caspar Weinberger who was the Defense Secretary at the time. Since then, we have continued to commemorate the month of April annually for military connected kids.

Why Purple-Up? On April 15 of each year, we are encouraged to wear purple in support of military kids. Although “Purple Up!” Day is not an official holiday being aware of the event allows for the community to acknowledge the importance of military kids.

What are your units doing for month of April? Purple Up! Events are the highlight of the Month of the Military Child and I hope that units are planning on at least one Purple Up! Event during the month. Let’s show our support for our military kids by wearing something purple on the 15th of April. Drop me a line at sorayaumphrey@yahoo.com. Pictures are also needed.

2. Youth Hero and Good Deed Awards: Eight of the twelve Departments in the Eastern Division have given out at least one of the awards since June of 2022. Maine has not had any submissions. Please take the time to check in with your local schools, youth groups or any other youth organizations. Kids are doing great things every day and we need to find them and congratulate them.

3. The Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine (AFFM) recently opened up a teen center called Cody's Closet at the Bangor AFFM office. They are trying to stock it with teen items such as hair products and personal items for both teen boys and girls along with some teen activities such as drawing pads or headphones/earbuds. They are also seeking gift cards to give out to teens for their back to school program so they can go purchase their own clothing from Walmart. They need around 50- 25.00 gift cards to Walmart, but any denomination will help! Monetary donations are also welcomed. Checks can be made out to: ALA Department of Maine and annotate that it’s for the Foster Kids Program and mail to: American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Maine, 5 Verti Drive, Suite B, Winslow, Maine 04901.

Again, Thank you for all that your units do AND more importantly, remember to REPORT all that your units do!!!!

Soraya Umphrey, 596 E. Pittston Rd., Pittston 04345 (215-8552) sorayaumphrey@yahoo.com

DIRIGO STATE

All Dirigo State information can now be found at www.mainelegion.org. Go to the “Programs” tab and click on Dirigo State. All forms will also be attached to this week’s ALA Chatter.

For 2023, the program has a new home and is moving to Colby College in Waterville. The program will open on Sunday, June 18th, with graduation on Thursday, June 22nd. Sponsorship per student remains at \$400 for 2023. Note: you may sponsor either male or female students who are just completing their junior of high school.

We appreciate your continued support of this American Legion Family program for Maine youth. Only with your support can the program continue to grow.

MAINE VETERANS HOME AUGUSTA

Hello everyone,

As always I hope this finds you well and I hope you are enjoying a beautiful spring day.

So not a lot this week, we have about two weeks to go until we find out as to our grant for the tablets project; fingers crossed we will get this! Think of how wonderful it will be for our heroes to have 40 tablets for their use whenever they need one, being able to video chat with loved ones, listen to music, read a book!

In other news any help anyone is able to give to help finish up the sensory unit please send donations to Auxiliary Department Headquarters, earmarked for the sensory unit. Many thanks to Ann Spaulding, Pam Johnson and Lauren Curtis for their donations at the 4th District meeting this past weekend.

Vets home meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 1130, please think about having a unit member attend.

Thank you for all you do for our heroes at the MVHA.

Yours in service,

Stella Trahan, 41 Hatch St., Lot 19, Richmond 04357 (504-6708) Practicalmagik67@yahoo.com

MAINE VETERANS HOME SOUTH PARIS

I have not had much contact with Heidi, acting activity director, due to increase of COVID cases. She wears many hats at this nursing home....also dispensing medications and giving direct care to the residents.

Thank you Lisbon post for stepping up to do April birthdays. Hopefully, you have been able to receive the names and list of gift requests.

As mentioned before, they would like on their wish list:

Birdseed, outdoor umbrella... remember the base!!!!.....dove body wash, pear soaps, mens body wash and deodorant

They always enjoy decorations and "goodies" for Easter!!!

Have a great day...and thank you for all you do for our veterans and their families.

Patricia Hackett, 58 Winter St., Auburn 04210 (577-9170) pgreuben@gmail.com

MARCH CALENDAR RAFFLE WINNERS

3/1/23 – Linda Everette

3/3/23 – Raymond Benner, Sr.

3/2/23 – Mike Larrivee

3/4/23 – Nancy True

3/5/23 – Pam Decoteau

3/6/23 – Wade Griffin

3/7/23 – Gene White

3/8/23 – Ken Wilson

3/9/23 – Lisa Griffin

3/10/23 – Joan Caron

3/11/23 – Rose Dyke

3/12/23 – Paula Stanhope

3/13/23 – Linda Jack

3/14/23 – Steve Barbour

3/15/23 – James Veilleux

3/16/23 – Virginia Chaput

3/17/23 – Alan Brule

3/18/23 – West Paris Unit 151

3/19/23 – Clayton Gay

3/20/23 – Carol Roach

3/21/23 – Angie Ferrell

3/22/23 – Cathy Dipietrantonio

3/23/23 – Xena Rolfe

3/24/23 – Cathy Proctor

3/25/23 – Bob Mooney

3/26/23 – Bonnie Smith

3/27/23 – Traci O'Neill

3/28/23 – Michael Frelk

3/29/23 – Joel Thompson

Winners in **RED** are \$100; all others are \$25.

JOIN US

1st District: April 11, Gray Unit 86, 5 p.m. (Past President/Past Commander dinner & District meeting)

2nd District: April 16, Rumford Unit 24, 2 p.m.

7th District: April 23, Madawaska Unit 147, 1 p.m., no meal

Gray Unit 86: April 29, 9:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. Indoor yard sale. Start your spring cleaning early and start pricing your unwanted items to sell at our yard sale! Table rentals are \$25. Make your reservation now by sending me an email to make sure you don't miss out on this exciting opportunity! If you prefer, you may donate your goods to the Auxiliary to sell. We will only be able to accept donations the week before the sale as we have limited storage space. Money raised by the Auxiliary will go to veterans and their families. Spread the word to all of your family, friends and neighbors. Contact Nancy True at nancytrueALA@gmail.com

3rd District: May 7, St. George Unit 34, 1 p.m. if luncheon, 2 p.m. meeting

7th District: May 7, Madawaska Unit 147, 12 p.m. meal, meeting to follow

National President's Visit: May 12-14, details to follow

Department Joint Testimonial: May 20, Rumford Post 24, Flyer below

1st District: May 21, Scarborough Unit 76, 2 p.m.

4th District: May 21, Augusta Unit 2, 1 p.m.

Department Convention: June 9-11, Jeff's Catering and Event Center, Brewer

Dirigo State: June 18-22, Waterville

Eastern Division National Vice President Homecoming: DATE CHANGE: July 15.

ALA CHATTER DEADLINE IS 3 P.M. EVERY TUESDAY

To be added to the mailing list for the ALA Chatter, email name and address to mcrae.mls@gmail.com. This is a free, weekly e-mail only newsletter for all members of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Proud to serve our organization,
Michelle McRae, Department Secretary, 5 Verti Dr., Suite B, Winslow 04901
(465-4966; Fax: 465-4967) mcrae.mls@gmail.com

FLYERS BELOW

**American Legion Auxiliary
Celebration of Life for
Jeri Brooks Greenwell**

January 29, 1955—December 31, 2022

**Please join us on Saturday, May 13, 2023 as
we celebrate Jeri's many years of service to
the American Legion Auxiliary**



Department President 1983-1984

**Eastern Division National Vice President
1986—1987**

National Chaplain—2007—2008

The Maine American Legion Auxiliary, under the leadership of our Past Department Presidents, will honor Jeri's many years of service to the American Legion Auxiliary at all levels from Unit, to District, Department, Division and National, sharing her talents in many capacities. Joining us for the celebration will be our current National President Vickie Koutz.

The celebration will begin at 10 a.m. at Gray American Legion Post 86, 15 Lewiston Road, Gray, Maine.

The family will be holding a funeral for Jeri on Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 1 p.m. at the West Paris Congregational Church., 22 Church St., Bethel, Maine.



The American Legion Family Department Testimonial



Join us on Saturday, May 20, 2023 as we honor our 2022—2023 leaders.

The American Legion Department Commander Kirk Thurston

American Legion Auxiliary Department President Debra Rumery

Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Mike Hustus

Location: Napoleon-Ouellette Post 24, 184 Congress St., Rumford, Maine

Post doors open at 2 p.m.

Time: 4 p.m. social; 5 p.m. dinner, followed by ceremony and possible entertainment

Menu: **Choice 1:** Maple, bacon wrapped pork loin **Choice 2:** Shrimp stuffed Haddock

Both include green beans, mashed potatoes, gravy, roll and dessert. Either meal can be requested gluten-free.

Cost: \$25 per person

Mail reservations to: American Legion Post 24, Attn: Tricia Thurston, 184 Congress St., Rumford, ME 04276 by **May 5, 2023**. Make Checks payable to American Legion Post 24 and indicate your meal choice when making reservation.

Local Hotels:

Best Western—(207) 507-4061

Blue Iris—(207) 364-4495

Hotel Rumford—(207) 364-3621