



From the desk of the President, Renee Kohl...

Hello American Legion Family,

A new year is underway, and I'm honored to serve as your 2025–2026 Department Auxiliary President. Representing Ohio and each one of you is a true privilege, and I thank you for your trust and support. Let's extend a warm welcome to our newly elected officers:

- **1st Vice President:** Mindi Rue
- **2nd Vice President:** Rebecca Long



I'd also like to express heartfelt thanks to **Lee-Bishop Unit 464, District 14**, and our entire Legion Family for your encouragement throughout this journey.

This year's theme is **GNOME: Giving Necessities to Our Military Everywhere**. From supporting veterans in hospitals to aiding active-duty members and their families, our mission extends far and wide. Let's also remember that our youth are part of this family too—they need to know we're here for them.

My special project this is the **Creative Arts Festival** and I'm looking forward to sharing more information with you via the Buckeye Messenger and Bulk Mailings.

NEW LOCATION: School of Instructions

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, September 20 and Sunday, September 21, 2025**, at: **Marriott Columbus Northwest 5605 Blazer Parkway, Dublin, OH** (Yes, it's the same venue we use for Mid-Winter! – Information will be distributed soon)

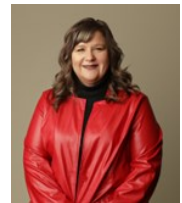
We're grateful to have secured this location—especially on short notice. A huge thank you to **Lori Wickham** and **Megan Wilson** for their quick action and dedication to making this possible.



Membership Minute with Mindi

Mindi Rue, First Vice President, Membership Chairman

mindi1036@gmail.com



They say people need to hear things seven times before it will stick. Well, I guess I am going to keep with that old adage.

I will be talking about "Driving the Membership Experience" and creating opportunities for members to serve, well more than seven times this year. We want to focus on renewals and rejoins by giving every member a chance to honor their "why." Every member of our units joins under her own service or to honor a family member's service. Let's focus on giving everyone an opportunity to participate in their unit activities. We know that life gets in the way for some people to attend meetings and help with events, but there are many necessary projects that they can help with on their own schedule. Create a group of members who do Buddy Checks on unit members and veterans. Get a list of members who will make desserts for fundraising meals or funeral dinners. Find some folks who will write some handwritten notes to our members who are struggling with health issues or are shut ins. Find someone to send birthday cards to members and our Legionnaires. Some members may want to financially support your unit. Let's think outside the box!

As some of you know, American Legion National President, Trish Ward, was in Ohio for our convention Wednesday night-Friday afternoon. During the caucuses, she dropped a challenge on Ohio. The Merit Medallion is a National President's Award for Excellence, and qualification starts by being 85% of goal by March 15th, the American Legion's birthday. President Trish, who will be the Membership Chairman for Kansas for the 2025-2026 administrative year, challenged Ohio to a friendly wager, that whatever Department (Ohio or Kansas) is highest over 85% by March 15th, will have to wear the jersey of choice for the winner. When Ohio wins, Trish will have to wear my Cincinnati born, Ohio raised Sam Hubbard Bengals jersey (she is NOT a fan of the Bengals)! If, by some chance, Kansas wins, I will have to wear a Patrick Mahomes jersey (my skin may peel off if I have to put that jersey on!

Let's drive that bus right over our goal this year!



Public Relations
Rebecca Long, Chairman
Second Vice President

I want to begin by extending a thank you for this opportunity to serve as your Department Second Vice President. I truly appreciate your support and am excited to see all the wonderful things that you are doing in your units.

Public relations is our chance to brag about who we are and what we do as an organization. Publicize your events and accomplishments. The key to this is communication through newsletters, social media, flyers, phone calls, local newspapers, schools and word of mouth.

Are you wearing your Auxiliary branding? This is a great way to open conversations about the Auxiliary and what we do for our Veterans and in our communities. My goal for this year is to present a positive image of the American Legion Auxiliary and would encourage each of you to share your activities. Please include me in all your newsletters. My email is rebecca.j.long254@gmail.com. Also make sure to join the ALA OHIO Public Relations page on Facebook and share your events and photos there.



The Year Wrap-Up by Immediate Past Department President Louise Smerk

On July 13, 2024, at approximately 11:00 am I was sworn in as the Department President of Auxiliary for Ohio. I wanted this event to be special to my family, so I asked me two brothers to please escort me up to the stage for my installation. My daughter honored me by holding our family bible while I took my oath of office.

Soon we were traveling to New Orleans for the National Convention. Just before we were about to leave, I received the resignation letter of our Department Secretary. As soon as we returned to Ohio, our HR committee proceeded then search for a new secretary.

In September we held our annual School of Instructions. Our chairman did a wonderful job to bring new ideas to the membership in attendance to work the programs.

In October, we hold our District Fall Conferences and the President, 1st Vice, and 2nd Vice are the guest speakers at these conferences. We deliver the theme and/or messages to these members from each other.

My theme this year follows my 1st Vice year utilizing the Tree of Life on my pin with the message "Growing from our Roots" followed this year with "LEAVES – Let's Embrace All Veterans Every Season". My special project is The Judge Sara J Harper village. This is home to 12 previously homeless female Veterans. We are raising funds to provide them with raised flower/vegetable gardens, dog waste stations and a storage building to house the gardening tools along with patio furniture.

November marks the month for my homecoming which was held in the Cat and Primate building of The Cleveland Zoo. Everyone in attendance did not know what to expect for this venue, which allowed us to have great food and fellowship amongst the animals in the building.

December brought us to several Christmas events at our VA facilities. Donations of clothing, books, toiletries, boots, coats, hats, and gloves were distributed to the patients.

January is when we hold our Mid-Winter Conference with The American Legion and the SAL. We were honored to have our Central Division Vice President, Rosemarie Hauck in attendance. Rosemarie asked that in our spare time if she could see our state capital. Since this event is in Columbus we could make this happen. While we were driving I thought of 2 additional stops that we could make, first, we stopped at The Veterans Museum and Memorial to show her the newly installed Gold Star family memorial. Secondly, Rosemarie had stated her grandson was a huge Ohio State football fan, so I decided to take her to the Horseshoe Stadium and have her photo taken in front of the stadium and with the statue of Jesse Owens. My chairman reviewed their programs with the members in attendance, we had a membership skit and an awards banquet with The American Legion. We held a basket raffle raising funds for my special project.

In the month of February, we were able successfully hire a new Department Secretary. But unfortunately, in April we received the resignation letters of our program coordinator and our membership admin assistant. This made doing business at the Department office a bit tough. We have managed to keep the wheels turning and hired two additional employees.

I have been invited to unit meetings, Past Commander and Presidents dinners, fund raisers, and Legion meetings. I have truly enjoyed every one of these events.

As the Department President I am a member of Buckeye Girls State Board along with being the Director of Government. Our week was full of excitement and special guests for our delegates. On Wednesday, Frank LaRose, Secretary of State of Ohio joined us to announce the winning delegates of the top 7 positions and then gave them their oath of office. In the afternoon of the very same day Governor Mike DeWine spoke to the delegation and then met privately with the top 7 winners. While at Bowling Green State University this week, I chose to plant a Weeping Waterfall Beech tree in dedication to my theme and to leave a remembrance of the Buckeye Girls State program for the 2025 year.

The Year Wrap-Up cont'd...

Well, for my final Finance, DEC and Convention meetings held in July. We were honored to have National President Trish Ward in attendance from Wednesday evening until the end of the Friday session. Trish has great speaking abilities in telling stories from her year as National President. She told us one story that will resonate with me forever. She told a story of when she was having difficulties getting from one state to another, with a short layover at home. The story was about being at the right place at the right time. Trish learned that her flight was delayed by a malfunctioning plane and then the replacement plane also had mechanical issues. The third plane was good to go and as they were taxiing to the runway the pilot came over the speaker stating they had a distinguished guest on board. It was the remains of a soldier being returned home to his final resting spot after he was identified as a WWII MIA. Trish made it home to her husband to then look up the arrangements for this veteran. She discovered his calling hours where the next day and only a 7 hour ride each way to Omaha Nebraska. She called fellow Auxiliary members and they met Trish at the funeral home. Trish then stood before the family and explained who she was and how honored she was to be on the same plane. The moral of this story is we as Auxiliary members all have a WHY, why we are in this organization and why we do what we do.

This has been an AMAZING year. It is bittersweet that it is over, I did not get to everything that I wanted to do. Though I think that I accomplished quite a bit.

I wish the newly elected officers a year of new adventures and fun.

Pam's Parliamentary Pearls
Pam Bates, Department Parliamentarian
BUCKEYE MESSENGER ISSUE # 1
937-974-2316 (7am to 7pm EST)
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BUCKEYE MESSENGER
ISSUE 1

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE QUICK START SHEET

(Note: I found this in one of my reference folders. The original did not have an author's name or indication where the information came from; however, it is correct information)

I WOULD RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING:

- **Print a copy and share with your members**
- **Put your copy in protective sheet covers**
- **Put this and the parliamentary to come in a binder for quick and future reference.**

**HELP YOUR DISTRICT PRESIDENT & Yourself WIN THE
PARLIAMENTARY PEARLS CHALLENGE!**



For member in your District that answers a Buckeye Messenger or Bulk Mail Parliamentary Procedure question correctly, your District President & the member will receive 1 point per their correct answer. Answers will only be accepted up to 7 days after the question has been posted. Your Name, District Number, Unit Number and date of the Buckeye Messenger and/or Bulk Mail issue number. (The entry will not count without the information) Winners will be announced at the 2026 Department Convention.)

ISSUE # 1 QUESTION:

Name your Department Officers and Your District President

A member making a motion must first get, recognition from the chair? **Yes**

The person seconding a motion has to stand? **No.**

For courtesy=s sake, a nomination should be seconded? **No.**

In order to hurry things along, the president should express his opinion about each matter promptly?

No, the president does not enter into the discussion while presiding.

The chairman should allow time for discussing all motions?

**No, some motions are not discussable.
However, most of them should be discussed.**

If a member, when he thinks the discussion has gone on long enough, call for a vote?
Call for the Question.

There are four ways of voting. Name all four ways.

Acclamation (or voice)

Show of hands (or standing) Ballot

Calling the roll

If the presiding officer wishes to enter the discussion, what may he/she do?

Relinquish the chair to someone else & proceed as a member to get the floor & speak.

A person making a motion should stand?

Yes.

If a motion is not seconded the chairman takes a vote on it anyway?

No, it is lost for want of a second.

Give the correct way to state a motion.

I move that...

rather than I make a motion...

To keep the business meeting from dragging, the chairman of a committee making a report should move its adoption?

Yes.

Is it true that a motion to adjourn need not be seconded.

No.

If the president thinks the discussion has been long enough, what may be said to close the discussion & take a vote?

Are you ready for the question?

Who records the results of the vote?

Secretary in the minutes.

During a discussion period (of a motion) members wishing to speak who must be recognized by the presiding officer?

All persons wishing to speak should be recognized.

When members speak out of turn or make some motion when another is on the floor, what should the president say?

I'm sorry, you're out of order.

If the president or some member fails to follow some rule of procedure - such as failing to take a vote - what should the members (orparliamentarian) do?

After securing recognition, the person may say, A rise to a point of order. We failed to take a vote@, etc.

May a motion be withdrawn?

Yes

Name two ways officers may be nominated.

A - From the floor by member

B - By nomination committee

Name 3 duties of president.

A - Presides at meetings

B - Checks on arrangements for meetings and sees that program is ready

C - Approves payments made by club

D - Appoints committees

In taking a voice vote, the president says, All those in favor say Aye and All those opposed, no?

Yes.

How and when does a president call for order?

At beginning and any other time when the group gets too noisy

Motion to adjourn is always in order.

Yes.

Members seconding a motion are expected to vote for that motion?

No. Often a motion is seconded just to get the question before the house.

Who may withdraw a motion?

Is it permissible for the president to vote?

No, only if there is a tie vote or if the vote is by secret ballot. Check your bylaws.

Who presides at meeting when both president and vice president are absent?

The secretary or what does your bylaws say

Give an accepted order of business for a meeting.

Call to order

Pledges to flags

Song

Roll Call

Reading of minutes

Reports

Old business

New business

Program

Social hour

Adjournment

When the secretary reads the minutes and a correction is made, the president then says, The minutes stand approved as read

No. The minutes stand approved as corrected.

In voting on candidates for office by voice vote, the first one nominated should be the first one voted on.

True.

Motion to table is always in order.

Yes

Should a chairman always restate a motion before calling for a vote?

Not always-may have the secretary read or merely say AYou have heard the motion@.

Is the report of a standing committee old business or new business?

Old business.

If two members ask to be recognized at the same time, which one should the chairman recognize?

Either one.

When is an ordinary motion out of order?

When there is a motion already on the floor.

Who can properly install officers?

Anyone elected for that purpose or what is stated in the bylaws..

If there is a question about the manner of voting, what method should be used?

Ballot.

If three members in secession rise and address the chair, which one must the chair recognize?

The first.

If a motion is made and duly seconded that effects the chairman personally, who may relieve the chairman of the embarrassment of calling for the motion?

The Vice-President or other officer or a member.

Is it proper for a newly elected officer to preside until he is formally installed?

Yes.

If a motion is amended, which should be voted on first, the amendment or the original motion?

The amendment.

Is the report of a special committee old business or new business?

Old business.

If a member thinks that the chairman made the wrong declaration after a voice vote, what may he do?

Ask for show of hands or standing vote.

What is the difference between an ad hoc committee and a standing committee?

An ad hoc committee is appointed to complete a specific task and then is disbanded. A standing committee continues to exist throughout the year or from year to year.

Should the ones nominated for an office be permitted to vote for those nominated?

Yes.

Poppy Shop

Cindy Masowick, Chairman

Currently there is only "1" poppy maker at the Ohio Veterans Home. Doug Fulton has made a total of 10560 small poppies and 470 large poppies. The Department of Ohio, has outsourced 45,000 poppies this year.

Totally, almost 60,000 poppies have been shipped out of the Auxiliary Headquarters office. All poppy orders have been shipped.

I want to thank all of the Units for ordering poppies this past year. I do hope you get your orders in early this coming year.

Education
Jane Ann Brenneman
Department Chair
Jane Ridenour
Department Vice Chair

Thank you Renee for this appointment.

My name is Jane Ann Brenneman, I am a 60 plus year member of Joseph W Diehn unit 468, Sylvania Ohio. I also am a 30 plus teacher of special needs children.

In this position I would like to focus on “*House Bill [Ohio HB117 | 2025-2026 | 136th General Assembly](#) -Feb 24, 2025 · To amend sections 3313.602, 3314.03, 3326.11, and 3328.24 and to enact section 3313.6031 of the Revised Code to enact The Pledge of Allegiance Act to require the Pledge of to require the Pledge of Allegiance in schools. In the interests of promoting excellent citizenship skills, schools and teachers are highly encouraged to develop and implement lessons related to the American flag and pledge of allegiance In the development of its graded course of study, *The board of education of each city, local, joint vocational, chartered community, and exempted village school district, and the Cleveland scholarship and tutoring program, shall require each district school to devote time on or about Veterans' day to an observance that conveys the meaning and significance of that day. The amount of time each school devotes to this observance shall be at least one hour or, in schools that schedule class periods of less than one hour, at least one standard class period. This is a good place for veterans in the classroom program. The board shall determine the specific activities to constitute the observance in each school in the district after consultation with the school's administrators.**

The board of education of each city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school district shall adopt a policy establishing a time and manner for the daily recitation of the pledge of allegiance to the flag. No board of education or employee of a city, local, exempted village, or joint vocational school district shall alter the words used in the oral recitation of the pledge of allegiance to the flag from the words set forth in 4 U.S.C. 4.

My 2nd focus is **PURPLE STAR AWARD**, this award falls into the American Legion Auxiliary Military Children’s program. This is a program that recognizes schools that show a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation’s military.

More information and how to apply is on the be page [Purple Star Designation - Ohio Department of Education](#), or military children.org, For over twenty-five years, MCEC has supported the identification and inclusion of all military-connected students by educating, advocating, and collaborating to resolve education challenges associated with the military lifestyle. The Military Student Identifier (MSI) was mandated in **Every Student Succeeds Act**, requires states and districts to report on the performance of students with a parent in the military.

3rd focus is **Scholarships**. The auxiliary has many scholarships available along with local units and departments. And national.

WATCH THE DUE DATES. Get the information to your local school district ASAP! Don’t forget private, charter, and catholic schools

4th **Give 10**, this should be done at least twice a year, at the beginning and after winter break. Besides the standard items, donate tissues, hand sanitizer, paper towel, glue sticks, fidgets to keep hands busy, clothing (in case of accidents) diapers, wipes for bottoms and disinfectants.

5th **Buckeye Girl State** start early, get into the schools, explains the program and what is expected of the girls who are chosen to attend. The school doesn’t decide who attends! This is still happening! BGS is open to any girl that will be a junior the next school year and complete the interview process and is selected by the unit.

Dates to remember

- American Education Week
- Nation scholarship application due
- Purple up day
- Teacher appreciation week

The plan of action has a list of resources, awards and deadlines, please use them.

District 1

The Selection of 2025 Winners for the STEP UP & STAND OUT Scholarship Supported by The American Legion Kerner Slusser Post #63.

The STEP UP & STAND OUT Scholarship was created to honor the outstanding Seniors who have participated in one or more of the following Post #63 Youth Programs. The programs are American Post #63 Baseball Program, Buckeye Boys State (sponsored by Post #63), Buckeye Girls State (sponsored by Unit #63), Miss Poppy Program (Sponsored by Unit #63), Oratorical Program (sponsored by Post #63).

Three STEP UP & STAND OUT Scholarships were given out to students for 2025

Two Honor Mention STEP UP & STAND OUT Scholarships were honored for 2025

Winners were: Brandon Gerding, Ryan Verhoff, and Rori Butcher

Honorable Mentions were: Layne Rellinger and Carter Niese

Pictured with the winners is Ken Hanneman, Commander Post 63, Ottawa, OH

Pictures are of the Unit #63 members cleaning the banners for hang up in Ottawa of the Veterans that served.



Winnow-Arn Unit 541 celebrating the programs of the American Legion Family by opening the doors the their community on American Legion Family Day. The day was highlighted by a very moving presentation on Be the One by National Be the One Manager, Tony Cross.



District 2

Dayton VA collection and volunteers



District 3

Thundering Third District Auxiliary Unit 707 President Melissa Emmons and members donated a new coffee bar with coffee to the USO at Wright Patterson AFB.



District 4

The Fabulous 4th District experienced an exceptional quarter. With a remarkable Summer Convention that paid tribute to those members who departed from us too soon, alongside a round-table meeting explaining reporting procedures, our members are diligently working within their units and posts to serve our veterans. Many are proactively engaging with their communities to elevate awareness of the American Legion Family.

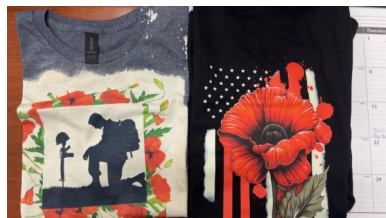
Our units held interviews and sent remarkable delegates to BGS, provided meals for Vietnam veterans, participated in Flag and Memorial Day observances, distributed poppies, and organized CPR training sessions. We honored women veterans, volunteered at the Cincinnati and Dayton VA hospitals, as well as the Georgetown and Chillicothe VA homes, and warmly welcomed home returning veterans from Honor Flights. Some attended a dedication ceremony for a veteran who received a home from the Gary Sinise Foundation and attended a Bronze Star with Valor award for a local veteran.

On a personal note, the past two years serving as the President of the 4th District have been truly remarkable. My achievements during this time would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our units. I have learned to listen attentively to our members, helping to guide them toward improving their respective units. I am profoundly grateful for this invaluable opportunity.

Margie Hominy

4th District President

1. Unit 123 members were recognized by their post for their dedication
2. Unit 49 held a member social, to encourage member involvement
3. Unit 49 participated in Memorial Day Celebration
4. 4th District Convention - Memorial program
5. Unit 218 participated in the Memorial Day parade
6. Unit 218 created and sold "Poppy" shirts to support the Poppy program
7. Unit 256 Auxiliary/Riders volunteered at Cincinnati VA July 4
8. Unit 256 Award Blue Star Flags to military mothers
9. Unit 256 volunteers for Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities program
10. Unit 256 members attend Gary Sinise home dedication
11. Unit 288 Members volunteer to support the post at the annual Car Show
12. Unit 256 participates in Memorial Day wreath program
13. Unit 256 Offer Poppies at Kroger in Loveland
14. Unit 450 Honors Vietnam veterans with an appreciation dinner
15. Unit 450 Members earn funds through their annual fish fry
16. Unit 450 Requests Marsha Giehls install officers for the upcoming year
17. Unit 615 Presents annual Scholarships to Waynesville High School
18. Unit 631 4th District 1st Vice Pat Morganroth, poses with Unit 631 President Phyllis McKinley as the offer meals to their membership





District 7



Excited BGS Delegates from Teays Valley HS in Ashville, enjoying activities at Bowling Green State University -June 8th through June 14, 2025. They had a great time learning & making lifelong memories.

The Ashville ALA Unit #730, District 7, sponsored their Veterans Appreciation (Flag Day) luncheon on June 13th, 2025. Local Veterans were honored. Special Thanks to the ladies of the South Bloomfield Methodist Church for the meal and to the Pickaway County Veterans Services for Veteran gift bags; and to our membership for this annual tribute.



Members of Ashville ALA Unit #730 distributed Poppies in the Ashville community on Saturday, May 17, 2025 (Armed Forces Day). Many Thanks to all those who supported our local Veterans.



Our juniors at Post 7 Brewer-Tarasco have been super busy. They have been making lap quilts and distributing them to the VA Wade Park. Nicholas Perciful, Antonio Perciful, Dominick Brown, Isaiah Doell-Shaffer, Ezekial Charon, Beyancah Charon, Amelia Jaworski, Lillian Shaffer, Lucas Shaffer, Max Jaworski and Natalia Shaffer have worked continuously on this ongoing project. We are anxiously awaiting more fleece to move forward. Every blanket was crafted with love and appreciation for our veterans as they selflessly sacrificed their lives to give us the freedom we have today.



District 9, Unit 7 Brewer-Tarasco participated in the Memorial Day parade in Wickliffe. Miss Poppy, Beyancah Charon and Master Poppy, Lucas Shaffer represented us well. This year we had one of our junior SAL, Ezekial Charon, march for the first time. The parade ended with a celebration on the front steps of the Wickliffe City Hall. The boy scouts raised the flag and proclamations were received by Miss Poppy and Master Poppy. Following the ceremony, there was a flag raising at the Post, followed by a BBQ. The public was invited to join in the festivities. It was a



District 11



Memorial Day Program given by the Lowell American Legion Post 750, & Auxiliary Unit 750. District 11. Lowell, Ohio.

District 14



July 16 2025

Aurora Mayor and ALA Unit 803 member Ann Womer Benjamin is pictured with ALA Unit 803 BGS delegate Savannah Brent

Annual ALA Unit 803 picnic chairwoman MaryAnn Podboy

ALA Unit 803 President Becky Sharp introduced welcomed guests

ALA Unit 803 Chaplain Sue Kray gave the prayer



2025 ALA Unit 803 Buckeye Girls State Delegate Waverly Solvesky carried our flag in the Aurora July 4th parade. Pictured here with Unit 803 President Becky Sharp and her Mother, Jenny Solvesky.



2025 ALA Unit 803 Buckeye Girls State Delegate Waverly Solvesky carried our flag in the Aurora July 4th parade. Pictured here with Unit 803 President Becky Sharp and her Mother, Jenny Solvesky.

On September 11, 2025 Members of ALA Unit 803 participated in the Post 803 September 11th ceremony followed by Flag Disposal.



2024/2025 ANNUAL BOOK OF REPORTS

DISTRICT 1

ROSEANNE PAQUETTE, PRESIDENT

As we return from Department Summer Convention which was held in Independence, Ohio, it was a wonderful convention – a few hiccups – but no one is perfect. We are in the middle of summer with these warm temperatures – are you staying cool? Are we doing Buddy Checks? Even though the weather is nice, does not mean that we need to forget our veterans who are shut in. They would love to hear a friendly voice or see a friendly face. It doesn't hurt to give a few minutes of your day.

The following awards were presented and won at Department Summer Convention this year by members of the First District: **Americanism** – Emma McBane Plaque went to Freedom Unit 183; **Children & Youth** – Leta Zeller Plaque went to District President, Roseanne Paquette; **Community Service** – Anna Mae Beckley Plaque (Best All Around) to Becky Dippman, Troy-Webster Unit 240; **Membership** – Tontogany Unit 441 won \$100.00 for reaching membership goal by February date; **Chaplain** – Ruth Adams Plaque (Best All Around) went to Freedom Unit 183; **Education** – Agens Merritt Plaque (Best Report) went to Anne Michel Freedom Unit 183; **History** – Plaque will be awarded to the unit with the best all around Senior History and it went to Freedom Unit 183; **VA&R** – Blanche Klein Plaque (best all around program) went to Pam Brennehan Maumee Unit 320. Certificate of Merits were handed to Units 63, 183 and 587. There is one unit that was not recognized, but it is being looked at and they should be awarded the Citation of Merit and that is Unit 553. There were no President's Citations issued to District 1. Ladies in order to get either Citation you must: Citation of Merit made membership goal, turned in all of your green reports, paid your bonding fee on time and purchased poppies through Department by December 31st. The President's Citation goes to members who did not meet goal, but turned in all of your green reports, paid your bonding fee on time and purchased poppies through Department by December 31st. We can do this next year and make First District look good. Department Summer Convention next year will be held in Toledo, Ohio.

We elected a new Department President, Renee Kohl, Department 1st Vice, Mindi Rue (she is from our District) and Department 2nd Vice, Rebecca Long. When you see anyone of these ladies, please wish them well throughout their year. Department President Renee's theme this year is "Giving Necessities to Our Military Everywhere". I have the new membership pins which sell for \$3.00 and Mindi's theme is "Driving the Membership Experience". If you wish to purchase a pin, when you see me, I will be more than happy to sell you one.

First District Fall Conference will be held on October 11th, 2025 at Maumee Unit 320. Registration will start at 9:30 a.m. and the meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. The Spring Conference will be held on March 7th, 2026 at Community Unit 279 in Elmore, Ohio and District Summer Convention will be held on May 30th, 2026, at Adams Township Unit 553, Toledo, Ohio. I hope to see a lot of new faces at the conferences and convention.

As you all know, if there are any events your unit is putting on and wish for me to attend, please give me a call and I will make arrangements to attend. I wish all of the members of the First District a very safe summer. I will be attending National Convention from August 21st to August 28th in Tampa, Florida and hope to bring back some exciting news for the First District.

District Two

Deborah A. Meyer

District Two held their Fall Conference at St Henry Unit 648 in St. Henry, Ohio. Department 2nd Vice President Mindi Rue was the guest speaker and presented the membership incentives and expressed the importance of working on membership for this year. She introduced that new delivery for the Buckeye Messenger and Bulk Mailing would be done digitally in order to save money. She also encouraged units to send pictures and write about their activities for the Buckeye Messenger. Those attending listened to the District chairmen outline their program's Plan of Action and encourage units to work the programs. District chairmen were Americanism, Natalie Daniel; Children and Youth, Amanda Shaw; Community Service, Mona Shipley; Junior Activities, Rebecca Fetters; and VA&R, Sarah Maurer.

The units in the District continued throughout the year planning and found success working the programs. Units distributed their poppies, contacted the schools of available scholarships and talked to junior class girls to find Buckeye Girls State delegates, had Halloween, Christmas and Easter egg hunts for the children in their communities. The ladies crocheted and sewed blankets.

The District Spring Roundtable was hosted by Sidney Unit 217 where the attendees were encouraged to continue to work on membership with the District so close to being a goal District. The program chairmen gave their reports and outlined what could be reported and encouraged the members to report what they accomplished this past year. President Deb Meyer explained the importance of the End of the Year report. Members were shown how to use their program reports to fill in the End of the year report form.

President Deb Meyer worked hard towards reaching this year's membership goal of 2727 members. For the first time in many years, District Two did reach and surpassed their goal. The following units are goal units: William Paul Gallagher Unit 96, Lima; Harrold Kerr Unit 173, Bellefontaine; Isaac Van Wert Unit 178, Van Wert; Celina Unit 210, Celina; Commemorative Unit 268, Delphos; Fort Loramie Unit 355, Fort Loramie; Charles Collins Unit 381, Huntsville; Patriotism Unit 470, Coldwater.

The pinnacle, of course, was the District Summer Convention held in Van Wert hosted by Isaac Van Wert Unit 178 with the rewarding units for their hard work. Each of the District chairman gave a brief report and awarded each group's winners and Best Overall winner. Those receiving District Best Overall were Americanism, St. Henry Unit 648; Children and Youth, Emmet Mannix Unit 345; Community Service, Minster Unit 387; Juniors, Maria Stein Unit 571; and VA&R, New Bremen Unit 241.

At the Department Summer Convention units receiving the Presidential Citation of Merit were New Bremen Unit 241 and Minster Unit 387. Two Past President Parley Scholarships were given to Hannah Woods and Rachel Schroer from St. Henry Unit 648. St. Henry Unit 648 was awarded the Spirit of Community plaque for best community service project involving the unit and other organizations. Marilyn Holdheide from Unit 571 received the Doris Wainwright plaque for the overall best report for Public Relations. Minster Elementary School was awarded the Best All-American Elementary School for the report written by Diana Hausfeld of Minster Unit 387. Amanda Shaw was ratified and introduced as the next District Two President for the years 2025-2027. Congratulations to all units for your dedication and hard work this year carrying out programs and writing reports.

District 13

Cindy Boehnlein, President

Wow what a year the district has had. Our willow branches have bent and swayed with the changing needs of our veterans, military, children and youth, juniors and community!

First off, I would like to congratulate District 13 for being the first District to be goal in the state of Ohio, not to forget being over goal by 6.43% putting us in 1st place at the time of Department Convention. Eleven units were 100% or better, with Unit 572, Joseph J. Jacubic the highest at 126.99%! Next year the membership challenge for Ohio against Kansas is which state can be the most over 85% by March 15th. Mindi Rue vs Trish Ward. Who will wear the other's football jersey? Bengals vs Chiefs! Our District will surely score the touchdown for us to win.

The District was also 100% in reporting of the Unit Impact reports! That was a 50% increase from last year. Though the numbers were reported, as asked by National, to improve our chances to regain the great granddaughters for membership, reporting on the top 5 at the district level was -9 units. But of these units, we did amazing work.

Members put together handouts to distribute at the Cleveland VAMC. Volunteers assist at the "Last Call" serving coffee and snacks, and serving as onsite guides to the families of those that passed while a patient at the VA. Our veterans at the Transitional Housing on 94th Street were treated to Thanksgiving and Xmas. 2 Veteran Baby Showers were attended at the Parma CBOC helping with donations and Amazon cards. Money was raised for Pres. Louise's project at Judge Sara J. Harper Village. 3 homeless stand downs were attended, and local hunger centers were supported. These are just a few of our veteran projects.

Americanism is high on our list by decorating the post property with flags and patriotic signs. We held community events to promote the flag and country and teach about what we stand for. Marching in our city parades got several units in the public eye and was a great way to involve the juniors. One unit assisted at their elementary school for Veterans Day and taught about flag etiquette.

Our Children and Youth programs include Easter, Halloween and Xmas fun. Scholarships are given and funds are donated to the Dept. scholarships. Give 10 to Education is given to the underprivileged children in our area. 2 members volunteer the entire week at BGS.

We have one Junior group from Unit 627 that participated with the travel log project to Holmes County. These Juniors also had a fund raiser in the canteen for members to put their spare change for President Louise's project raising \$250. District 13 proudly had 2 Miss Poppies at Poppy Shop, Miss Lillianna Markovich, Unit 343, and Miss Riley Lehmann, Unit 91.

Awards

Americanism- Dept. Distr. Winner Cert. of Achievement- Kimm Bunch Newburgh Hts. Unit 627

BGS- Dept. Distr. Winner Certificate of Achievement- Stacey Lehmann Albert E. Baesel Unit 91

Legislative- Certificate of Achievement to Units 2, 91, 343, 572, 610, 627, 703

Children and Youth- District reports and Achievement Certificates for group 1-5 were handed out

Department Certificate by membership- 2nd place Group 3, Michelle Bolin Unit 627

1st place Group 4, Unit 610

1st place Group 5, Unit 91 Stacy Lehmann

Juniors- Dept. Certificate of Achievement for Group 4, Unit 703

Education- Betty Robaszkiwicz Education Plaque for most money donated per capita- Unit 610

Best Unit report in District – Unit 2, Cindy Boehnlein

Nurses Scholarship Donations Certificates- 91, 343, 421, 610, 627

Historian- Certificates to all that turned in History reports.

Community Service- Dept. District Certificates- 1st place Henry J. Morgan 451

2nd place Albert E. Baesel 91

3rd place Euclid 343

C.S.- Mary Parker Plaque for best all year project – Henry J. Morgan 451, Pat Falkenstein

Best Community Service Video Certificate- Unit 703 Parma Heights, Danielle Zaremba

Membership Doris Kilgore plaque for greatest percentage over goal- Joseph J. Jacubic Unit 572

Units goal ribbon– 91, 196, 309, 343, 421, 469, 572, 610, 627, 703, and 738

Junior goal ribbon- 91, 627

National Membership award ribbon- 343, 421, 572, 610

Chaplain- Department per membership group award- Group 1, 1st place Cleveland Unit 2

Group 2, Unit 343 Honorable Mention

Group 3, 4th place Unit 627

Group 4, 4th place Unit 703

Group 5, 1st place Unit 91

National Security- Dept. District 1st place- Group 1 Unit 2 Cleveland

Group 2 Unit 343 Euclid

Group 3 Unit 627 Teddy M. Zieja

Group 4 Unit 610 Brook Park

Group 5 Unit 91 Albert E. Baesel

Public Relations- Certificate of Achievement to Unit 91

Poppy- Winners by membership groups- Group 2, 1st place Unit 343 Euclid

Group 3, 2nd place Unit 627

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation- Sue Friedrich Plaque, Unit 91 Albert E. Baesel

Blanche Klein Certificate 2nd place, Unit 91

Marie Moore Fund Plaque, Unit 91

Citation of Merit Awards- 91, 343, 610

KATHY BURKHAMMER
14TH DISTRICT PRESIDENT

I have had a wonderful 2 years as District President. We have had only a few “hiccups” but with the help of the Past District Presidents, everything worked out great. We kept 2 units from turning in their charters. I am so proud of my District and the members for the support they have given me and for all the work they have done for the programs. I will cherish my memories forever.

At my District Convention we had almost 60 people there from the Auxiliary, Legion, and SAL. Also all 15 units were in attendance. Kathy Linn was elected as our new District President, and I know that she will make us proud.

I have traveled over 10,000 miles (including air miles) as District President. I attended all DEC, Department meetings, and National meetings. But I am not going to Tampa. I attended all the American Legion monthly and quarterly meetings. I also attended all the SAL meetings. I finally made it to all 15 Units for a visit.

Now for awards from our District Convention:

Americanism-Patty Miller, Group I 1st- Frank Bender Unit 473, 2nd-Wendell L Willkie Unit 19. 3rd-Clare Eggleston Unit 803. Group II, 1st-Firestone Memorial Unit 449. Group III, 1st-Streetsboro Unit 685, 2nd- Garfield Memorial Unit 566, Group IV, 1st-Charles Faust Unit 281. Jane Turner- Americanism Award-----Streetsboro Unit 685

Chaplain-Kathy Corathers, Group I, 1st- Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, 2nd-Frank Bender Unit 473, 3rd-Lee-Bishop Unit 464, HM-Clare Eggleston Unit 803, Group II, 1st Firestone Memorial Unit 449, Group III, 1st-Streetsboro Unit 685, 2nd-Garfield Memorial Unit 566, 3rd-Roger Moore Unit 175, Group IV, 1st-Charles Faust Unit 281. Shirley Legg Chaplain Award----Wendell L Willkie Unit 19.

Children & Youth-Nardella Stockard. Group I. 1st-Frank Bender Unit 473. 2nd-Wendell L Willkie Unit 19. 3rd-John Fulton Unit 272. Group II. 1st- Firestone Memorial Unit 449. 2nd- Windham Unit 674. Group III. 1st-Ravenna Unit 331. 2nd-Garfield Memorial Unit 566. 3rd- Roger Moore Unit 175. Group IV, 1st- Charles Faust Unit 281. Iris Shields Children & Youth Award- Ravenna Unit 331.

Community Service-Kimmy Holland, Group I, 1st-Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, 2nd-Lee-Bishop Unit 464, Group II, 1st-Firestone Memorial Unit 449, Group III, 1st-Ravenna Unit 331, 2nd – Streetsboro Unit 685, Group IV, 1st-Charles Faust Unit 281, Patricia McLaughlin Community Service Award-----Ravenna Unit 331, Aileen Hovis Community Service Award-----Wendell L Willkie Unit 19,

Juniors-Makenah Leibert, Group I, 1st -Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, Group II, 1st-Firestone Memorial Unit 449, Group III, 1st -Ravenna Unit 331, 2nd-Garfield Memorial Unit 566, Marilyn Warner (Merry Lyn) Junior Activities Award---Firestone Memorial Unit 449

VA & R- Cindy Masowick, Group I, 1st-Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, 2nd-Lee-Bishop Unit 464, Group II, 1st-Firestone Memorial Unit 449, 2nd-Windham Unit 674, Group III, 1st-Streetsboro Unit 685, 2nd-Ravenna Unit 331, 3rd-Roger Moore Unit 175, Group IV, 1st -Charles Faust Unit 281, Martha Marsh VA&R Award----Wendell L Willkie Unit 19.

Membership, Goal Unit for SR & JR, Ravenna Unit 331, Lee-Bishop Unit 464, Sr Goal, Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, Roger Moore Unit 175, Garfield Memorial Unit 566, Windham Unit 674, Deerfield Unit 713. Phyllis Boltz Award--- Lee-Bishop Unit 464, Dorothy Brady Award----Tie Lee Bishop Unit 464 & Windham Unit 674, Eleanor Hartline Award----Garfield Memorial Unit 566.

Poppy-Pat Shipp/Michele Sandridge, Group I, 1st-Lee Bishop Unit 464, 2nd-Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, 3rd-Frank Bender Unit 473, Group II, 1st-Firestone Memorial Unit 449, Group III, 1st-Ravenna Unit 331, 2nd-Garfield Memorial Unit 566, 3rd-Streetsboro Unit 685, Group IV, 1st-Charles Faust Unit 281. Sharon Miller Poppy Award---Ravenna Unit 331.

Mary Forsythe Best all-Around Unit Award, Group I---Wendell L Willkie Unit 19, Group II-- Firestone Memorial Unit 449, Group III—Ravenna Unit 331, Group IV---Charles Faust Unit 281.

Department Convention-14th District Caucus: Americanism, Certificate to Units 449, 566, 685. **Legislative** Certificate to Units 19, 331, 449. **BGS**, Best Report Unit 464. **Children & Youth**, 3rd- Ravenna 331, Certificates to Unit 556, 449, 272, 473, 19. **Education** Best Report Karen Peel Unit 449. **Nurses Scholarship**. Certificate to Units 566,685 & District 14. **Community Service**, Group II 1st- 449. Group III 2nd -331, 3rd – 685. **Membership**, Group I Certificate to Units 19, 464, Group II Certificate to Unit 674, Group III Certificate to Units 331, 175. **Chaplain**, Group I 3rd-19, Group II 3rd- 449, Group III 3rd- 331, Group IV 2nd- 281. Certificate to Michele Sandridge for most prayers sent in for Department Louise’s Prayer Book. **Leadership**, Group I Certificate to Unit 19. Group III Certificate to Unit 331. **National Security**, Group I Certificate to Unit 272 Unit 19, Group III Certificate to Unit 331. **Public Relations**, Best District Report Unit 331. **VA&R**, Certificates to 19 & 685.

From the Department Convention floor: “Martha Van Horn” Junior Activities Plaque- John Fulton Unit 272. “Phyllis Nickoson” National Security Plaque- Kathy Burkhammer. “Anne Eshelman” Public Relations Plaque- Kathy Burkhammer. “Shelley Riggs” Poppy Plaque- Norma Mounts Unit 331. **Education**- Payton Leider Unit 281 \$400. Oliver Dyer Unit 685 \$500. **Citation of Merit**- Units 496,566.

Thank You 14th District for believing in me and supporting me for the last 2 years. I had a blast, and you all mean the world to me. Keep up all your work for our veterans and our programs. Love to the 14th District American Legion family.

Children and Youth
Krista Carpenter, Chairman
Colleen Phillips, Vice Chairman

Ohio has done an outstanding job promoting and embracing our children and youth every season of the year. We accepted National Chairperson Lisa's challenge to have a least one Youth Hero and one Good Deed awarded in our state and surpassed it. We raised money for the Child Well Being Foundation at the Unit Level and the Department Level. Ohio members are very aware of their purpose to promote programs that protect, care for, and support children and youth **149,183.25** volunteer hours reported.

33,003 youth were served by Units.

Reports showed **\$34,000 plus** donated in direct cash aid for needy children.

Units have awarded **13** Good Deed Awards and **2** Youth Hero Awards.

Units spent **almost \$144,000** on goods for youth activities. Units spent **almost \$57,000** in other expenses to support children and youth.

Sixty plus national and local charities received over \$50,000 in donations from Ohio members.

The 2024-2025 winner of the Leta Zellar Plaque is District 1 President Roseanne Paquette. District 1 had the "Highest Percentage" of Units contributing to The American Legion Child Well Being Foundation.

The 2024-2025 winner of the Miriam Junge Plaque for promoting the most outstanding report for the "Best Year-Round Children & Youth Program" is First District's Becky Dippman of Troy-Webster Unit 240. This Unit funded camp scholarships, raised a lot of money for a local pre-school, taught youth about community service by inviting students to volunteer and to support veterans. They donated to churches, community projects, charities, and to the school as a unit and as members. They celebrated Military children and youth. Quoted directly from the Chairman's narrative – "Members served 1583 children with 729 hours of time valued at \$24,414.21, funds raised \$10,000 value, and \$4,547.25 spent. 1215 miles were traveled by 22 Seniors and 9 Juniors. The total value of these efforts is \$38,961.46." Although these numbers are impressive, it was the well roundedness of their Children and Youth Program that stood out.

The chairman considered **any unit** submitting a green report AND narrative when choosing Group winners and the Miriam Junge Plaque.

Group I

- 3rd Place- District 6 - Clyde C. Keltner Unit 518 – Hope Eaton, Chairman
- 2nd Place -District 6 – Hanover Unit 764 – Suzie Nugeness, Chairman
- 1st Place- District 7 – Young-Moore Unit 100 – Margaret L. Blevins, Chairman

Group II

- 3rd Place -District 1 – Joseph W. Diehn Unit 468 – Evelyn Navarre, Chairman
- 2nd Place- District 4 – Mt. Washington Unit 484 – Sandy Pennington, Chairman
- 1st Place- District 5 – Ehret-Parsel Unit 447 – Cindy Perkins, President & Chairman

Group III

- 3rd Place -District 14 – Ravenna Unit 331 – Kimberly Holland, President & Chairman
- 2nd Place-District 13 – Teddy M. Zieja Unit 627 – Michelle Bolin, Chairman
- 1st Place-District 1 – Freedom Unit 183 – Gwenda Schroeder Zulch, Chairman

Group IV

- 3rd Place-District 7 – Ross County Unit 62 – Cari Steinbrook, Chairman
- 2nd Place-District 6 – Levi Phillips Unit 85 – Joyce Chaney, President & Chairman
- 1st Place-District 3 – Randolph Unit 707 – Melissa Emmons, President

Group V

- 1st Place-District 13 – Albert E Baesel Unit 91 – Stacy Lehman, Chairman

Our 2024-24 year began with members gathering at School of Instruction to learn more about the program through a presentation and the sharing of ideas from those members during the sessions. Folders were given to District Chairmen containing ideas and ways to promote the program. E-mails, monthly newsletters and the Ohio Buckeye Messenger were used to communicate through the year.

Caring for Ohio's Children

Ohio members want to Be the One not only for Veterans, but for Children and Youth. Many units made donations supporting Suicide Awareness – our Ohio Junior President's project. Pamphlets have been shared at unit meetings and in communities providing information about a variety of topics such as suicide, bullying, drugs, and internet safety. Unit 38 taught five life skills classes to 126 students. Unit 85 shared pamphlets during their April dinner and took some to the Salvation Army. Units 578 and 667 had information available at every event. Unit 175 planted a tree to bring Awareness to Children and Youth issues.

Halloween was the most reported event for keeping children safe in Ohio, but not the only event. Units passed out Halloween Coloring books and safety pages. Multiple units participated in or hosted their own trunk or treating events for safe experiences. Unit 707 passed out light up jewelry so children would be visible after dark. Unit 254 members acted as crossing guards on busy streets during trick or treating. Unit 260 made a trinket bag for a child with a severe peanut allergy. Unit 45 fingerprinted 53 children at a bike safety event. Multiple units donated to Safety Town/City to teach children community safety. Classes were held teaching CPR (Unit 435) and babysitting skills (Units 648 and 571). Unit 764 created safe locations for meeting at football games.

Supporting Homeless/Needy Children

Adopting and supporting children and their families at Christmas topped the charts in Ohio. Units donated gifts/gift cards, shopped, and wrapped gifts to ensure that children had something for the holidays. Toy drives were also popular to collect items for Christmas.

Many units collected hats and gloves. Unit 776 filled a 330-gallon bin! Clothing, coats and personal care items were donated to shelters or schools where there was a need. Food baskets during the holidays were a focus for eight units. Many units held food drives for local shelters, schools, and food pantries. Unit 305 formed their own food pantry for the community. Unit 637 collected snacks for the school nurse. Units 272 and 633 provided blankets for a homeless shelter and Unit 14 made pillowcases too.

Supporting students ranked high in Ohio. At least twelve units collected school supplies and Unit 62 held a weeklong drive-up event. Unit 100 members scoured for used instruments for a school band program in a low-income area. Unit 181 donated 100 jars of peanut butter to be included in backpacks sent home over Christmas break. Many units paid for school lunches including unit 749 donating \$1500.

Recognizing Youth

Thirteen Good Deed Awards were reported with one pending. Three recipients were given gift cards. Two were treated to dinner and gaming. One received a gift. One was also given a donation to present to the charity he was helping. Two Youth Hero Award recipients were reported.

Honoring Military Youth

KDH2 was supported with purple ribbons, balloons, flowers, cookies, and shirts popping up everywhere in the month of April, especially the fifteenth. Unit 92 sponsored a radio ad to spread the word about Military Child Month. Units 62, 100, and 776 reported local governments proclaimed April as Military Child Month. Units performed the Military Child's Table Ceremony. Unit 578 held a spirit week at a local school and Unit 764 had Juniors design a shirt and explain the meaning of it to classmates at school. Unit 518 held a pizza party for military children. Two units sent cards of support throughout the year to military children. Gift cards and food baskets were provided to military families when needed.

Supporting the American Legion Children and Youth Program

Donations were made by many units to the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation and the Child Well Being Foundation. The Department Chairman had veteran Samantha Burnette design a special T-shirt around Ohio President Smerk's theme. The purple t-shirts honored Military Children. A total of \$584 (\$6.56 per T-shirt) will be donated to the CWF. President Louise's special project – The Judge Sara J. Harper Village will also receive a donation of \$560 (\$6.29 per shirt). Over \$1000 was raised for CWF from T-shirt sales and raffles at Department functions. Units raised approximately \$2725 for CWF. Units reported participating in National Family Week.

Other Activities

Holiday parties, parades, post picnics, and volunteering for church activities were reported from units. Athletic teams and a variety of clubs were supported and fed. Some unique events included a free community pool day, donating board games to a hospital, helping purchase market items at the county fair, and sponsoring field trips. Units 389 and 750 donated books to five different elementaries. Auxiliary members taught youth how to be good community members through volunteer opportunities and to love and respect their country and veterans. Unit 240 provided a cookie decorating opportunity. Unit 144 supplied Veterans Day coloring books to a library to hand out. Unit 91 taught classes about veterans and helped the music teacher organize a Veterans Day appreciation concert.

Charities

Ohio ALA members donated over \$50,000 to 60 plus different national and local charities. Multiple scholarships were funded/awarded. Charities also received generous hand made donations.

Ohio members never stop their mission work with children and youth. Children and Youth are extremely important to Auxiliary members!

National Security Kimm Bunch

“National Security is one of those programs that seems to be overlooked by so many people.” This is so true! Yet, at each meeting we have a chair draped in the POW/MIA cover. Or we have a POW/MIA table in our Post home. We send packages to family and friends that are deployed or stationed away from home. We donate blood at a blood drive. We send cards throughout the year. All of these things are part of the National Security Program.

National Security received 109 reports out of 345 Units. That is 31.6% reporting. HOWEVER, many of these are not considered a report because the questions and the boxes were left empty or had a zero in them. So, in actuality we only received 87 completed reports. This makes it 25% reporting. But We are an AMAZING Department! We volunteered 23,493.50 hours of our time to support 4,093.50 families. We spent \$64,271.73!! That does not take in to account the \$31,713.61 in coupons that were reported sent overseas or the over 4,000 Crown Royal bags that were turned in with an approximate value of \$1 each. ALAOH ROCKED National Security this year! Can you imagine what these numbers would be if we all reported everything we’ve done??

Units across the state participated in so many different activities – food drives, picnics, care packages, donations to VA facilities, contributions to food pantries, stand downs, meals for military families, ROTC & JROTC. There were monetary donations made to the USO, Military Family Assistance Fund and Veterans Service Commissions. Military families were given food at Christmas along with gifts for the kids. Members donated Girl Scout cookies and Boy Scout popcorn to the troops. One Unit donated Bibles and sent the Guidepost to troops. We presented Blue Star Banners and Remembered Gold Star Families. We made sure our Units and Communities were prepared for disasters and weather-related issues. And we donated to Stamps for the Wounded. Unit 571, District 2 makes red ribbons to place on Veterans graves at local cemeteries the beginning of December. The ribbons stay there all month long and a Girl Scout troop volunteers to go take them down. This same Unit pays to have a memorial candle lit all year at a Shrine in remembrance of servicemen and women. Unit 354, District 5 contributed to Operation Evergreen which sends Christmas Trees to troops overseas. The organization collects ornaments as well, so the Unit is going to make ornaments at their July meeting to be sent along with the trees. And Unit 797, District 12 sent Boxes of Joy to military children with school supplies, candy, clothes, band aids and other small items in them. This stood out to me the most – we held 52 Blood Drives throughout the year! That is basically 1 per week! And we ALL WEAR RED!!! There were some ideas that I had never heard of or thought of before. Thank you for sharing those in your narratives.

One Unit stood out to me through their narrative and pictures. This Unit Chairman answered every question on the report form with more than a few short words. She then reiterated those same answers in her narrative. Because that is all the narrative has to be is a few more details about what you answer in those questions and more of a story of what the Unit has done in the past year. Although they are not near a military installation, they were able to participate in and pass out flags at an event welcoming home Vietnam Era Veterans. This Unit got their community involved in sending care packages to troops by contacting other local organizations; putting up flyers and posting on social media. Their local schools made cards to put in the boxes and some were sent to military servicemen and women as a Thank You for their service. This year, they presented a Blue Star Banner to a family and each year, a local Gold Star Family is remembered at Christmas with a gift of flowers. They hold a blood drive twice a year at a local high school. This year, a member of the Unit, who has volunteered at the blood drives in the past, was a senior at the school and able to oversee the whole event. They recognize the POW/MIA chair at each meeting and once a year present the POW/MIA table ceremony to explain what it all means. They continuously wear RED on Friday and, given the opportunity, spread the word on what RED means. I didn’t know this, but the RED campaign was all started 20 years ago in an email chain! This year’s winner of the Avonelle Clinger Plaque – awarded to the Unit Chairman with the Best All Around National Security Program based on a narrative – is Russell Chadwick, Unit 389, Beverly, LeeAnn Stan Chairman!!

And this year’s Phyllis Nickoson Plaque – presented to the District President with the highest percentage of Units reporting on National Security – with 11 out of 15 Units reporting or 73.3% is District 14 – Kathy Burkhammer!

Other winners included the following:

Group I: Unit 279, Unit 571, Unit 518, Unit 100, Unit 797, Unit 2, Unit 272

Group II: Unit 240, Unit 648, Unit 435, Unit 354, Unit 764, Unit 134, Unit 667, Unit 171, Unit 343, Unit 19

Group III: Unit 183, Unit 345, Unit 763, Unit 256, Unit 12, Unit 14, Unit 58, Unit 112, Unit 168, Unit 194, Unit 627, Unit 331

Group IV: Unit 63, Unit 707, Unit 194, Unit 85, Unit 62, Unit 283, Unit 103, Unit 389, Unit 610

Group V: Unit 91

There was only 1 recommendation: To add “A Plaque will be awarded to the District President with the Highest Percentage of Units reporting on National Security”. Since there is a recommendation about the Avonelle Clinger Plaque, this new recommendation will keep things consistent. It was passed at Department Convention.

Public Relations
Department of Ohio
Mindi Rue, Chairman

“Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some hire public relations officers.”

– Daniel J. Boorstin

The power of public relations is a well-documented phenomenon that drives your brand and makes it a household name. The Department of Ohio has worked hard using public relations to make the American Legion Auxiliary a known resource for Ohio Veterans, active-duty military families, and our communities.

One such example would be Winnow- Arn Unit 541 and their American Legion Family Day. The Unit headed a committee of American Legion Family members of the Post, to open the doors of the American Legion to the community to educate the community on the programs and the Be the One mission of the American Legion Family. Radio ads, social media, newspapers, and television were used to advertise the events. The Unit also reached out to American Legion National Headquarters to inform them of the festivities. ALNHQ sent out a crew to cover the event. This coverage allowed numerous American Legion Families across the country to get ideas to start planning their ALF Day.

Ohio also formulated a three-step plan for public relations. Step 1 is to advertise the event by communicating who/what the event is benefiting, when the event is, and where it is being held. Connecting your event to the program or a beneficiary will increase support when the community knows precisely what they are supporting. Step 2 is to take pictures at the event. A picture is worth a thousand words and a well-taken photograph is priceless when telling a story. Step 3 is to show the beneficiary receiving the proceeds of the event. Ohio has decided that Step 3 is vitally important to be transparent to the community that supported the event. Units need to show that they did what they said they were going to do.

This process allowed for Unit 181, Colonel Crawford in Bucyrus, to raise \$5000 for the Judge Sarah J. Harper Village for homeless female veterans at their annual Patriotic Dinner and Show. This beneficiary was the special project of Department President Louise Smerk. The three steps can be seen below:



All around the state, units could be seen on social media and in newspapers donating supplies to homeless shelters, showing off their Buckeye Girls State delegates, featuring scholarship winners, hosting birthday parties at the VA, and assisting Family Readiness Groups during deployments.

Ohio is moving into the digital world at unit, county/district, and department levels by emailing newsletters, bulletins, bulk mailings, and the Department’s very own Buckeye Messenger eNews.

“Without publicity there can be no public support, and without public support every nation must decay.” – Benjamin Disraeli

Without publicity, our organization will decay. Membership cannot be sustained by gimmicks, therefore our membership and survival will only be sustained by the programs and good works of our units. Getting that information to our public is one of our most crucial tasks and Ohio is taking that task head on.

VA&R SERVICE TO VETERANS

Deb Sutterlin, Vice Chairman

Greetings Auxiliary Members!

Thank you for your participation and report forms submitted for your Service To Veterans. For the 2024-25 year, we had 77 timely reports with 45 first time reporting volunteers from 27 auxiliaries. 25 new pins, 9-50 hr. bars, 9-100 hr. bars, 2-300 hr. bars, 9-500 hr. bars, and 3-1000 hr. bars. Service To Veterans Hours total \$13,324.25. You are amazing. Thank you so much for the difference you make to Veterans!!

Here is a clarification that will help you as you start your new Service To Veterans form. Your service starts May 1, 2025 through April 2026 with the report due April 15, 2026. Please start making your list now so you do not forget the amazing things you did to make a difference in the life of a veteran. National states in the American Legion Auxiliary Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers "Anything done directly for a veteran outside of a VMAC is considered Service To Veterans." **Everything you do that can be listed on the Service To Veterans form is reportable on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation green report but NOT everything that is reportable on the VA&R report can be put on the Service to Veterans form.**

What is a Caregiver? A caregiver is someone who aides and support another person who needs help with daily tasks, medical care, or other needs due to illness, injury, disability, or age. You must be a caregiver to get the 10 hours per week for a veteran (boyfriend/husband/other) who lives with you or the 5 hours a week for a veteran (family member/other) who does not live with you.

Let us make the 2025-2026 year even better with accurate and timely reporting sent to the correct person so each one of you are eligible for the volunteer pins and bars. Have a great summer! Thank you for all you have done and will do for our Veterans. And to Louise, thank you for this opportunity to serve the Auxiliary. It was great to see all our members do for Veterans. Best wishes in your future endeavors!