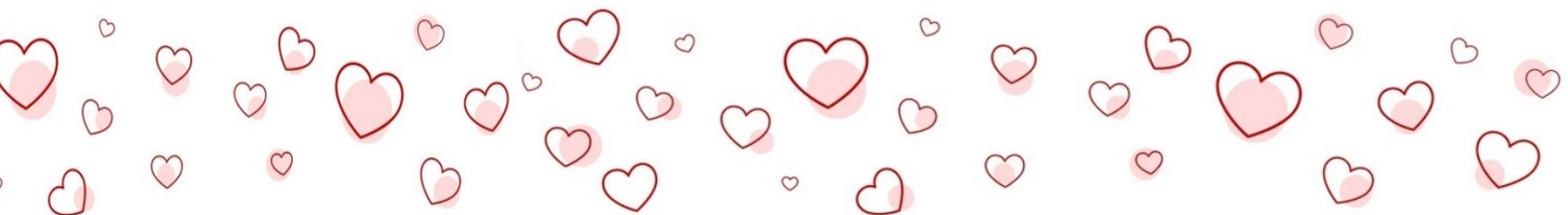




## Dept Bulletin February 2026

- ♥ Department Headquarters
- ♥ Americanism
- ♥ Buckeye Girls State
- ♥ Finance
- ♥ Leadership
- ♥ Membership
- ♥ V A & R



*Buckeye Messenger*  
(March April May Issue)  
*Announced Candidates Articles*

Announcements for **DISTRICT** Presidents  
(odd district numbers)

Announcements for **DEPARTMENT** Officers  
(please include photo)

**Deadline: March 1, 2026**

*Don't Miss the*  
**DEADLINE!**

Send to American Legion Auxiliary  
Attention: Buckeye Messenger  
1100 Brandywine Blvd Bldg D  
Zanesville OH 43701

**Or Email**

**[ohdeptsec@alaohio.org](mailto:ohdeptsec@alaohio.org)**

**Subject: Candidate Article for (state office)**





AMERICAN LEGION  
**AUXILIARY**

*Serving veterans, their families and their communities*

SUBJECT: District & Department Intent to Run Form

A Member wishing to be an announced candidate for District President or Department Office must complete and return this form along with their Letter of Intent, to Department Headquarters by April 1 (District Presidents) or May 1 (Department Officers) of the year of elections. Unit Presidents are asked to share this information and make this form available to all members upon request.

Announced Candidate for the Office of: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit #: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsed by Unit? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsed by District? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to Department Headquarters: American Legion Auxiliary  
1100 Brandywine Blvd Bldg. D  
Zanesville, OH 43701

**Deadlines**

District Presidents: April 1, 2026

Department Officers: May 1, 2026

All interested candidates for District President should review the Bylaws Article 1 (section 3) for more information. All candidates for Department Office should review Policy Section 13 for more information.



# AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Department of Ohio, Inc.  
(740) 452-8245 Ext 100  
programs@alaohio.org



## 2025-2026 DONATION DESIGNATION FORM

*The following donations must be included in a separate check. Please specify the amount credited to each program. A copy of this form should be kept for your records. Indicate below where you would like your donation acknowledgement sent.*

**Corrected Form: Poppy Funds (Restricted) may be used for those items with an \*  
Poppy Funds cannot be used for the National President's Project this year (asterisk removed)**

### AMERICANISM

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Americanism/Government Test Trip (Dept)

### AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ AEF – Financial Emergency Assistance for  
ALA Members (Natl)

### BUCKEYE GIRLS STATE

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Buckeye Girls State Endowment Fund

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Buckeye Girls State Donation

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Children and Youth Fund (Dept)

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Ohio Community Service Disaster Fund  
(Dept)

### DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Capital Improvement Fund  
(Dept Headquarters Building)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ National Leadership Fund (Dept)

### EDUCATION

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarships (Dept)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Nurses Scholarships (Dept)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit of Youth Scholarship (Natl)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Women Veterans Scholarship\*  
(Ohio Veterans Only)

### DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL PROJECT

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ National Veterans Creative Arts Festival\*

### NATIONAL FUNDS

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ The American Legion Child Well-Being

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ ALA Foundation

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ National President's Special Project:  
Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund (Natl)

### NATIONAL SECURITY

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ U.S.O. \*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Military Family Assistance Fund\*  
(Ohio Veterans Only)

### VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Chillicothe VAMC\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cincinnati VAMC\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cleveland VAMC\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Dayton VAMC \*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Ohio Veterans Home\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Columbus – ACC\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Toledo – CBOC\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Fisher Houses – Ohio\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Veterans Creative Arts Festival\* (Natl)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Support for Women Veterans\* (Dept)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Marie Moore Fund\* - (Dept-Donations for  
purchase of items for Veterans in VA Hospitals)

\* INDICATES PROGRAMS WHERE POPPY FUNDS MAY BE USED

*Only VA Birthday Party contributions are to be sent directly to your District President*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Personal Donation

Unit # \_\_\_\_\_ Donation

*Please enclose a check made payable to "American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of Ohio"  
and send to:*

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF OHIO, 1100 BRANDYWINE BLVD. BLD. D, ZANESVILLE, OH 43701

Acknowledgement/Receipt will be sent to the following:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# Americanism

The eighteen winners of the Americanism & Government Test Trip have been selected and notified. This year in conjunction with America250-Ohio, the students will meet at the Ohio State House and participate in a History Quiz. The Quiz Master will be the Speaker of the House. They will then attend a luncheon followed by their trip orientation. This is a terrific event that will highlight our Americanism program.

Thank you to those who purchased tickets for the Americanism raffle as those monies were designated for the trip. This trip is costly and to date very few funds have been donated by units. Please consider supporting this wonderful program by making a donation. The trip is in early March so there is no time like the present to send a check to Department Headquarters. All donations, large or small, will be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for having the Americanism Essays to me is April 1<sup>st</sup>. Please check the cover sheets to be sure they are completely and accurately filled out. My deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup> to have the essays in to National, so the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline is especially important.

Continue to promote flag education in both the community and the schools.

Have you visited the America250-Ohio site to see what events are happening in your area? Have you joined in hosting or participating in one of those events? Has your community applied to become an OFFICIAL AMERICA 250-OH COMMUNITY? Your unit could be the non-profit needed to serve on the committee.

We would like to see pictures of your activities and events. Our Central Division Chair is looking for photos, and we will gladly send on any that we receive.

Stay warm and safe,

Diann Long – Chairman

Kimm Bunch – Vice-Chairman



# Buckeye Girls State

June 7-13, 2026 Bowling Green State University

## Step 1: Determine the Number of Delegates to Sponsor

Each Unit/Post must first determine the number of Delegates it intends to sponsor for Buckeye Girls State.

## Step 2: Understand the Delegate Fee Structure

- Submit the application request form for Delegates and Alternates before February 15, 2026—the applications can be photocopied at the email address on the form. ([buckeyegirlsstate@alaohio.org](mailto:buckeyegirlsstate@alaohio.org))
- Do not send payment for delegates at this time

After you select your delegates and alternates have them fill out the Delegate/Alternate forms and obtain necessary signatures and send to Department American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters before April 1, 2026. The applicable fee must be received by **Department Headquarters prior to the mailing** of any Girls State Delegate/Alternate packets. Fees are non-refundable.

## Step 3: Delegate Application Fee

In addition to the sponsorship fee, there is a **non-refundable application fee of \$50.00** required for each Delegate on or before April 1, 2026.

- This \$50.00 fee must be submitted along with the completed **BGS Delegate/Alternate Application Form**.
- Alternates who are promoted to Delegate status are also required to pay this fee upon confirmation of their new status.
- Units or sponsors may choose to cover this fee on behalf of the Delegate or Alternat

If you have any questions feel free to reach out to BGS Director Gwen Schroeder-Zulch (419-494-7366) or email [buckeyegirlsstate@alaohio.org](mailto:buckeyegirlsstate@alaohio.org)

<b>February 15, 2026</b>	Request Applications	<i>“2026 Application Request Form”</i>
<b>April 1, 2026</b>	Return Completed Applications with payment	<i>“2026 BGS Application”</i>
<b>May 20, 2026</b>	Reminder call to Delegates	Ensure Delegate attendance
<b>June 1, 2026</b>	Make Replacements	<i>“2026 Replacement Notification”</i>
<b>June 1, 2026</b>	Request Unused Application Refund	<i>“2026 Application Refund Request”</i>
<b>June 3-6, 2026</b>	Confirmation calls to Delegates	<b><u>Make sure they are going to attend</u></b>
<b><u>June 7-13, 2026</u></b>	Buckeye Girls State Session	Registration at McDonalds Hall June 7th





## FINANCE IN THE NEW YEAR



An audit is required and should be completed as soon as possible before the installation of officers and then presented to membership at the earliest possible meeting.

**Purpose:** An audit involves a review and report on the records for the financial transactions and the procedures used to conduct those transactions. The purpose is to assure both the membership and the executive board that the funds have been properly administered and that good financial practices have been followed.

We are at the halfway point of our Auxiliary year, and it is time to review your income and spending during the last six months. Check to see how your figures align with your current unit budget. Make note of any major changes that will need to be considered when planning for next year. Below is a guideline that you may want to use as your unit begins preparation for the 2026-2027.

### HOW TO SET GOALS THROUGH ANNUAL BUDGETING

**Objective:** Provide for financial stability by setting goals through the annual budget process.

#### Step-By-Step Instructions:

- Appoint a three-member Finance Committee for your Unit. Some Units use their officers & committee chairs.
  
- Conduct a budget planning meeting of the Finance Committee prior to the start of your fiscal year; make sure to invite Unit officers at which time the agenda should include, but not limited to the following:
  - o Review your current financials in comparison to the IRS and nonprofit watchdog organizations' benchmarks (as mentioned in the "What Units Should Do" section of this POA).
    - o Review your progress status of your long-range goals.
    - o Review your annual ALA obligations (use attached Donations Form as a guide, etc.)
    - o Review your annual operating expenses (bank fees, rent, utilities, conventions, etc.)
    - o Review your membership numbers and related dues income.
    - o Review other sources of revenue (donations, events, bequests)
    - o On a 12-month calendar, plot out when you anticipate your revenue and expenditures.
    - o Compare your total estimated revenue vs. your estimated expenses.
    - o Determine which areas need further consideration to accomplish your long-range goals and meet the IRS and non-profit watchdog organizations' expense benchmarks.
  
- Try to create a positive bottom line. Remember, budgets are guidelines.
  
- The Finance Committee approves the budget and submits to the Unit for adoption.

Alice Teynor, Chairman

Leeann Stan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Member

Christie Peeper, 3<sup>rd</sup> Member



**American Legion Auxiliary  
Annual Audit Report**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year \_\_\_\_\_

Name of ALA Unit and # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dates covered by this audit \_\_\_\_\_

Balance (at start of fiscal year) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Receipts (total for fiscal year) + \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Assets \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Disbursements (total for fiscal year) - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BALANCE (at end of fiscal year) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \*

Latest Bank statement balance (at end of audit period) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Outstanding Checks: - \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Outstanding Deposits: + \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Final Checking Account Balance \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \*

\*two lines must match

We have examined the financial records of the treasurer of ALA Unit # \_\_\_\_\_ and find them:

\_\_\_\_\_ correct

\_\_\_\_\_ substantially correct with the following recommendations. (see attached sheet)

\_\_\_\_\_ partially correct – more adequate accounting procedures need to be followed so that a more thorough audit report can be given.

\_\_\_\_\_ incorrect

Date Audit Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Names and Signatures:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Presented to membership on: \_\_\_\_\_

Audit procedures and checklists attached, along with recommendations sheet.

Ohio Unit Plan of Action

#### AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations of the Audit Committee:

# Leadership

Deb Meyer, Chairman

Here we are in February already and soon we will be working on our reports and getting ready for the end of the year activities. In a month or so you will be looking for your unit's slate of officers for the years 2026-27. In preparing the slate of officers, the nominating committee should look for members who want to take office and not be coerced into taking office. There is a course on the ALA Academy, Exploring Leadership Styles, that might help when looking for those who will make a good leader. Look for members who:

- Have the characteristics of a good leader; courage, integrity, and perseverance
  - Courage to step out of their comfort zone and up to the needs of the unit
  - Integrity to be honest and fair, a good listener
  - Perseverance, responsible, organized and will keep working even when things go awry
- Those members who display those characteristics and want to be more involved
- Make sure there is someone who will mentor the new officers. There is a course in the ALA Academy explaining how to mentor.

I encourage all membership to utilize the ALA Academy and hope those who are unit presidents are doing the same. There are so many academy courses that will help with working the auxiliary programs or giving ideas to help plan program activities. The ALA Academy is on the National website [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org)

- It is now time to begin developing activities for the Month of April to celebrate the military child. There is a course, Celebrating the Month of the Military Child. There is a good number of resources listed that will have ideas and help the unit better plan activities.
- Most units will be disturbing poppies in May. Do your new members understand why poppies are distributed and how the funds generated can be used? There are two courses on the ALA Academy that explain both why the poppy is important and how the money can be spent.
- The deadline is March 1st at 11:59 PM to submit scholarship forms. There is an excellent course for who is eligible, how to complete the scholarship form and where the form needs to go.
- For new members there is the course ALA 101.

Soon we all will be working on reporting. We need to work to contact all members, even though they do not attend meetings, to accumulate hours and the money they have spent on veterans, active duty, children and in our communities. Now is the time to start collecting those numbers. We cannot wait until the last minute especially if you are sending anything through the mail. It is slow and you might miss deadlines. Your unit deadline, April 15<sup>th</sup>, is very important so the District or Department chairman can get their reports where it needs to go by their deadline. It is very important to make sure reports go to the correct chairmen. The five major reports, Americanism, Children and Youth, Community Service, Juniors, and VA&R need to first go to the District chairmen. All other reports go to the Department chairmen whose names and addresses are at the top of each Plan of Action. Unit presidents, please make sure the unit chairmen know where to send their reports. We all work hard so it is nice to get credit for what we do.

The award for Unit Member of the year can be very important for that one member who the unit can always count on to be there to help or chair a committee. She/he encourages other members of the unit to become involved in unit activities and attends District and Department meetings to stay informed of what the auxiliary is doing and its mission. That member cannot have served beyond the unit president level. Please look at the criteria and see who in the unit fits the description. This award can be a great way to say thank you to that one important member in your unit.



# Membership



Mindi Rue, Chairman

First Vice President, Department of Ohio

[Mindi1036@gmail.com](mailto:Mindi1036@gmail.com)

From the National Membership Team:

## **Know Your Audience: Engaging New and Current Members**

Strong membership doesn't happen by accident—it grows when people feel welcomed, valued, and connected. In the American Legion Auxiliary, members come to us for many different reasons. Some are brand new and eager to help, while others have years of experience and deep roots in the organization. Understanding both groups is key to keeping our Units active and engaged. For new members, the first few interactions set the tone. Many join with a genuine desire to serve but aren't always sure where they fit in. A friendly greeting, a quick explanation of what the Auxiliary does, and an invitation to participate in something simple can make all the difference. When new members understand why projects matter and know their contribution—no matter how small—is appreciated, they are much more likely to stay involved.

For current members, engagement can look different depending on life's seasons. Longtime members bring valuable knowledge, tradition, and leadership, but even the most dedicated members may step back at times due to work, family, or health. Keeping communication open, offering flexible opportunities, and recognizing continued dedication helps members feel connected even when their level of involvement changes.

### **Getting Started:**

For New Members

- Attend a meeting or event to meet fellow members
- Explore Auxiliary programs and choose one that feels like a good fit
- Start with a small or short-term activity
- Ask questions and lean on experienced members
- Stay informed through newsletters, email, or social media There's no "right" way to get involved—every effort supports the mission.



## Re-Engaging Current Members

- Reconnect with programs or projects that once brought joy
  - Try something new or help in a short-term role
  - Share ideas, experience, and encouragement with others
  - Support leadership or mentor newer members
  - Join in on social events or service projects when able
- Involvement may change over time, but every member continues to matter.

## Tips for Engaging All Members

- Offer a variety of ways to participate, both active and behind the scenes
- Reach out personally whenever possible
- Use multiple ways to communicate, knowing preferences differ
- Acknowledge and appreciate contributions regularly
- Keep the mission front and center in everything we do

When members feel seen and appreciated, engagement follows naturally. Knowing your audience helps build stronger Units, deeper connections, and a lasting commitment to serving Veterans, their families, and our communities.



# Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

February 2026 Bulletin

Chairman Deb Sutterlin Vice Chairman Robyn Cooper

Wow, it is hard to believe that it is February already. While we are continuing to support our veterans, their families, and our communities; we need to start putting together our information to write the story about what we have done this year. Have you achieved your goals? If not, there is still time to accomplish them.

National Salute to Veteran Patients is next week, February 8-14<sup>th</sup>. This week is to remember the veterans who are patients in the hospital as well as those who are ill and being treated as outpatients. So, get a list of veterans who are receiving ongoing treatments and plan something special for them during this week. Even if you only have one veteran, you make a difference! It can be as simple as sending a valentine card to let them know you are thinking of them or something more involved. Maybe hold a dinner at the post and invite the veterans undergoing medical treatment (such as those who have cancer, hip/knee replacements, are sick, or other medical conditions). Or for those who can't get out, plan a boxed meal. Get a box, decorate it for Valentine's day, put a to go container of a soup in it with a sandwich, a drink, and a cookie. Include a spoon, napkin, and a little centerpiece. Then a couple of you can deliver the boxed meals. Don't forget to include an extra serving for their spouse, Thank you for your kindness!

As you know, this is the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of America. There is a commission formed by the president called America 250 and then each state has a committee. With county committees. The purpose is for everyone to celebrate this exciting year of the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. The goal of the commission is "350 for 250" which is for all 350 million people in America to do volunteer service for the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. The good news is you are already participating and all you need to do is report. The website [America250.com/AmericaGives/](http://America250.com/AmericaGives/) has the total reported hours volunteered. You can contribute you hours by signing up as an individual or as an organization, report your total hours from the first of the year, and you can tell briefly what you did to accumulate those hours. It will only take you a few minutes to do this. If you sign up as an organization, you will need to list the American Legion Auxiliary as other organization because they have the American Legion prelisted but not the auxiliary.



The American Legion has formed an America 250 program. You go to the national Legion website for details. The goal is for the member or group signing up to complete 250 of something in three areas: community service, physical activity, and mental wellness. You sign up; pick one, two, or all three areas; and pay a registration fee of \$30 which is a donation for the Veteran and Children Foundation and can be reported. To sign up. go to the legion.org website, click on get involved, then community programs, then [American Legion Family USA250](#). You can choose to contact 250 veterans, donate 250 hours, or anything you want to do. I signed up. I am sending 250 Valentines to Ohio Veterans Home residents and have donated more than 250 hours helping veterans (which I will report on the Service to Veterans form). How about you? Won't you please share this with me. I care and I would like to share what you are doing. Please send me a text (330-465-9230) or email me ([debsutterlin270@gmail.com](mailto:debsutterlin270@gmail.com)) or snail mail (950 Township Road 2506, Perrysville OH 44864) so I can share what Ohio is doing on the next quarterly VA&R zoom call on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*Thank you for what each of you do. Continue to fill the need in your community doing what you always do. If you want, then try a new project or activity. Volunteering and doing kind acts for others helps to improve your health. (There are studies to prove this statement to be true.) My wish for each of you is a happy and healthy year ahead in 2026. Let us take advantage of the opportunities we have through the American Legion Auxiliary and report what you do. Thank you.*

