



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Department of California

The Roarin' 20th District

Volume 64, #6

CHATTERBOX

March 13, 2024

California—The Golden State



Mission Statement

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

Our Impact

We are one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military and their families. We help to advance the mission of The American Legion. From helping to draft the GI Bill in 1944 to advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the nonpartisan American Legion Family is instrumental in advancing legislation that improves the quality of the life for our nation's veterans and Service members.



Inside this issue:

District & Unit Information	2
President's Message	3
Chaplain	3
Parliamentarian	—
Americanism	3
Auxiliary Emergency Fund	3
Children & Youth	4
Community Service	4
Constitution & Bylaws	4
Education	4
Girls State	4-5
Historian	5
The HUB	5
Junior Activities	5
Leadership	5
Legislative	6
Membership	6
Music	—
National Security	7
Past President's Parley (PPP)	7
Poppies	7
Public Relations	8
VA & R	8
December Happenings	9
Birthdays	9
Dates to Remember	9
Editors Corner	9



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Monthly Programs

July	Happy Birthday, America
August	National Convention
September	Music
October	Education
November	Membership
December	Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
January	Legislative
February	Americanism
March	Community Service
April	Children & Youth
May	Poppies and Poppy Month
June	Junior Activities



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Carol Harville

"Happy Saint Patrick's Day." March is here already! The March activity is Community Service. End of Year reports are due to District Chairman by April 12th. Please send them to the proper Chairman listed on the back of the report.

Our National President, Lisa Williamson, is visiting Southern California. She visited Unit 43 at the Hollywood Post 43 on March 9th. I attended along with 7 District 20 ALA members and 2 District 20 Legionnaires. What a beautiful Post.

Remember to get your member impact reports.

As always feel free to reach out if there is anything that I can help you with or point you in the right direction.

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

Hila Estrada

I hope everyone is doing well.

Thank you to those of you who are keeping me informed about members who have passed away and who are ill. Let's keep our members in prayer as well as our organization. We have so much to accomplish.



We as the "Golden State Chaplains" must make sure we are attending to our members needs. God Bless you all and our Veterans.

AMERICANISM

Sam Marsteller

Star Spangled Kids aims to educate youth on the history of the United States from the aspect of patriotism, Americanism and the U.S. Constitution.

- In conjunction with local schools, create a Unit Citizenship Award for children and youth who have demonstrated the ideals of the U.S. Constitution.
- Team with the Education chairman to bring veterans or servicemembers into the classroom to talk about what their service means to defending the ideals of the Constitution.
- Share "Fascinating Facts about the U.S. Constitution" each month in the department or unit bulletin, in tweets, or in a newspaper editorial.
- List important constitutional dates by chronological order or by month.

AMERICANISM

(continued)

- Encourage students to test their knowledge of the Constitution.
- Distribute patriotic coloring book pages for children in primary grades.
- Celebrate Constitution Day (also known as Citizenship Day) on September 17, the day set aside each year to commemorate the signing of the U.S. Constitution.
- Celebrate at September's Junior meeting with a cake or cupcakes.
- Let Juniors report on different sections of the Bill of Rights
- Print and distribute pocket copies of the U.S. Constitution for school children and/or Juniors.
- Put on a skit or musical about the Constitution and the signers.
- Hold a scavenger hunt in the post where children find information relating to the Constitution.
- Have members dress up as signers of the Constitution and describe the role of their character in the writing and signing of the Constitution.
- Encourage high school-aged students to use their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution by participating in The American Legion Oratorical Contest Reprinted from ALA national website [American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Program/Facebook](#)



AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

Barbara Garrison

I encourage all Units to consider holding a fundraiser to support the AEF. Donation forms can be found online at ALAforVeterans.org. This program supports members when affected by a national disaster. A grant of \$3,000.00 can be awarded.





CHILDREN & YOUTH

Bonnie Christner

Easter is fast approaching, is your unit putting on an Easter party for children in your community? If you are, please remember to put it on your end of year report so that I can report it on my end of year report to department.

April is Children & Youth month. Has your unit made plans to do something to celebrate C&Y month within your unit or your community? Now would be a good time to start thinking about it. Of course, some of us do things for the C&Y program and it's not necessarily in April, so you can count these things on your report also. Whatever you do, just make sure to keep track, year end reports will be here before we know it. And, don't forget about those Youth Hero Awards and Good Deed Awards. Our Department Chairman reported on the floor at DEC that she awarded to date 13 Good Deed Awards and 1 Youth Hero Award. The rules for these can be found on our department website under the C&Y program.

Have a Blessed Easter



COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mahala Beery

Our Community Service Department Chairman is asking that we all help the American Legion with their "Be the One" campaign to raise awareness and to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. We are encouraging all members to encourage their posts to participate in American Legion Family Day, the last Saturday in April. I wrote about it in last month's Chatterbox. We are doing community service by helping the veterans in our community so they and their families know we care.

There are several days to remember in March, many of them are past but we can still wear Red on every Friday to remember everyone who is deployed. March 13 is K-9 Veterans Day, March 25 is Medal of Honor Day, March 29th is Operation Iraqi Freedom Day, and March 29 is Vietnam Veterans Day.

Helping and supporting veterans is important as it strengthens our entire community. We want to thank every American Legion Auxiliary member who so kindly and open heartedly volunteered their time. Your willingness to give of your time and service is greatly appreciated. Your support of the American Legion Auxiliary allows us to fulfill our mission, In Service, not Self.

Remember that April is coming fast and reports will be due. Are you keeping track of your hours, your expenditure/donations and travel? Thank you to all who help with the reports.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Linda Hayes

We will have a First Reading of the District Bylaws and Standing Rules during the March meeting. If you have any input or you feel there needs to be any changes, now is the time to voice your opinion. The Second Reading of the Bylaws will be read at the April 10 meeting. We will then have a vote on the proposed changes.

Have a Happy Easter!

EDUCATION

Hila Estrada

Scholarship Applications Due Dates and Processing

The *Education Assistance (Form E21)*, *Continuing/Re-Entry Students (Form E21C)*, and *Lucille Ganey (Form 21G)* scholarship applications are due to the Unit Chairmen no later than March 15. The Unit selects one applicant for each type of scholarship and forwards that application to the District Education Chairman by April 1. The District selects one applicant for each type of scholarship and forwards them to the Department Education Chairman by April 15. (NOTE: The Lucille Ganey scholarship is restricted to Stephens College in Missouri.) Each applicant is eligible to win no more than one scholarship.

The *Connie Settles Scholarship (Form E21S)* is due by March 1. The Unit selects one applicant for each type of scholarship and forwards applications to the District Education Chairman by March 15. The District selects one applicant and forwards the scholarship application to the Department Education Chairman by April 15.

Adhere to Guidelines and Requirements

Scholarship requirements vary among the different types. When judging, be sure to adhere to the guidelines for that specific scholarship. Only one entry for each scholarship should be submitted.

GIRLS STATE

Louralee Gouch

This is the exciting part of the year as we get to know and be inspired by our applicants!

Some important dates and to-dos:

- Fees will be due April 15. Don't send your fees now - wait until you have your final Unit Transmittal Form, which will be emailed to you by April 5th.
- Make sure your Delegates and Alternates complete their online applications by the March 15th deadline.

Continued on Page 5





GIRLS STATE

Continued from page 4

If you have a Delegate who is eligible for the Samsung Scholarship, the application process for that scholarship is easier to complete while school is still in session, so encourage her to apply early. Information about the Samsung Scholarship is available here: <https://www.legion.org/scholarships/samsung>

This week we'll begin discussions and planning for a Girls State Tea to meet and celebrate Delegates and Alternates from our district. Stay tuned for details!

HISTORIAN

Krista Young



In January, Unit 311 received a call for assistance from Antelope Valley Medical Center in Lancaster. The hospital requested donations of teddy bears that would be given to help comfort children going in for procedures. When the children arrive at the hospital, they are welcomed by a teddy bear wearing a surgical cap that has been placed on their hospital bed. To date, Unit 311 has donated two batches of 12 inch teddy bears with plans to donate more.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Jackie Landan

There is not much going on with our juniors right now. If you have not mailed your raffle tickets money yet, please do so. Our Junior Conference will be held on April 26- 28 in Bakersfield at American Legion Post 26.

Friday night will be a Meet and Greet from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. On Saturday, the Juniors will have learning activities and the election of new officers for Department. Sunday will be Installation and a Memorial Service.

If you wish to attend, please check out the information on the Department website and download the reservation form. Turn in your reservation ASAP.

LEADERSHIP

Laura Kellgreen

Leadership can be fun.

Why did the leader join a theatre group? **Because she wanted to lead a drama-free team.**

How does a leader handle setbacks? **By turning them into comebacks.**

Why did the manager become an artist. **Because she wanted to paint a picture of effective leadership.**

"When trouble arises and things look bad, there is always one individual who perceives a solution and is willing to take command. Very often, that person is crazy." -*Dave Barry*

"Leadership is the ability to hide your panic from others." -*Lao Tsu*

"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito." -*Dalia Lama*

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because she wants to do it." -*Dwight Eisenhower*

Auxiliary News Hub

Please remember to read *The Auxiliary News Hub* found on the welcome page of the ALA Department website: calegion-aux.org. Deadline for the April/May issue is March 24 but submissions may be sent at any time.



LEGISLATIVE

From the CA American Legion Department



Leading lawmakers and Veterans organizations are once again pushing for support of the Major Richard Star Act, a bill designed to expand benefits for Veterans injured in combat.

The legislation seeks to ensure that all Service Members who medically retire have full access to both military retirement pay and VA disability benefits. Although the bill gained momentum last year, it has since encountered obstacles. Nevertheless, lawmakers and Veterans service organizations on Capitol Hill sponsoring the bill are committed to getting the bill passed into law.

Currently, Veterans with service-connected disabilities often face restrictions on receiving their full retirement pay and disability benefits due to rules against "double-dipping" from federal funding sources. Advocates argue that this system is unjust and denies Disabled Veterans the full compensation they have rightfully earned. The Major Richard Star Act strives to rectify this by eliminating the offset that reduces retirement pay for some Disabled Veterans.

The bill, named after Major Richard Star, an Army Veteran who battled lung cancer linked to toxic burn pit exposure, proposes amending existing laws to expand the number of Veterans exempt from the offset. Despite previous legislative efforts, the Major Richard Star Act offers a renewed opportunity to address this issue. It specifically targets Veterans with combat-related disabilities. It would extend eligibility for Veterans with combat-related ratings of at least 10 percent but fewer than 20 years of service.

Under current regulations, Veterans may qualify for various types of payments upon exiting the military, including military retired pay, disability retirement payments, separation pay, and VA disability compensation. However, the Code of Federal Regulations prohibits multiple payments for the same period of service, leading to offsets for Veterans eligible for more than one benefit. Veterans with less than 20 years of service and a disability rating below 50% experience a dollar-for-dollar reduction in their retirement pay for each dollar of disability pay received. While some Veterans qualify for exemptions or special compensation, many still face reduced benefits.

The Major Richard Star Act would impact approximately 50,000 Veterans with combat-related disabilities who currently do not meet the criteria for concurrent receipt. The bill aims to provide these Veterans with their full retirement and disability benefits, potentially increasing their monthly compensation by an average of \$1,200, according to Congressional Budget Office estimates.

Despite bipartisan support, questions about funding have delayed progress on the bill. However, supporters state a moral obligation to provide benefits to Veterans, regardless of cost. Efforts are underway to attach the legislation to other bills, such as the annual defense policy bill, to expedite its passage.

Continued in the next column



LEGISLATIVE

continued

At a recent press briefing and behind closed door meetings, legislators and advocates for Veterans voiced their determination to advance the Major Richard Star Act, seeing it as an essential measure to pay tribute to the dedication and sacrifices made by these Service Members. With widespread support and determination from both sides of the aisle, there is hope that the bill will soon become law.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

ALAMIS Numbers as of
March 12, 2024

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0176 San Fernando	53	66	80.30%
0311 Antelope Valley	84	93	90.32%
0348 Palmdale	46	41	112.19%
0377 Sunland-Tujunga	91	73	124.66%
0507 Newhall-Saugus	51	59	86.44%
0520 Sun Valley	23	38	60.53%
0817 Panorama City	<u>59</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>105.36%</u>
TOTAL	407	426	95.54%

MEMBERSHIP

Liz Tungate

Is someone in your Unit eligible for the Recruit 10 National Membership Award? Here's the qualification details:

Member Award: Recruit 10

- Award: Special gift selected by the National Membership Chairman
- Presented to: Members who recruit 10 NEW Senior and/or Junior members
- Deadline: Members must be entered and paid in ALAMIS member database by June 1, 2024.
- FORMS must be received at National HQ by June 5, 2024.
- Materials and guidelines:
- Form can be printed from the ALA national Membership Committee page of the national website (www.ALAforVeterans.org). You must be logged in to the My Auxiliary area to access the page.
- One entry per recruiter

Congratulations to the three Units that achieved 100% of Goal by January 31st, 2024!!

Units 348 Palmdale 112.19%, 377 Sunland/Tujunga 117.81%, and 817 Panorama City 105.36 will receive the Award: 100% Unit Flag Ribbon.

As a District, together we have accomplished 95.07% of our goal and this ranks us 4th out of thirty Districts, not including District 1000.





NATIONAL SECURITY

From the March Bulletin by Liz Doidge

Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Suicide remains a top issue in the veteran community. The suicide rate among veterans is nearly double that of civilian counterparts. It is imperative that we simultaneously destigmatize mental health assistance, while increasing access. The American Legion encourages Congress to robustly fund VA's suicide prevention outreach budget and peer support programs. We encourage all Americans to "Be the One" who is willing, ready, and able to have a difficult conversation about suicide and other mental health issues.

Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity National Guard and Reserve servicemembers are being deprived of education benefits that active duty servicemembers enjoy, despite completing the same duties. According to current law, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers only accrue GI Bill entitlement when called to active duty under federal orders. When Guard and Reserve servicemembers are activated under state orders, they do not accrue eligibility for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits like their active-duty counterparts do. The American Legion believes that every day in uniform counts and urges Congress to recognize the service of Guard and Reserve servicemembers as eligible for the GI Bill.

Military Quality of Life The U.S. military's greatest resources are servicemembers and their families. Without highly qualified and committed men and women, even the most sophisticated weaponry will not provide the deterrence necessary to defend our nation. Factors contributing to quality of life include proper compensation, appropriate housing, quality healthcare, reasonably priced commissaries, and access to childcare services. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation to expand access to affordable childcare, increase appropriations for military construction projects (including barracks and family housing), and ensuring timely access to mental healthcare.

Pay the Coast Guard U.S. Coast Guard personnel carry out vital national security missions. Still, because the Coast Guard is under the Department of Homeland Security instead of DOD, its members are more likely to experience pay interruptions during prolonged government shutdowns. The common threat of shutdowns brings severe and unnecessary hardship on these men, women, and their families. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation that would guarantee that Coast Guard personnel are paid in case of a shutdown.

Access to healthcare for overseas military and families Military personnel stationed overseas in support of U.S. interests and our alliances provide a key role in deterring adversaries from a myriad of actions. However, even after the realignment of medical services in overseas and remote locations

Continued in the next column

NATIONAL SECURITY

Continued from previous column

under the Defense Health Agency (DHA), major issues involving access to various types of healthcare continue. Additionally, the lack of access to certain types of care limits overseas assignments and contributes to military families being separated for extended periods of time.

Improving the military TAP The American Legion urges Congress to direct the modernization of Transition Assistance Program (TAP) delivery using technology and performance data to ensure the DOD delivers a successful program. The creation of a mobile application, providing servicemembers with an extensive toolkit of on-demand transition-related content would improve participation and increase the benefit of transition resources available. Delivering effective transition assistance will ensure a veteran's proper reintegration from active duty to civilian life and reduce negative experiences. Improved TAP instruction will support our servicemembers in finding education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities and send successful citizens back to our communities.

PAST PRESIDENTS PARLAY

Attention All Past District Presidents: The Annual PPP Luncheon will be on March 23. RSVP to Jackie Landon.

POPPIES

Bonnie Christner

Units shall sponsor contests in local schools. When schools do not conduct activities, other youth groups, including Junior members, may participate under direct supervision of the unit. You can find the rules for these contests on the department website. The rules and requirements are quite lengthy, so make sure you read them carefully and adhere to the rules. I hope everyone got their poppies and the count was right. If not, please let me know.

Also, don't forget there's a poppy display contest at convention and now would be a good time to think about what your unit might like to do for this.





PUBLIC RELATIONS

Linda Hayes

This is from the ALA Academy course ALA Branding and Why it Matters to ME!. "Branding involves not only proper use of our emblem and trademarks but also living our brand promise to deliver our mission in a positive way." Also "How the public experiences us constitutes how they view the ALA as a brand." As an example, if your unit is assembling care packages, take a picture of them packing items versus posting a shot of people posed next to boxes. Action pictures will draw more attention than a bunch of statues in a posed picture.

All units and districts are asked to send the Public Relations Chairman at least two pictures of their units/districts working our mission. If you have a picture with Madame President Glenda, it would be even better if it is an action shot. Chairman Joan will be creating a book for President Glenda and would like to have all districts/units included. Please use the who, what, where to include your unit's name and number. Joan's email address is joancannon@hotmail.com.



VA & R

Marcy Velador

Yes, March Madness is upon us, Spring is just around the corner, and with that comes year-end reporting. Hopefully your calendar notes are current, and your tracking sheets reflect the miles, hours, and dollars you have spent on services and events for our veterans and military families during the year. And don't forget to include all those miles, hours, and dollars spent for activities and services provided for homeless veterans, veterans in rest homes and medical centers. These statistics need to be included on Unit and District Impact Report Forms as the information ultimately finds its way into the Annual Report that the American Legion compiles for Congress.

Dates to Remember

✓ Unit End-of-Year Reports are due to the District VA&R Chairman by April 12.

✓ Unit Impact Reports are due to the District President by April 12.

Continued in the next column

VA & R

Continued from previous column

✓ District End-of-Year Reports are due to the Department Chairman by May 1.

✓ District Impact Reports are due to the Department Secretary by May 1.



The American Legion has declared the first day of each month as a Be the One day, so that is ideal. But there is such a critical need to spread the word about preventing veteran suicide, that really any day, anytime, anywhere is a good step forward



National Medal of Honor Day is March 25th





What's Happening In the Roarin' 20th County?

District 20

Coming in April—1st Round of Nominations
March -1st Reading of the Constitution & Bylaws
April—2nd Reading of the Constitution & Bylaws
April—1st Round of Nominations

Unit 817

March 17th, 2024 : Saint Patrick's Day Party -
3pm till TBD Live music by U.S. 99 Band
\$20. advance \$25 door



March Birthdays

March 13— Kathy Gosling
March 25—Kathy Faulconer

If your birthday isn't included, let the Editor know at:
LJeffery@aol.com
661-209-4365

March Dates to Remember

Monthly Program Focus: Community Service
Recognition Month: Month of the Military Caregiver

- Mar 3 Navy Reserve Day
- Mar 5 Seabee Birthday
- Mar 10 Daylight Savings Begins
- Mar 13 K-9 Veterans Day
- Mar 17 St. Patrick's Day
- Mar 29 Spring Begins
- Mar 29 Vietnam Veterans Day
- Mar 31 Easter Sunday



From the Editor's Corner

The following was submitted by Liz Tungate:



Celebrate a Vietnam Veteran you know on National Vietnam War Veterans Day, March 29th. This is a special day to honor and thank Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. Operation Rolling Thunder began on March 2, 1965, when U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps aircraft commenced the bombing in North Vietnam. This evolved into one of the longest air campaigns in the history of warfare. It lasted—with some brief pauses—until October 1968, though President Lyndon B. Johnson restricted the bombing in March 1968 to encourage peace negotiations.

We wish you and your families a Happy St. Patrick's Day (don't forget the green!) and a Happy Easter. Please stay safe and stay healthy.

