



JILL LAYTON

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Illinois President
2025-2026

BELIEVE



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Scenes from Junior Conference





*Gill
Layton*



*Roy
Smith*

I have many friends who do not belong to the Legion Family who want to know what I have been doing while I am gone so often. I do get as excited as a kid on Christmas morning when I share with them what my travels and experiences have been! I share with them about the Post Homes I have visited this year and so many Legion Family members that I have met. I share with them the VA Homes we have visited, the Legion Family raffles we have taken part in, the Legion Birthday dinners, listening to the Americanism essays, being wowed at the Department Oratorical contest, visiting with Units about all the Auxiliary programs, attending Post and Unit special events, weekly visits to Department Headquarters, the Fall Forums, the January Membership Caravan, Lincoln Pilgrimage and Patriotic Conference and there is more yet to come! I made many contacts with Units as we were working on membership. How exciting it was to call National President Pam to tell her that the Department of Illinois had achieved the 85% membership target prior to the March 15th deadline. And now we are working on the next target date of June 12th, where I am hoping we are at 95%.

How fortunate I was that Department Commander Roy invited me to attend the visits to Chicago Veterans Home and Manteno Veterans Home. Both visits were amazing. The staff all love their residents who are family - and the residents love the staff as family. There isn't enough space to write down all the incredible things the staff does to make the Veterans' home comfortable and happy. And both places need volunteers - male and female. The VA homes I have visited this year make you smile with pride. With all the amazing people I have met, I know we can do this! What an incredible year this has been. And I am looking forward to the Junior Conference, Police School, Illini Girls State, Boys State and then we turn the corner and there is the Department Convention! Thank you for your support for our wonderful organization and our programs.

Please take a moment and donate to my special project - ALA Illini Girls State!

April was another busy Month.

The highlight of April was going back to Great Lakes Naval Training Center with members of the National Security team. The purpose of the visit was to perform a Base Assessment and Servicemember Experience (BASE).

It was a "homecoming", I went to Machinist Mate "A" school there, although the barracks that I stayed in while I was there has long since been torn down, it was home. We toured different classrooms and talked with students and instructors. One of the classrooms that I was in was still in use today.

As we toured the base and the facilities, we identified several areas of concern, plus the aging infrastructure such as roads and buildings. Students go to classes in shifts because the facilities could not handle the number of students. Then bag lunches were served to the students on night shift.

We also visited two more Illinois Veterans Homes. First it was the Chicago Veterans Home, brand new. The facility was clean and was a class act. Very impressive. I would have to say if it wasn't so far from home I would stay there. Then we were off to Manteno. Another first-class facility. None of the facilities that we have visited to date are built the same, each offers something a little different but all accomplish the mission of caring for our veterans. I hope to visit the LaSalle home before the end of my year.

I took my wife and Granddaughter to the ALA Jr Conference this year, my granddaughter had a great time. Between making new friends and swimming, she enjoyed herself!

Last but not least the Annual Haven Run was a success, Mary Madson, with a little help from Wayne, did a great job as usual. Thanks for their hard work.

As Always
For God and Country
Just One More



Wayne
Madson



Membership
Chairman

Linda Oakley

Hello everyone! Another busy few months with convention in sight. Patriotic Conference was an excellent time with the Auxiliary as always. I would like to say THANK YOU to President Jill once again for her submitting my name to receive the Quilt of Valor. I did go to NYC for SAL National Commander Bill Clancy's homecoming and had a great time with other Detachments personnel. After I got back from NYC I met with Roy and Jill and we visited Chicago Veterans Home and Manteno Veterans Home. They are doing excellent work taking care of our veterans. One thing both places did ask for is more volunteers so they can do more for the veterans. If you have time please consider volunteering your time at any veterans home.

I attended my first Junior and Sons Conference in Monticello, what an excellent time. I was impressed by how many Sons that participated at the conference. The kids had a great time, and Angie Mulligan did an excellent job organizing the weekend. Spent the last weekend in April Jeeping around Southern Illinois on the 12th Annual Haven Run. We raised over \$9,300 for the Haven. It was a great day with the American Legion Family. May and June are not slowing down either. We have Commander Roy's Be The One Walk. As Commander says, it's just a short walk of 8 1/2 miles to help prevent veterans suicide. We have Armed Forces week visiting all the Divisions with the Legion National Commander. We have Memorial Day weekend. Please attend a memorial service in your communities. Take time to remember those men and women that made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms that we enjoy today.

June doesn't slow down. We have Special Olympics in Normal if you're able to assist please do so. We have a Boys and Girls State going on. And my special project is Youth Police School, June 21-26 at Camp Lincoln in Springfield. It's been my pleasure and honor to serve as your Detachment Commander this past year. Also, with serving with Commander Roy and President Jill hopefully we were

(Continued on page 4)

Dashing through the State
The elves are working hard
The membership we take
Will make our Department great
Bells on elves hats ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to work and play
A goal Unit is so right!

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way
Oh, what fun it is to say
Our membership's on it way, hey
Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way
A goal Department is so right
And so much fun to say!

Congratulations to the 72 Goal Units! Thank you for all of your hard work. But we can't let up now...our next goal...is to be 95% by June 12th! Right now the Department percentage is 90.29%. This is not impossible....we can accomplish this.

Do you know how to eat an elephant? – Bite by bite!! And that's what we need to do. As I write this, that's 150 members per week for 7 weeks...6 members per District per week for 7 weeks! Bite by bite...one by one.

Patriotic Conference was wonderful. For the traveling Poppy bracelet/Poppy tie tac, I was privileged to have announced that Division 2 – Karen Stetina President and Todd Latham Vice President were the top Division. The top Districts were: in the 1st Division – District 7 Marlene Russell President, Bonnie Sheirok Vice President; in the 2nd Division – District 12 Janet Bacon President, Jean Firlick Vice President; in the 3rd Division – District 15 Rebecca Marvel President, Shannon Tournear Vice President; in the 4th Division – District 19 – Patti Williamson President, Sandy Kirby Vice President; and in the 5th Division – District 25 Diana Steele President, Patricia Edwards Vice President. Let's see if they will keep these at Department Convention or at the last minute relinquish them to another Division/District. Will they achieve 100% in their District and automatically qualify to keep

(Continued on page 4)

(Membership Message Cont'd from pg. 3)

them? Time and membership will determine that factor.

This chairmanship has led to me meeting so many wonderful members throughout the Department of Illinois. Thank you to each of you for embracing Department President Jill's theme.

Just remember "To live is to dance, and to dance is to live. Never miss a chance to do your happy dance." Maybe even with an elf's hat and Christmas tree glasses on!

(SAL Message Cont'd from pg. 3)

good examples of the American Legion Family serving together. I know we had fun serving you and just think it all started because we couldn't find Jill.

Department Convention Housing Information

"Believe" is calling all delegates, alternates and guests to attend the Department of Illinois ALA Convention, July 9-11, 2026 in Springfield, IL. Housing and Convention meetings will be in the President Abraham Lincoln a Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, 701 E Adams St, Springfield.

Reservations can be made over the phone by calling 217-544-8800, clicking the link below, or by going to the ALA website (ilala.org) and clicking on the Department Convention Hotel Reservations Link in the "Important Links" box. Please mention you are with the American Legion Auxiliary if you call to book your reservation.

Deadline for reservations is June 23, 2026.

Room rates are:

Standard Room - \$127.00 plus tax

Make your reservations early and plan on attending!

Housing: <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/americanlegionauxiliary/>

Basket Raffle at Department Convention

The basket raffle will be held during Department Convention on Thursday, July 9th. Bidding will begin shortly after the recess of the general meeting and will close at 6:30 p.m. Announcements of the winners will be made during the Gold Star/Past Presidents Parley Dinner.

District and Division Presidents will be providing the baskets.

Purse Auction at Department Convention

The purse auction will be held in the PPP/GS Dinner room. We are asking Past Department Presidents and anyone interested to bring a gently used/new purse with a surprise inside!



Convention Mailing to Board Members

All Department Officers, Division and District Presidents, Department Chairmen, Reps and Deps and Past Department Presidents who have their email addresses on file with Department will receive their Department Convention information by email. Please check your emails.

National Convention

States Dinner information is not available from National at the time of this printing. There will be no Public Spirit Luncheon. Look for information on the National Convention meeting at Department Convention. Sign up forms will also be available at the Department Office.

Unit Presidents May Mailing

All Unit Presidents on file with the Department will receive a packet with information and credentials for convention. There will also be a 2027 Officers List for their Unit to be sent in. No membership rosters or cards will be sent to the Unit without an Officers list being submitted to Department. **Units that have sent in the Officers List by June 30th will be able to pick up membership packets at Department Convention.**

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2026

The National Scholarship winners for 2026 that will be forwarded to National for further competition are:

Junior Loyalty

Paige Horstmeyer
From Staunton

Spirit of Youth

Naomi Cordova
From Worth

Children of Warriors

Benjamin Clark

Non-Traditional

No Applicant



SAVE THE DATE

Fall Board Meeting

August 14 & 15, 2026

2026-2027 Department Officers, Division and District Presidents and Vice Presidents, Department Chairmen are **expected** to attend. Past Department Presidents and Hospital Reps are invited.

ALA Illini Girls State Director Sarah Wyckoff

The 85th session of ALA Illini Girls State is about five short weeks away. We are still accepting applications. The application can be found on our website at alaigs.org and in this edition of the ALA Today.

The session starts Sunday June 21st and ends on Saturday, June 27th. The delegates will receive all paperwork communication from us by our Google gmail account. Please reach out to your delegates to make sure they have received this paperwork. The paperwork includes a read and return which needs to be completed and uploaded into our system prior to their arrival at ALA IGS. All delegates need to attend an orientation either in person or online. The times and dates of these are on our website along with the link to the Zoom orientations. Members are also able to participate in these orientations.

We have a few items still left on our Amazon Wishlist. Please check the wishlist and see if you are able to help. These are supplies we use during the session. Donations are always welcome too.

ALA Illini Girls State Wishlist: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2G90NXKISOAL7?ref_=wl_share

Be sure to follow us on social media now and during the week. We update our social media pages throughout the week and you can see the activities and fun the delegates are engaging in.

Thank You to all the Units who have supported delegates and the program!
We are looking forward to meeting your delegates and having a wonderful 85th session.

Sarah Wyckoff
2026 ALA IGS Director

Social Media:



**Happy National
Poppy Day—
May 23, 2025**

FOR DEPARTMENT OFFICE USE ONLY

\$ _____ REG. FEE

2026 APPLICATION FOR ATTENDANCE AT AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY ILLINI GIRLS STATE

Sponsored by American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Illinois

Please PRINT Legibly and Use a Dark Pen

Applicant's Name _____
(Last) (First) (Preferred name) Age

Address _____ Phone _____
(Street) (Town) (Zip Code)

Applicant's Personal E-mail Address **DO NOT use a school email** : _____

Are you an American Legion Auxiliary Member? (Yes or No) _____ Is your Mother, Father, Brother or Sister currently serving in the Armed Forces? _____ # Volunteer Hours serving veterans? _____ # Volunteer Hours in community? _____

Name and Address of Parents or Guardian _____

(Street) (Town) (Zip Code) (Cell Phone/Work phone)

Parent's email address _____

May we share your email and phone number with applicants that might want to carpool to the session? _____ Yes _____ No

*****TO BE FILLED OUT BY UNIT*****

Sponsoring Auxiliary Unit _____ Name of President of the sponsoring Unit _____

Address _____ City _____ Phone _____
(Zip Code)

Approved by _____ Secretary/ALAIGS Chr. of Unit No. _____ Phone _____

District No. _____ OR approved by ALAIGS Director _____

The alternate is _____
(Name) (Email Address) (Phone Number)

Mail to Department, American Legion Auxiliary, P.O. Box 1426, Bloomington, IL 61702-1426, to be received **PRIOR TO Session**. Check for Registration Fee of \$400.00 must accompany this application **if not forwarded previously**. Applications will be accepted until quota of participants is reached.

***CERTIFICATION MUST BE COMPLETED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, GUIDANCE COUNSELOR OR HOME SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR (APPLICATION WILL NOT BE PROCESSED UNLESS COMPLETED IN ITS ENTIRETY)**

Name of applicant _____ DATE _____

Applicant is a member of the current junior class of _____ High School. School District _____

1. Is student a Junior in the 2025-2026 school year? _____
2. Is student a legal resident of The United States? _____
3. Does student have good character? _____
4. Does student possess outstanding qualities of leadership and good citizenship? _____

Signed _____ Title _____

Counselor's Email Address: _____ (please print)

*****WAIVER*****

The undersigned parent or guardian of _____
(Name of Applicant)

In consideration of the instruction and training to be given said participant at American Legion Auxiliary Illini Girls State, to be held at Charleston, Illinois June 21st-27th, 2026 does hereby release and discharge the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Illinois, its officers, agents, instructors and employees, from any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, or courses of action which may, can or shall have by reason of illness, injury, or accident incurred or suffered by said participant while in attendance of said American Legion Auxiliary Illini Girls State no matter how caused or occasioned.

Signed _____ day of _____ 2025-2026
(Signature of Parent or Guardian)

ALA Illini Girls State Director Sarah Wyckoff

A Little Help Goes a Long Way!!

Want an easy way to support ALA Illini Girls State? Our Amazon Wishlist is open!

Every donated item helps us create an engaging, meaningful, and unforgettable leadership experience for our delegates
Wishlist link:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2G90NXKISOAL7?ref_=wl_share

We're so grateful for our supporters that help make ALA Illini Girls State possible!

2026-2027 Unit Officers List

No membership rosters or cards will be sent to the Unit ***WITHOUT*** an Officers List being submitted to Department.

Units that have sent in the Officers List by **June 30th** will be able to pick up membership packets at Department Convention.

If you bring your Officers List to Convention, you will also be able to pick up your packet.

American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Illinois

Delegates allowed (by membership) for credentials certification

1 – 25.....1	476 – 525.....11
26 – 75.....2	526 – 575.....12
76 – 125.....3	576 – 625.....13
126 – 175.....4	626 – 675.....14
176 – 225.....5	676 – 725.....15
226 – 275.....6	726 – 775.....16
276 – 325.....7	776 – 825.....17
326 – 375.....8	826 – 875.....18
376 – 425.....9	876 – 925.....19
426 – 475.....10	

Each Unit is entitled to one delegate and one alternate; and for every fifty members or major fraction thereof, one other delegate and alternate shall be allowed, provided the current dues as fixed by the Bylaws have been received by the Department Treasurer thirty days prior to the date of the annual Convention. For instance, a Unit having 24 members is entitled to one delegate and one alternate: a Unit having 26 is entitled to two delegates and two alternates. The President of the Unit and the President-elect shall have preference as nominees.

Are you planning on attending National Convention in Louisville, KY?

The dates are **August 28-September 3, 2026**

Watch for more information on the website and in email!



Constitution and Bylaws Changes

The proposed changes for the Constitution and Bylaws will be sent out in the May Unit President Mailing. Department Chairmen, District and Division Presidents, and Department Officers will receive it by email after the mailing goes out.

Department Leadership Classes

Department Convention will be here before we know it. Please sign up for leadership classes online at <https://ilala.org/leadership/> via email ilmembership@ilala.org or by returning the snip sheet (found on page 19) to:

Cindy Hall, Department Leadership Chairman,
1376 Brown St Apt 1
Des Plaines, IL 60016

VA&R Needs

Bloomington VA:

- Men's Sweatshirts (Sizes L & XL)
- Men's Sweatpants (Sizes L & XL)
- Women's Sweatpants (Sizes L & XL)
- Hygiene Items (toothbrushes, hand lotion, gold bond foot powder, hand/foot warmers, hand sanitizer)
- Water (8 oz bottles)

Sue Winger, Rep

Credentials at Department Convention

There will be **NO** delegate/alternate credentials issued at Department Convention.

CREDENTIALS FORM MUST HAVE ARRIVED IN THE OFFICE NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, JULY 3RD.

Plan to send them early.

Walk-in's will be guests.

Quarter Auction

The Finance Committee will once again host the Quarter Auction. What is a quarter auction? If the value of the item is under \$15, you will bid one quarter if you want the item. If the value is \$16 - \$30, your bid will be two quarters. If the item's value is over \$31, the bid is three quarters. You purchase paddles which have numbers on them. If your paddle number is drawn and you placed a bid, you win! You could win an incredible prize for 75 cents or less. There will be tokens available if you don't have quarters! Something NEW this year, you can buy an all in paddle for \$50 and not have to worry about quarters or tokens.

Date: Friday, July 10th Time: 1:30 p.m.

Where: 11 B&C, BOS Convention Center

Come enjoy an afternoon of fun winning nice prizes!

American Legion Family Sweepstakes

You will soon be receiving tickets in the mail for the American Legion Family Sweepstakes summer drawing. The drawing will be held at Department Convention in Springfield. There are many cash prizes, with the grand prize being \$10,000! You do not need to be present to win.

This is a unique opportunity to help and support the important programs offered by the Department of Illinois. Please return the tickets along with your donation in the envelope provided in your mailing. Every single gift is vital and each gift is appreciated by all of us and by those we serve.

Good Luck to all who participate and a very sincere

Thank You

Chaplain Carolle Junge

If you want to be happy do the following: Stop worrying. Stop Over thinking. Do not live in the past. Forget past hurts. Focus on the present. Feel grateful to God and for all He gives you. Love with your whole heart and most of all Smile.

The 7 promises of God:

1. God hears your prayers. Jeremiah 29:12
2. God will never leave you. Hebrews 13:5
3. God will guide your steps. Proverbs 3: 5-6
4. God is your light in the darkness. Psalm 27:1
5. God is your refuge and strength. Psalm 46:1
6. God is working all things for your good. Romans 8:28
7. God's plans for you are good. Jeremiah 29:11

Parliamentarian Pat Kranzow

Robert's: Past, Present and Future

On February 19th, we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the publication of Henry M. Robert's first edition of his *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies*. What began as a small handbook to bring order and fairness to meetings has become a lasting foundation for deliberative assemblies across generations.

In every organization, the basic principles of orderly debate, majority rule with protection of minority rights, and thoughtful decision-making foster trust, clarity, and confidence. Even the most fundamental tools—how to make a motion, how to debate respectfully, how to vote properly—strengthen both members and leaders and help our members conduct meetings that are fair, efficient, and productive.

(Parliamentarian Message Cont'd on pg. 11)

(Parliamentarian Message Cont'd from pg. 10)

Just as the written Robert's has changed to meet new situations, so technology has added electronic meetings and new vocabulary for those meetings. According to C. J. Mills, electronic meetings use different vocabulary than face-to-face meetings. Here are some examples.

Join the meeting = login

Chair = host

Secretary – note taker

Members = participants

Call to order = start the meeting

Secret = anonymous

Rights = privileges

Strike = delete

Adjourn = end the meeting

Every time we use Robert's principles to guide a meeting, advise a chair, or teach a class, we extend the impact of that first pocket manual into today's meetings and prepare for tomorrow's technology.

Parliamentarian Pat Kranzow

Member Responsibilities

We *believe* that our members are important and make a commitment to our mission when they join. They have responsibilities. Weldon L. Merritt, PRP, CPP, lists the responsibilities of ordinary members of an organization as follows (All citations are from Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th edition [RONR]).

A member of a deliberative assembly has the responsibility

1. to become familiar with the assembly's bylaws and procedural rules. [2:13]
2. to obtain the floor before making a motion or speaking in debate. [3:30]
3. to refrain from criticizing a ruling of the chair unless the member has appealed from the ruling. [24:2]
4. to refrain from debating a matter that is not pending. [43:4]
5. to confine remarks to the merits of the pending question. [43:20]
6. to refrain from attacking or questioning the motives of other members. [43:21]
7. to address all remarks to or through the chair. [43:22]
8. to refrain from referring to members by name. [43:23]
9. to refrain from speaking adversely on a prior action not pending. [43:24]
10. to refrain from speaking against the member's own motion. [43:25]
11. to read from reports, quotations, or other documents only with permission of the assembly. [43:26]
12. to be seated during any interruption by the chair. [43:27]
13. to refrain from disturbing the assembly. [43:28]
14. to refrain from explaining the member's vote during voting. [45:8]
15. to abstain from voting on a matter of direct personal interest. [45:4]

National Security Chairman Tina Abdelnour

We are approaching Armed Forces Day, and many people do not know what it is about. The history of Armed Forces Day dates to July 26, 1947, when President Harry S. Truman signed the National Security Act into law, merging four branches of the military under a single executive authority, the Secretary of Defense. The creation of the Department of Defense followed in 1949. Later, Armed Forces Day was declared an official national holiday on March 18, 1961, by President John F. Kennedy with Proclamation 3399.

Some other ways to commemorate this important day include flying the American flag, wearing red, white and blue, donating to military-based organizations, attending an Armed Forces Day parade, sending a care package to a servicemember away from home, or simply saying “thank you” to a military servicemember.

Now is a great time to find a service member to nominate for the American Legion Auxiliary National award “Salute to Servicemembers”. This award was established in 2003 for honoring women veterans to honoring active-duty women, to honoring all enlisted personnel who are currently serving our country in the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force and the National Guard/Reserve.

One enlisted servicemember from each branch of service as well as the National Guard/Reserve will be recognized at the National Convention.

The rules of eligibility and nomination requirements can be found at <https://www.legion-aux.org/Salute-to-Servicewoman-Award> or <https://member-legion-aux.org/Salute-to-Servicemembers>. Just click on “nomination form”!

The deadline is June 1, 2026, but nominations are being accepted NOW!!! Don’t wait, Illinois has many service members that deserve this recognition!

There will be a second Department of Illinois National Security Zoom Meeting on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 7pm. Any member may attend. This will be a chance for us to discuss the National Security program, get new ideas and ask any questions you may have on this program. You do not need to be your Unit, District or Division Chairman to attend. I DO encourage ALL Chairman at all levels to attend this meeting, so all Unit, District and Division Presidents, please encourage your chairman to attend. The Link is below:

Topic: 2ND DEPT OF IL NATIONAL SECURITY ZOOM MEETING

Time: May 26, 2026 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89204236621?pwd=0bt1K3wQkzeW79ue13bKWSjfiCrVNT.1>

Meeting ID: 892 0423 6621

Passcode: 851912

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,89204236621#,,,,*851912# US (Chicago)

+13092053325,,89204236621#,,,,*851912# US

Join instructions

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/89204236621/invitations?signature=e--S75CLwv_kZTYrxsoP6r0G-lsV_sOgYaUN7PIUkhA

Remember to enter to win a Department National Security Award. Go to ilala.org to see what awards are available.

American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention July 2026

Department Convention at a Glance

Wed. July 8

Leadership breakouts - Beginning at 12:30 pm, Abraham Lincoln Hotel, 2nd Floor, Freeport Room

Credential Registration - 2:00-6:00 pm

Flag Registration – 3:30-6:00

Basket & Purse drop off at the Mary Todd Room, Abraham Lincoln Hotel– 2:30-5:00 pm

Department Board of Directors Meeting – 7:00 at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Ottawa Room

(Attendees: Dept. Officers, Division and District Presidents, Chairmen, Past Department Presidents only)

Thursday, July 9

Registration – 7:00 am-8:30 am

Display Room – 7:00 am-8:15 am

Convention Opening – 8:30 am

Basket Raffle – 3:00-6:30 pm – Pre-function Area, Abraham Lincoln Hotel

Gold Star/Past Presidents Parley Dinner and Purse Auction– 6:30 pm, 11 B&C , BOS Convention Center

Friday, July 10

Convention begins at 8:30 am

Quarter Auction – Doors open 1:30 pm, 11 B&C, BOS Convention Center

American Legion Freedom Fest – 6:00-10:00 pm

Saturday, July 11

Joint Memorial Service at 8:00 am at the Convention Center

Joint Poppy Poster presentation immediately following the Memorial Service

ALA Convention resumes 15 minutes after Poppy Presentation

Installation of 2026-2027 officers – 1:30 pm

American Legion Family Reception for 2026-2027 officers – Immediately following ALA installation, Rooms 11 B&C, BOS Convention Center

Cocktail Hour—Pre Function Room, Abraham Lincoln Hotel

Commanders and President Dinner, Abraham Lincoln Hotel Ballroom

If you would like to receive the ALA Today, General Department Communications and/or the Membership report, via email please go to the department website: www.ilala.org, scroll down and select “Subscribe”. You then can choose the information you would like to receive by clicking the box next to the item. If you do not receive the ALA Today or the Membership report via email, you can always find them on the website listed above as well. Please check your SPAM box in case you do not receive emails from us.

Linda Iberg—Candidate for Department President



Linda Iberg has been endorsed for the Department of Illinois American Legion Auxiliary Department President for the 2026-2027 term by her Unit #439 Highland, District 22, and Division 5.

She is eligible for this position through the service of her late father, Robert Rochell (Army WWII), and her late husband, Richard Iberg (Air Force Vietnam era). Through her years, Linda has held officer positions and chairmanships in her local Unit through Division, including President at every level. Linda has been an Auxiliary member since 2007.

Linda has worked for 54 years at Eaton B-Line in Highland, IL in Supply Chain as a buyer of the steel coils required to make their products. She is a member of Evangelical United Church of Christ, Highland and plays in their hand bell choir. She has also been a Sunday School teacher and recently a church representative at the annual meeting of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ for three years. She has been the coordinator of blood drives at her employer for many years. She was the recipient of the B-Line Division 2017 Stover Volunteerism Award for Community Service.

Linda's pride and joy are her children, Robert and Laura, and of course, her son-in-law Larry.

Tina Abdelnour —Candidate for Department First Vice President

Tina Abdelnour is a Paid-Up-For-Life member of the American Legion Auxiliary. Her Eligibility is through her husband, Terry Abdelnour, who is also very active in the American Legion. She is a daughter, wife and mother of a Navy Veteran. She has spent her whole life attached to the military and has a special place in her heart for them. She has held the positions of Unit President for (9) years, 12th District President, 2nd Division President, Department Historian and is currently serving as the Department 2nd Vice President. She has held many committee chairmanships at all levels including (2) positions at the National Level which were the National Central Division Junior Activities Chairman and the National Central Division Children & Youth Chairman. She has always been willing to help out wherever she has been needed.



Her endorsement for the 2026-2027 Department 1st Vice President is from her Unit 635, and 17th District.

Susan Heinz-Wojcik – Candidate for Second Vice President



Susan Heinz-Wojcik has been endorsed by her Unit #806 Billy Caldwell, District 9, and First Division for nomination for American Legion Auxiliary Department Second Vice President for 2026 – 2027. Her eligibility is through her Grandfather Andrew Irl Lewis who was in World War I. She has been a member of the American Legion Auxiliary for 56 years and is PUFL member.

Throughout the years as an Auxiliary member, Susan has held several chairmanships and officer positions in her Unit, District and Division including President. At Department level she has been Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms and held many chairmanships. Currently serving as American Legion Auxiliary Department Historian.

With her personal qualifications and dedication to The American Legion Family, she will do her best to carry on the fine traditions we have in the Department of Illinois. Susan's pride and joy is her son Rick Heinz, daughter-in-law Allison and of course, her Granddaughter Melody.

Marybeth Revoir—Candidate for Department Treasurer

The Ervin A. Borlick Unit 1109 is proud to again support the candidacy of Marybeth Revoir for the office of Department Treasurer 2055-2026. Marybeth wishes to continue serving the Department of Illinois as its Treasurer. She is a proven leader in our great organization and continues to devote her time and efforts on all phases of the American Legion Auxiliary. After serving as 4th District President in 1979, Marybeth has continually served in various capacities on the Department level. Her accomplishments on behalf of the Department, her Division, District, and Unit highlight her dedication to our Organization and its principles. Marybeth's leadership has been recognized by the National Organization where she has served as the Secretary/Treasurer of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation and 4 terms as National Treasurer.



The Ervin A. Borlick Unit #1109, the 4th District and the 1st Division are most proud to support Marybeth Revoir for the Office of Department Treasurer 2025-2026 and request your favorable consideration of her candidacy.

Candidate for Historian

No Candidate

Teri Miller—Candidate for National Central Division Vice President



Teri Miller is a 60 year Paid Up for Life member of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Illinois.

On the Department level Teri served on all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary, serving as Department President 2004-2005. Teri has also held numerous Department Chairmanships. Teri has served all other levels of the American Legion Auxiliary, including Unit, District, Division and National.

In Teri's spare time she volunteers for Goodwill of Central Illinois Stand down and heading up the Holiday gift bags for Veterans through the Bob Michel Outpatient Clinic. When she is not volunteering, she loves to travel with her husband George of 25 years, spend time with her family and machine embroidery. Teri retired from Peoria Public Library in October after 40 years.

Teri is eligible through the service of her late father, Leonard R. Krapp, Sr who served in the Army Air Corp during WWII.

Peoria Unit #2, Sixteenth District and Third Division have endorsed Teri and ask for your favorable consideration for this candidacy for the for Central Division National Vice President for the year 2026-2027.

OFFICIAL CALL FOR THE 105th DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

July 9-11, 2026

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel a Doubletree by Hilton Springfield, Illinois

The 105th Department Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary is hereby called, and, in conformity with Article VI, Section 2, of the Department Constitution, which provides that the annual Department Convention, if feasible, shall be held at the same time and place as that of The American Legion, or otherwise, as determined by the Department Board of Directors. The American Legion, Department of Illinois is meeting in Springfield, Illinois.

PURPOSE

The Convention is called for the purpose of electing officers for the ensuing year and delegates and alternates for National Convention, amending the Department Bylaws, receiving reports of Department Officers and Committees, and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before it.

REPRESENTATION

Representation at the Convention shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Department Constitution, Article VI, Section 3. Delegates to the Department Convention shall be as follows: Each Unit shall be entitled to one delegate and one alternate; and for every fifty members or major fraction thereof, one other delegate and alternate shall be allowed, provided the current dues as fixed by the Bylaws have been received by the Department Treasurer thirty days prior to the date of the annual Convention. Units organized within this thirty-day period shall be entitled to representation in the Convention. Other voting members shall be the Department Officers, the Past Department Presidents, the Division Presidents, the Division Presidents-elect, the District Presidents, the District Presidents-elect, the Presidents and Presidents-elect of County Organizations, the two Department Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, the Chairmen of Standing and Convention committees, Holiday Gifts Chairman, Hospital Service & Service to Veterans Chairman, and Department Hospital Representatives and Service to Veterans Representatives at the Illinois Veterans Homes.

ALTERNATES

Each Unit is entitled to elect a number of alternates equal to the number of delegates to which such Unit is entitled. Alternates will have the power to vote only in the absence of the regular delegates. The selection of alternates to represent absent delegates is a matter of decision within the respective Unit.

Alternates must be listed on the Credentials Certificate.

CREDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION

The number of delegates to which each Unit is entitled shall be determined by the membership records of June 10, 2026, as shown on the books of the Department. Credentials of properly certified delegates and alternates will be distributed as follows: Wednesday, July 8, 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Thursday, July 9, 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. If arriving after 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, credentials may be picked up in the Department Convention Office.

Credentials MUST BE PICKED UP by 10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 10 to vote.

Registration will be conducted in the Pre-Function Foyer of the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel a Doubletree by Hilton, 701 E. Adams St, Springfield, IL until 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 9th.

DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES REGISTRATION FEE

The registration fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) per delegate must accompany the Credential Certificate before delegates can be registered and credentials given out. **COMPLETED AND CERTIFIED CREDENTIAL CERTIFICATE MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE BY 4:30 PM ON FRIDAY, JULY 3, 2026. Any member whose Credential Certificate is received after the above date, will attend the Convention as a Guest.** A registration fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) per alternate must be paid for all alternates attending Convention meetings. **Alternates must be listed on the Credential Certificate, whether attending or not. All registered Delegates and Alternates will receive a Book of Reports when picking up their badges.**

GUESTS

All guests attending Convention meetings must pay a \$10.00 registration fee to receive a badge and Book of Reports. Book of Reports will be available at a cost of \$10.00 at the registration table for those wishing to purchase extra books.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions to be presented at the Department Convention must be typewritten in triplicate, signed by two delegates and filed with the Department Managing Director before they will be considered by the Convention Resolution Committee. They should be sent in advance to Department Headquarters – if late, they must be filed no later than **10:00 a.m., Friday, July 10th** in the Department Convention Office.

DIVISION CAUCUSES

Caucus time and locations, if deemed necessary, will be announced on Thursday, July 9th .

ELECTIONS

An election for Department Officers, Delegates and Alternates to National Convention will be held **Friday at approximately 10:30 a.m. in the Ballroom. ALL DELEGATES MUST BE SEATED IN THEIR DELEGATION PRIOR TO 10:00 A.M. AS DOORS WILL BE CLOSED AND NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENTER OR LEAVE UNTIL VOTING IS FINISHED.**

PROCESSIONAL OF COLORS

Processional of Colors is limited to District, Division and Department Flags. **Stands must be brought for each set of flags.**

All flags must be registered prior to opening of Convention: **Wednesday, July 8th, 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. or Thursday, July 9th, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. in the Mary Todd Room of the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel.**

GOLD STAR/PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY DINNER

DATE: Thursday, July 9th

TIME: 6:30 p.m. (Doors open at 6:00 p.m.)

PLACE: BOS Center Room B11

Please be sure to check mark your Gold Star Members as special seating and gifts will be provided to them.

Reservations must be received July 1

Mail check to: American Legion Auxiliary, PO Box 1426, Bloomington, IL 61702-1426

Charge a credit card: call 309-663-9366

Date: _____ UNIT NAME: _____ Unit No: _____ District No: _____

Name of person picking up tickets _____

Entree: Chicken Francesca or Grilled Salmon

Please list below ALL those attending dinner.

Please CHECK MARK the names of GOLD STAR MEMBERS.

	Chicken	Grilled Salmon	Unit #
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

TOTAL tickets for Gold Star/Past Presidents Parley Dinner _____ @ \$50.00 each \$ _____

Scenes from Other Events



Left: President Jill Layton presenting Cobden Unit 259's charter to Unit President Diana Steele!

Right: VA Volunteer Banquet! Mike Murphree received the John Cochran Lifetime Award.



Right: Group shot of Haven Run participants at Traveling Wall Memorial.

Left: President Jill Layton presenting ROTC award at Eastern Illinois University.



President Jill Layton, Past Department Commander Joe Lampert, and TAL Senior Vice Commander Celeste Latham at the Motorcycle Run!



ALA LEADERSHIP CLASSES AT DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Wednesday, July 8, 2026

Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Springfield IL

12:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Believe In Yourself and Our Members to Lead the Way to Achieving Our Goals of Service.

This year, due to limited space, the classes will be held in 1 room.

12:30 – 2:00 PM MEMBERS ARE THE BEST GIFT

- 12:30 – 1:00 ALA 101
- 1:00 – 1:30 RECRUITING AND BEYOND
- 1:30 – 1:50 ALAMIS – MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION SYSTEM

***** BREAK*****

2:00 – 3:30 PM UNITS ARE THE STARS OF THE AUXILIARY

- 2:00 – 2:30 UNIT MEETING BASICS
- 2:30 – 3:00 YOU'RE A CHAIRMAN – NOW WHAT?
- 3:00 – 3:30 PROMOTING YOUR GOOD WORKS OF SERVICE

Please register in advance so that we have enough materials for all attendees.

Return this form to Department Leadership Chair

Cindy Hall, 1376 Brown St, Apt 1, Des Plaines, IL 60016

Email to cindyskier5139@gmail.com or Text to 224-201-4009

by June 20, 2026.

Name _____ Phone _____

Unit _____ District _____ Email _____

_____ **12:30 pm – 2:00 pm MEMBERS ARE THE BEST GIFT**

_____ **2:00 pm – 3:30 pm UNITS ARE THE STARS**

Special Olympics Food List

Children & Youth Chairman Sue Johnson

Special Olympics Food Bank For All Games

Legion

Veggie Straws Ind Pks
 Pop Chips Variety Ind Pks
 Raisin Ind Packets
 Bare baked crunch Ind Pks
 Sun Chips Ind Variety Pks
 Olives Grm/Blk
 Dry Roasted peanuts w/sea salt
 Fruit: strawberries, blueberries,
 Pineapples, grapes, bananas

 Sugar free cookies

 GoGo Squeezed Applesauce
 And variety Ind Pks

SAL

Veggie Chips Ind Pks
 Quaker Rice Crisp Multi Pks
 Hummus single 16 pks
 Pirate Booty cheddar puffs Ind Pks
 Baked Lays Regular & Barbecue Ind Pks
 Archer Mini Sticks Turkey & Beef
 GFS Peanut Butter Ind Pks
 Trail Mix 240 calories or less Ind Pks

 Holy Nuts Sunflower Seeds
 Kernels Ind Pks

Auxiliary

Veggie Puffs Ind Pks
 Nature Valley Crunchy Granola
 Snack Mix Ind Pks
 Kind Minis Bars Variety Ind Pks
 Snyder Pretzel Ind Pks 100 cal
 Terra Veggie Chips "We Bag"
 Beef/Turkey Jerky <240 Cal
 Mount Olive Dill Pickles Sliced
 Veggies: Broccoli, Cauliflower,
 Bell Peppers Variety, Cherry
 Tomatoes, Radish, Baby
 Carrots, Celery

 Robert Irvine Fitness
 Crunch Bars Variety Ind
 Pks

What are you doing for American 250?

Submit Your America 250 Activities

We want to highlight your efforts! Posts, Units, Squadrons, and Chapters (Counties, Districts, and Divisions) can submit their events, projects, and stories through our **America 250 Submission Form**.

Please complete the form below with information on your event. Once the form is received, it will be reviewed by the Department's America 250 Committee and then published on the Department's website under "What's Happening?"

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScrZsecAXsaphMa0kUXu6CHleNI05sNze4evH7hP4fjY0NjYg/viewform>

or

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScrZsecAXsaphMa0kUXu6CHleNI05sNze4evH7hP4fjY0NjYg/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=114853315181864307350>



CHILDREN & YOUTH

Legion Convention Action Requested It
Now it is your turn... **Volunteers are needed!**

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ILLINOIS SUMMER GAMES 2026 Illinois State University, Normal, IL JUNE 12-13, 2026

The Illinois American Legion and Auxiliary will sponsor a Hospitality Center for athletes, coaches, volunteers and families. We plan to provide items such as: See page #20. This will provide athletes, coaches and families a place in the shade to rest, relax and fellowship among themselves and us. *We must be assured of adequate help for loading and unloading supplies, cleaning tables and money to put this operation together for both days.*

PLACE

Hancock Center

Illinois State University
Normal, IL 61761

HOURS OF OPERATION

Friday, June 12th, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday June 13th, 8:00 a.m. - 500 p.m.

(Please indicate below the times you will be there to help)

** Must work a full day for lunch to be provided—morning through afternoon **



I will be there: From _____ To _____ on Friday

I will be there: From _____ To _____ on Saturday

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Post/Unit # _____ District # _____ Division # _____

Here is my donation of \$ _____ to help with supplies for Special Olympics.

RETURN TO:

The American Legion	-or-	The American Legion Auxiliary	-or-	Sue & Dave Johnson
Dept. of Illinois		Dept. of Illinois		140 E. Russell St.
PO Box 2910		PO Box 1426		Rockton, IL. 61072
Bloomington, IL 61702-2910		Bloomington, IL 61702-1426		americandancer13@gmail.com

The American Legion Department of Illinois Family
cordially invites you to the annual

COMMANDERS & PRESIDENT

Dinner

honoring



Department Commander
Roy E. Smith



Department President
Jill Layton



Detachment Commander
Wayne V. Madson

Saturday, July 11, 2026

— \$67 per person —

Cocktails at 6:00 p.m.

Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Main Ballroom

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel

Name: _____ Division# _____

Address: _____ District# _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone# _____

No. of Person(s) _____ or Table(s) _____ (For tables of eight (8), please send a list of names with this form)

(Grilled Sirloin Steak x _____) - (Chicken Forestiere (mushroom sauce) x _____) - (Salmon x _____)

All dinners are served with roasted garlic whipped potatoes, haricot verts and glazed carrots, tossed salad and dessert.

Check Total \$ _____ Make checks payable to: The American Legion Department of Illinois

To guarantee your reservation, mail check & reservation form **DIRECTLY** to Sharon Conatser
2305 Rebecca Dr. Champaign, IL 61821 no later than **June 25, 2026.**

For questions or special dietary needs: Sharon Conatser (C)217/369-6211; or email: sconatser44@live.com

American Legion Auxiliary Membership Report - 4/29/2026

District	Division	President	Units	Goal	Total Members	Goal %
7	1	Marlene Russell	3	152	149	98.03%
25	5	Diana Steele	15	698	671	96.13%
9	1	Kris McIntyre	7	529	500	94.52%
12	2	Janet Bacon	25	1598	1496	93.62%
19	4	Patti Williamson	33	1821	1677	92.09%
18	4	Debbie Myles	28	1216	1114	91.61%
8	1	Lea Morsovillo	11	609	557	91.46%
15	3	Rebecca Marvel	25	905	826	91.27%
20	3	Jodith Lewis	20	647	590	91.19%
14	3	Dona Kenney	11	532	484	90.98%
11	2	Barbara Howe	33	1858	1681	90.47%
23	5	Diana Owens	23	1473	1325	89.95%
22	5	Karen Daesch	25	935	839	89.73%
13	2	Kathy Pignato	15	545	488	89.54%
4	1	Diane Cetera	7	194	173	89.18%
17	4	Crystal Black	33	1334	1175	88.08%
16	3	Teri Miller	24	1105	964	87.24%
5	1	Balvina "Bo" Ranney	11	307	267	86.97%
10	2	Angela Walker	13	581	504	86.75%
2	1		4	57	49	85.96%
24	5	April Parkhurst	14	566	484	85.51%
3	1	Karen Atkins	6	114	93	81.58%
21	4	Barb Turner	17	637	510	80.06%
		Headquarters 2910	1	478	441	92.26%
		TOTALS	404	18891	17057	90.29%
	1	Nancy Stevens		1962	1788	91.13%
	2	Karen Stetina		4582	4169	90.99%
	5	Ann Flanagan		3672	3319	90.39%
	3	Michelle Gorsage		3189	2864	89.81%
	4	Diane Shapland		5008	4476	89.38%
		Goal Units	72			
		Linda Oakley			Jill Layton	
		Department Membership Chairman			Department President	

The American Legion Auxiliary — Department of Illinois

P.O. BOX 1426

BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS 61702

Phone: 309-663-9366

Fax: 309-663-5827

Web: www.ilala.org

Email: executivesecretary@ilala.org

Department President

Interim Managing Director

Jill Layton

Sharon Conatser

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

American Legion Auxiliary

★ *A community of volunteers* ★

Serving veterans, military, and their families

NON-PROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Bloomington, IL

Permit No. 18

Dates to Remember

- June 12-13 Special Olympics at ISU—Normal, IL
- June 21-27 ALA Illini Girls State—Charleston, IL
- July 8 Leadership Classes at Department Convention—Springfield, IL
- July 9 100% Membership Target Date—Department Convention
- July 9-11 Department Convention—Springfield, IL
- August 14-15 2026-2027 Fall Board Meeting
- August 28-Sept 3 National Convention—Louisville, KY