

# WELCOME

## What is the purpose of the Auxiliary?

Our Mission Statement reads:

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.

The American Legion Auxiliary has one GREAT purpose – “to contribute to the accomplishments of the aims and purposes of the American Legion.” Except for the addition of those words, the Preamble to its National Constitution is nearly the same as that of The American Legion.

The American Legion Auxiliary does not establish any policy that conflicts with those of the American Legion. Its activities are designed to enhance The American Legion’s programs.

## **PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

- To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
  - To maintain law and order;
- To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
- To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars;
- To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
  - To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
    - To make right the master of might;
    - To promote peace and goodwill on earth;
    - To safeguard and transmit to posterity,  
the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
    - To participate in and contribute to  
the accomplishments of the aims and purposes of The American Legion;
- To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

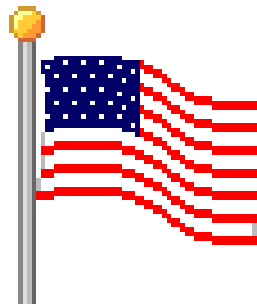


### **THE EMBLEM WE WEAR**

The Emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is a badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and Country and the highest rights of man. It consists of several parts and each part has a meaning.

The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary, loyalty, justice, freedom and democracy, dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. Unity and loyalty are represented by the unbroken Circle of blue.

The field of white exemplifies the hope of freedom. The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in peace. The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the Emblem of Americanism. It is a badge of service to community, state and nation, obligating the wearer to ever guard the sanctity of home and country and free Institutions.



There is a [custom](#) in The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary to never walk between the Flag of our Country and the Banner. There is nothing in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Legion or the Auxiliary to support this custom, but perhaps the following little poem will give the reason for this long-standing custom.

*Between these flags that proudly fly  
Let no man dare to stand.  
For here our fallen comrades lie  
A symbol, yes, but mark it well;  
Here let us humbly pause in memory of the lads  
Who fell in fighting for our sacred cause;  
On sea and land these buddies die,  
Some lie beneath a foreign sod  
In graves caressed by winds and tide,  
In spots unknown to all but God,  
And so, this place is hollowed ground,  
And it shall be forever blest,  
As though' it were a grassy mound  
Beneath which gallant heroes rest,  
Be ever watchful, Legionnaire,  
Of those two flags which signify  
That we should guard this spot with care  
Where our departed comrades lie.  
And if a man should dare to tread this spot  
Where lies our gallant brave,  
He desecrates that noble dead  
As though he walked upon their graves.*



## POW – MIA Table

The white tablecloth represents the purity of the soldier's intentions to respond to the summons of the trumpet.

The rose reminds us of the soldier's loved ones.

The red ribbon is the same as those worn by the thousands of citizens who demand a proper accounting of the missing.

The lemon is a symbol of the bitter fate of the missing.

The salt is symbolic of the tears of their families.

The glass is inverted because they cannot toast with us today.

The chair is empty because they are not here.

## COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

AEF	Auxiliary Emergency Fund
ALA	American Legion Auxiliary
ALCWF	American Legion Child Welfare Fund
ALR	American Legion Riders
C&B	Constitution & Bylaws
C&Y	Children & Youth
CBOC	Community based outpatient clinic
CFA	Citizens Flag Alliance
CS	Community Service
CWF	Child Welfare Foundation
DEC	Department Executive Committee
DOD	Department of Defense
E-Board	Executive Committee
NEC	National Executive Committee
NPSF	National President's Scholarship Fund
PPP	Past President's Parley
PDP	Past Department Presidents
PNP	Past National Presidents
POW/MIA	Prisoner of War/Missing in Action
PR	Public Relations
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Course
SAL	Sons of the American Legion
SOY	Spirit of Youth
TAL	The American Legion
TFA	Temporary Financial Assistance
VA&R	Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
VCAF	Veterans Creative Arts Festival
VAMC	Veterans Administration Medical Center
VAVS	Veterans Administration Voluntary Service

# OFFICERS

Upon entering office each one should make herself acquainted with the duties entailed. The plan of action and method of accomplishment should be clearly in mind.

When going out of office, the retiring officer should pass on to her successor her file of materials, communications, etc. as promptly as possible.

Everyone, when leaving office, should do so as gracefully as possible. It is well to aim to be a good, fair, generous, helpful, open-minded and uncriticizing PAST officer.

## **PRESIDENT**

The Unit President must be an able and qualified leader, for she represents the Auxiliary in her community, and its success or failure depends largely upon her.

She should act in a supervisory capacity, be familiar with the duties of all the officers and committee chairmen and encourage and inspire them in their work. It is the responsibility of the President to see that all officers are supplied with all available information and material from Department and National Headquarters for the efficient promotion of their various activities.

The Unit President has many duties. She should preside at all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee; require strict adherence to the Constitution and Bylaws and rules and regulations established by the National and Department Convention, National and Department Executive Committees and the Unit itself; appoint members of standing committees and create such other committees as are necessary; appoint all non-elected officers, and perform all duties which are assigned to her office.

## **VICE-PRESIDENT**

The Vice-President is given the responsibility, with the President, for complete development of the Units' programs. The Vice-President should be prepared to preside at meetings in the absence of the President, or whenever the President vacates the Chair temporarily. In case of the President vacating the Chair for a long period of time, she exercises all duties of the President except to change or modify rules made by the President or with her approval and to fill vacancies when the Bylaws state that vacancies shall be filled by the President. In case of resignation or death of a President, she resigns her office as Vice-President if she does not care to assume the office of President.

## **UNIT SECRETARY**

The duties of the Unit Secretary are administrative, she occupies a pivotal position around which all the activities of the Unit revolve. She should be efficient and well informed on all phases of Unit, Department and National activities and requirements and be capable of giving authentic information on organization matters. The Unit Secretary records business transacted at each meeting and of the Executive Board and presents her minutes for approval at the next meeting. She counts a rising vote when requested by the president. She prepares a statement of unfinished business to come before the meeting, has a reference at each meeting, a list of names of members of all standing committees, and a copy of local Bylaws. She is responsible for forwarding all name and address changes to Department Headquarters.

## **TREASURER**

An efficient Unit Treasurer is essential to the smooth functioning of the Unit and to ensure that proper accounting practices and internal controls are maintained. The Treasurer is responsible for handling all Unit funds, including the collection of dues from members and donations to special funds. The Treasurer keeps a financial statement up to date at all times, accepts bills for payment only when receipts for bills are presented. The Treasurer should be bonded.

## **HISTORIAN**

The Unit Historian is charged with the responsibility of recording the activities and accomplishments of her Unit during her term in office. The writing of the Unit or Department history is a very important assignment. Through the years the recorded experiences of those women who served before us have guided the footsteps of those who followed. Unit Historians are encouraged to present the factual running story of the accomplishments in each program. The description should be simple and concise. The quality and artistic value of the work depends upon the enthusiasm of the individual Historian. Upon the Unit records of history that of the Department is written, upon the Department records that of the National Organization.

## **CHAPLAIN**

The Unit Chaplain will express by word and action our founding principles of service to God and Country. She will encourage the Unit to celebrate the diversity among its members and their faiths. She will provide spiritual and emotional guidance to members or their families as needed or requested, and with respect, always maintaining confidentiality. The Unit Chaplain is responsible for pronouncing the invocation and the

**benediction at meetings, as well as performing such other acts as would fall within the realm of her office as the spiritual leader of the Unit, including but not limited to: installation, initiation of new members, dedication of halls, monuments or colors, Four Chaplain Services, POW/MIA recognition programs and the memorial service of a member, always lending dignity and respect to the occasion. The Unit Chaplain should stay in close contact with the President and other officers of the Unit and should attend all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee.**

## **SERGEANT-AT-ARMS**

**The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for keeping order at Unit meetings, for the advancement and retirement of the Unit colors and their proper care, and for such other duties as may be assigned to her by the Unit President.**

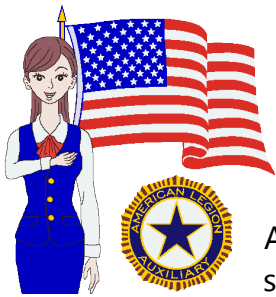
## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**The Executive Board consists of the above mentioned people plus the Junior Past President (most recent Past President) and at least one member at large. The E-boards meet at the call of the President. Usually this happens in between meetings when there is an emergency. For example a Veteran needs a bill paid that is more than the President is authorized to spend. Each transaction must be documented and presented to the membership at the next general meeting and put into the minutes by the secretary.**

# PROGRAMS

## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

### SIX MAJOR PROGRAMS



#### **AMERICANISM:**

Our Americanism program includes all activities tending to perpetuate American ideals and to uphold the principles of American democracy. The security of America lies in a citizenry in whose minds and hearts is ingrained a true understanding of and love for those ideals and principles upon which the nation was founded; a citizenry aware of the duties of citizenship and a willingness to perform those duties even at the cost of great personal sacrifice. Americanism work is largely educational in character and is usually divided into three phases: work with the youth, adults, and the community. All matters pertaining to the flag or patriotic education are rightly classified as Americanism activities. Monetary donations are made to Department annually by the Unit & reporting of activities annually also.

#### **What our Unit does:**

We promote Americanism in the schools with participation in the Department Americanism Essay Contests.



#### **CHILDREN & YOUTH:**

The purpose and principles of the American Legion Auxiliary's Children and Youth Program are in general the same as those of The American Legion. Although the program is derived from mandates of The American Legion, the Auxiliary augments and adds to it through its continuing support of the overall program as well as through the sponsorship of special assignments and activities.

1. To preserve the integrity of the family home.
2. To maintain a "whole" child program, with due regard for all needs of children; physical, spiritual, emotional, and educational.

3. To cooperate with and strengthen other sound organizations and agencies for children, avoiding duplication of existing programs

**What our Unit does:**

We promote the Youth Good Deed and Hero recognition programs with an event at least once a year. Also Temporary Financial Assistance for Veterans with minor children.



**EDUCATION:**

The education of all of America's children is essential for the future of our nation. The American Legion Auxiliary joins with The American Legion to aid and support the basic rights of all children to receive an appropriate education. That education should prepare them for a fulfilling life.

**What our Unit does:**

We offer scholarships of \$500 to students at Tehachapi High School and Monroe High School. We also educate them about the Department and National Scholarships. We participate in the Give 10 program and Box Tops for Education.



**LEGISLATIVE:**

American Legion and Auxiliary members are interested in legislative measures which come before the United States Congress and the state legislatures. Through lobbying efforts The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary are able to influence legislation of benefit to veterans, the community and our nation. When measures important to the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary are before the lawmaking bodies for consideration, appeals go out for support on these measures. At such times the unit members should contact their representatives urging them to take the action desired.

**What our Unit does:**

We discuss important Legislative issues and encourage letter writing phone calls and emails to our State and Federal Representatives.



**POPPY:**

Symbolism of the Poppy:

The red petals stand for the vast outpouring of blood; the yellow and black center, the mud and desolation of all battlefields.

The green of the stem is symbolic of the forests, meadows and fields where generations of Americans have perished to make this land free.

The stem represents the courage and determination of our fallen warriors.

The assembled product, a flower, is a symbol of resurrection, which is sure to follow.

**What our Unit does:**

We offer poppies to the public in May, which is designated as Poppy Month; all donations collected go into our "Welfare Fund". These restricted monies can only be used for the direct aid to our Veterans, Active Duty military and their families.



**VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION (VA&R):**

The single most important program of the ALA the VA&R program promotes the betterment of all Veterans whether they be recently discharged or have been out for decades. VA&R means the complete restoration of the veteran and his or her family to normal function and adjustment, physically, mentally, socially, and vocationally for the fullest possible life, compatible with his or her abilities and disabilities.

**What our Unit does:**

Our Nationally recognized Food Bank for Veterans attending Airstream's Wind Turbine Training classes, Poker Tournaments at the Lancaster Veteran's Home, and Temporary Financial Assistance when requested.

Units are required to show participation in these 6 major programs, as well as Membership. Participation includes donations to Department and reporting of Activities in each program on the Units year-end reports.

## OTHER AUXILIARY PROGRAMS



### AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND (AEF):

This fund, provides emergency assistance to a member for a limited period of time, provided she has been a member of the Auxiliary for the immediate past three consecutive years and has her current year's dues paid, is supported by contributions from our Units and members. Another kind of emergency has been recognized by the Auxiliary - the emergency a woman faces when she is suddenly single - deserted, divorced, or widowed, with no skills to support herself or her family. This area deals strictly with the need of a member to brush up on former job-related skills seldom used as she raised her family. It is to give immediate, rather than long-term, assistance. The criteria are similar to that of the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, including the requirement that she must have exhausted other means of job-preparation assistance. The Department of California has a California Disaster Fund set up to assist members in the event of a Natural Disaster. The same criteria must be met for eligibility.

#### What our Unit does:

We let members know that this is available as a benefit of membership.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE



Community Service embraces all activities for improvement of conditions of life in the local community where the Unit is located. It has resulted in a vast number of projects to make American communities better places in which to live. Every Unit is expected to carry out or cooperate in a least one project for community betterment each year.

#### What our Unit does:

We have been asked by the City of Tehachapi to take charge of "The Wall of Valor" on the Fourth of July. We also actively participate and help plan activities for Memorial Day, Veteran's Day and other civic events.

**Editor's note:** For many years the ALA has promoted other civic projects, but in recent years the focus has been on more Veteran related projects. We believe the program is still evolving and will be narrowing its focus in the coming years



## Constitution and Bylaws

The Constitution and Bylaws are the governing document of all Units, every 10 years this document has to be updated and re-written. Model by-laws are available on the Auxiliary web-site [www.calgionaux.org](http://www.calgionaux.org), and this is a matter of filling in the blanks. Amendments to the bylaws can be made any time with in the 10 year period due to dues changes, and or meeting changes or for other reasons as deemed necessary by the membership. Due to new IRS regulations, if there are more than 2 amendments made by a Unit within the 10 year period a re-write is suggested so as to avoid possible IRS audit. Standing Rules are also suggested by the C&B chairman and can be changed at any time on the request of the membership.

What our Unit does:

We are due for a re write in 2017.

All members should have a copy of the C&B and the standing rules.



## GIRLS STATE

Girls State is a practical application of Americanism and good citizenship. The entire program is a non-partisan, non-political attempt to teach and inculcate in the youth of America a love of God and country. The purpose of Girls State is to provide citizenship training for girls of high school age; to afford them an opportunity to live together as self-governing citizens; to inform them of the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship, in order that they may understand and participate in the functioning of their government; and to help them grasp the meaning of some of the responsibilities which they must assume when they become adults.

What our Unit does:

We sponsor a junior from Tehachapi High School to the Girls State session in June.



## JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Junior Activities is for the enrollment in the Auxiliary of daughters, granddaughters, and sisters of the American Legion members too young to take part in the regular meeting and activities of the Unit. Junior members do not form a separate organization, but are grouped separately so they may be given a program within the scope of their years and understanding. Junior groups can participate in all Auxiliary programs on their own level, but Americanism should be a major activity of the Juniors and presented to them in such a manner that they will be taught patriotism, citizenship and loyalty to American ideals and principles.

### What our Unit does:

Most of the Junior memberships are grand and great granddaughters of members. If in the future we get some local Junior members we will encourage Junior Conference, and other Department activities designed for them. We do buy Junior Conference tickets.



## LEADERSHIP

Leadership is for the training and development of members on all levels of endeavor. It is recognized that trained leadership is essential for the perpetuation of the American Auxiliary Programs.

### What our Unit does:

This new member handbook is an example of things we are implementing to educate our members on the programs, and activities of not only our Unit, but the entire Auxiliary from Unit to the National level.



## MEMBERSHIP

Membership is the foundation on which the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary are built. We need a strong Auxiliary membership to carry out all the programs. Dues of the American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 221, Tehachapi, CA. are \$25.00 a year for Senior members and \$5.00 for Junior members.

### What our Unit does:

It is the obligation of the entire Unit to encourage friends, relatives and neighbors to join and participate in our activities and programs.



## NATIONAL SECURITY:

By supporting activities that address the practical and emotional well being of military servicemembers and their families, the program hopes to ease the worries of those deployed so that they can focus on the monumental task of protecting our country. Auxiliary members step up and reach out to care for military families in very practical ways, such as assisting with their needs for child care and lawn work or by providing a listening ear to a stressed-out spouse. We Honor the Troops by Providing the Blue Star banners for the families of deployed service-members as a gesture of support. We offer help to families displaying banners and honor those still missing with a POW/MIA Remembrance Service. The National Security program also is about doing everything possible to promote the security of our nation. Emergency Preparedness is a phase of this program promoting individual self-protection in the event of natural disasters or attacks by the enemy. The work of the Auxiliary is coordinated with Federal, State and local Emergency Preparedness authorities.

### What our Unit does:

Our "Packages for the Troops" project, we pass out Blue and Gold Star banners and pins, and encourages participation in CERT training.



## PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

The purpose this program is to allow the women who have served as presidents on all levels of the organization the opportunity to continue in active service to the Auxiliary. The objective of the Past Presidents Parley is to care for the disabled women veterans. The Department of California offers a Nursing Scholarship Application

through the Parley. This support is intended for a man or woman who is educationally working toward becoming a nurse.

What our Unit does:

We encourage students who are in nursing programs to apply for the scholarship. We also donate to Department PPP for the nursing scholarships.



## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations are simply a matter of establishing and maintaining goodwill. It is telling the general public of the value of the American Legion Auxiliary to the community and the country. Public Relations cover every kind of communication from personal contact in casual conversation, to speakers, and to carefully prepared news releases for the media. It is not a complicated job, but it is a vitally important one. It is a job for every member of the Auxiliary as well as the Public Relations Committee.

What our Unit does:

Luckily we have 2 newspapers that will publish our activities and events. The PR chairman or the program chairmen are often the writers of such articles.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

Once you signed your application for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary you will be voted on and you will be a member of a **UNIT**.

### **UNIT:**

- 1. You will take your obligation and receive your pin.**
- 2. Later, you will join other new members in an Initiation Ceremony (sometimes both are done together.)**
- 3. A UNIT is made up of various numbers of women and juniors, a Senior member is 18 or over (or married teens), and a Junior member is birth to 18.**
- 4. Your Unit consists of Officers by election or appointment and is under the guidance of the District.**
- 5. A Unit can't survive without the member's interest, attendance at meetings and other functions. Take an active part and be involved. Volunteer to assist with a**

**Committee to begin with if you aren't comfortable chairing a committee. Speak up and share your ideas. Chairmanships will come later when you are familiar with the programs.**

- 6. Try to attend meetings every month when possible, if not, you can still be involved and help out.**

## **DISTRICT**

- 1. Your Unit is part of a DISTRICT. (We are District 15)**
- 2. The District is comprised of all the Units in a certain area.**
- 3. The Officers of the District are elected as stated in the District Bylaws (Usually the President, 2 Vice-presidents, and a Junior member of the Finance Committee are elected, and all other Officers are appointed by the new President-elect.)**
- 4. At the District meeting (called a CAUCUS) in June of every year, the officers for the new year (beginning in July) are elected and there are two names proposed as candidates for Delegate and Alternate Delegate for the National Convention.**
- 5. UNIT Chairmen prepare year-end reports that must be sent to the District Chairmen in order for the Unit programs to be counted.**
- 6. DISTRICT meetings are a combination of sharing information and the distribution of plans and bulletins to make the organization function in a business-like manner.**

## **DEPARTMENT**

- 1. DEPARTMENT is the state in which you are a member, in this case it is the Department of California with headquarters in San Francisco, 205 13<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 1300, San Francisco, CA 94103-8365**
- 2. The Department of California is comprised of 29 Districts;  
The American Legion (men) has 30 Districts.**
- 3. The Executive Committee of this Department is made up of Department Officers, the 29 District Presidents, the Past Department Presidents, Department Chairmen of Standing Committees and the Veterans Hospital Representative. They are called to a meeting in January for mid-year reports and candidates for the June election are presented. The Executive Meeting is called prior to the opening of the convention and the entire above are requested to be present to vote on recommendations.**
- 4. As a paid-up member of this Department you will receive a paper called the *California Legionnaire*, and in it you will find a section called *Auxiliary News*. The cost of this paper is part of the dues you pay into your Unit. If you haven't received it in a few months after joining, ask your Unit Secretary to check on it for you.**

5. If you move (or change phone# or email), it is up to you to contact your Unit Secretary for the necessary changes to be made.
6. Your membership card number is the same each year; this number will be issued when you pay your dues and will show up on your identification card which you will receive either from the Membership Chairman or in the mail.

## NATIONAL

1. NATIONAL is comprised of the 58 Departments (all states and US possessions). The DEPARTMENTS are divided into groups known as Divisions. California is in the Western Division along with Alaska, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Hawaii and New Mexico. Each Division has an elected National Divisional Vice-president. This Vice-president is elected at a Divisional Caucus during the National Convention.
2. The Unit Chairman reports to the District Chairman. The District Chairman compiles her report and summary and sends it the Department Chairman. The Department Chairman compiles her report and summary and sends it to the Western Division Chairman. The Western Division Chairman compiles her report and it goes to the National Chairman for a report to the delegates at the National Convention.
3. The National Convention is held usually toward the end of August each year. Delegates to the National Convention and Alternates elected at the State Convention are the voting body for the Convention. All members are welcome at all meetings during the National Convention.
4. You will receive a *National American Legion Auxiliary News* magazine 4 times a year. This is included in you annual membership dues also.

More information is available in the AMERICAN AUXILIARY HANDBOOK, copies can be ordered through your Unit (there is a nominal cost), or by going online to:

[American Legion Auxiliary Department of California](#)

or to: [Legion.org/auxiliary](http://Legion.org/auxiliary).

### Contact Information:

ALA Department of California  
205 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 3300  
San Francisco, CA. 94103-2461  
415-861-5092

ALA National Headquarters  
8945 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN. 46260  
317-569-4500

Fax: 415-861-8365

Web site: [www.calegionaux.org](http://www.calegionaux.org)

Fax: 317-569-4502

Web site: [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org)

## REMEMBER

You are part of the **LARGEST** women's organization in the world, and this patriotic service organization is formed to protect the aims and purposes of The American Legion. As a member in a Unit, you pledge cooperation with your American Legion Post, but the Post doesn't dictate policy or procedures to any Unit.

YOU ARE A **UNIT** MEMBER, IN A **DISTRICT**, THAT IS PART OF A **DEPARTMENT**, AND IT ALL WORKS TOGETHER TO MAKE THE **NATIONAL** ORGANIZATION.

**WELCOME ABOARD  
WE ARE GLAD YOU'RE HERE  
HAVE FUN**

