

Governor Honors WWII Veterans



We want to thank Governor Pillen, NDVA Director John Hilgert, and everyone who has been supporting this recognition program. Photo credit to the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs.

2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the Allied victory and the end of World War II in Europe, or V-E Day. Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen has made it his goal this year to ensure those living WWII veterans in Nebraska are honored for their service. In doing this, each WWII veteran has been receiving a recognition medal and a certificate to commemorate their service. It is estimated that Nebraska has approximately 250 living WWII veterans. Through ceremonies at the veteran’s house, Nebraska Veterans Homes, local care centers, and at the State Capitol, many of these veterans have already been presented with their medal.

American Legion Commander Boyd Yochum and VFW Commander Kenneth Yount asked Governor Pillen if they would be able to help in any way, and the Governor took them up on that offer. Yochum and Yount attended ceremonies in Burwell, Broken Bow, and a few others and were able to present medals on the Governor’s behalf. Yochum said, “It is great to be able to work together with the VFW Commander Ken. We get along really well and its nice to present the medals to those veterans together.”

If you know of a living WWII veteran, please sign them up! More information, the eligibility requirements, and the application for the World War II Recognition Program can be found on the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs website at veterans.nebraska.gov/world-war-ii-recognition-program or you can contact them directly at 402-471-2458. There is also a Hometown Heroes certificate for any civilian who helped out during the WWII war effort back home. That information and application can also be found on that page.

From the Desk of the Department Adjutant

It’s a difficult pill to swallow saying “Goodbye” to so many people. My time as the Nebraska’s Department Adjutant has been eye-opening and I consider myself fortunate for having been given the opportunity to serve so many Nebraska veterans. Over the past 12 years, I’ve been blessed to have had the opportunity to travel all over Nebraska and meet the fine men and women who make up not only The American Legion, but also the Auxiliary and Sons. Every Post I visited had its own nuance. Each person I got to meet who made up those Posts added to the experience at District Tours, Whirlwinds, and District Conventions.

I know my leadership style is not for everyone, but that’s just me. I guess growing up as a son of a Senior Chief and then serving decades myself in the miliary, I just might have acquired a little bit of a standoff’ish and hard exterior. I’m sure others have their own words to describe me but we won’t go into all that right now. Be that as it may, I can walk out the door knowing the Department is better off now than when I came onboard. Processes are smoother and administrative changes put into place eased a big workload not just for me, but my wonderful staff.

Speaking of my staff. We’ve had some pretty big changes over the years. Longtime employees like Sandy Steinkamp, John Thompson, Brent Hagel-Pitt, and Sandy Rickerts all retired so a fresh new batch of people running the show at HQ’s. I want to give a big shoutout to Amanda and Eric. They do so much more than you can possibly fathom and do it from the heart... not the wallet. When I started, we had five, full-time employees plus an intern working baseball during the summer. As I write this, it is just Eric, Amanda and myself at the helm. Although we are expecting a new Assistant Adjutant to come onboard in June, I just want to thank both Amanda and Eric for doing more with less and never a complaint. They know precisely what needs to be done and work tirelessly to meet our objectives. But I caution the Department Executive Committee to head advice from the Finance Committee and Department Commander and do what is needed to fill the empty seats at the Department HQ’s office. Last thing anyone wants is these two people getting burnt out. So thanks to Eric and Amanda – having people like you beside me made my job so much easier. I wish you both nothing but the very best in all your future endeavors.

With that, to all of you reading this, I say so long, farewell and goodbye. It was a pleasure serving you these past many years.

Respectfully, Dave Salak



FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

The Nebraska Legionnaire

150 NW 40th St, Unit A

Lincoln, NE 68528

THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

2025 MEMBERSHIP GOAL: 22,300 MAY 15TH TOTAL: 19,990 - 89.28%

DISTRICT 1 - 94.16%	DISTRICT 2 - 91.79%	DISTRICT 11 - 91.01%	DISTRICT 8 - 90.48%	DISTRICT 5 - 90.08%
DISTRICT 13 - 89.69%	DISTRICT 7 - 89.28%	DISTRICT 12 - 89.27%	DISTRICT 9 - 89.13%	DISTRICT 4 - 89.13%
DISTRICT 6 - 88.64%	DISTRICT 10 - 88.44%	DISTRICT 15 - 87.24%	DISTRICT 3 - 81.34%	



Commander's Corner

Boyd Yochum
Department Commander





In the last year, it has been my good fortune to be your Department Commander. The really good things in life do not go on forever. Life just isn't like that.

We have Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, and Legion Riders that we call our Department of Nebraska Family. This family has, to the extent possible, permeated an overwhelming and electrifying attitude of success. Our accomplishments have been second to none in spite of a few obstacles that had to be overcome. What makes the Department of Nebraska the really great organization it is? We certainly did not receive any secret organizational formulas. We follow our Constitution & Bylaw's, and rules of order. All this

and so much more will remain with myself and my lovely wife, Jackie, for the rest of our lives. The real purpose of the American Legion must never be obscured.

We have announced that our Adjutant choice was promoting Assistant Adjutant Eric Martin. It is always good to promote from within. Our new Assistant Adjutant will be Dave Stander, who has been through the chairs at Post, County and District levels.

We made it to as many Districts as we could. Our Legislative session has kept us busy. The Nebraska Veterans Coalition has prioritized LB 693, the Predator Claim Shark bill. I remind everyone to use your County Veterans Service Officer for help with your VA Claims. They are trained, certified, paid by your County taxes, and there is no charge to veterans.

Boys State, Junior Law Cadet, and American Legion Baseball are coming real soon. It is always great to see young students participating in our programs.

Governor Pillen and Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs Director John Hilgert developed a wonderful program, giving medals to living World War II Veterans. There were 140,000 Nebraskans that served during the war, and over 200 living veterans with us today. So far, over 170 medals have been presented. We have been helping to present medals when the Governor can't make it. We thank all the local Posts, Auxiliary Units, and Legion Riders that have helped us make these presentations a huge event.

Jackie, President Amanda and I presented wreaths at the Truman Library, on President Harry Truman's birthday, which is also V.E. Day. President Truman said that V.E. Day was the best birthday present he ever received.

Several of our Legion Family attend spring meetings at National Headquarters.

Department Convention is just around the corner. Hospitality Rooms are up and running again. We look forward to every post having delegates at convention. This is where great information is passed on to our Posts, and election of leaders is held.

My sincerest thanks to our Department Officers, President Amanda, Detachment Commander Eldon, our full-time staff at Headquarters, and everyone that sacrificed in the too often impossible fulfillment of our mission. May God go with you always.

“Character, Values, & Integrity”



Chaplain's Thoughts

Steve Witmer
Department Chaplain



During May and June, two important events take place. Holy Week, and along with everything else that is going on in your daily lives and the Legion State Convention. Actually, deciding which is more important depends on your personal views.

On the day we call Palm Sunday, Jesus makes a triumphant entry in Jerusalem. People everywhere are singing praises to him and laying palm branches before him. The next day, Jesus runs the animal sellers and money changers out of the temple. Now he has offended a lot of people because he has ended their ability to make money by cheating others. The Jewish leaders are also looking for a way to do away with him because they fear he threatens their authority. Thursday, they prepare and celebrate Passover and the Last Supper. On Friday, Jesus stands trial six times, 3 before the Jewish leadership, and 3 in Roman courts. All charges were made up and witnesses lied. By the end of the day, he is crucified and buried. Sunday morning followers go to the tomb and find the 2-ton stone that was placed in the opening has been moved, and the body is gone.

In one week, Jesus goes from the most famous and loved person in the world by those he had dealt with personally, to the most hated by those who felt their life styles had been threatened. Read all about it in Matthew chapters 21 – 27.

Today, you turn on the news, and people all over the world who were, at one time, heralded and praised by the rich and powerful as great and wonderful people, are now being persecuted, tried on false charges and even jailed not because they did something wrong, but because these once wonderful people now have personal views that don't align with the rich and powerful.

As you have been going through your daily lives and preparing for everything you need to do, including preparations for the convention, ask yourselves which event is more important. As important as they both may seem, remember that one is earthly and temporary. The other is heavenly and eternal. Just as at Christmas, Jesus is still the reason for the season.

NEBRASKA AMERICAN LEGION

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If you would rather receive the Nebraska Legionnaire by email or view it online, send in this form. The email and online edition of the newspaper is usually available a week or so before the paper arrives in your mailbox. All we need from you is your email address.

☐ I no longer wish to receive a printed copy of the Nebraska Legionnaire.

Name: _____

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Mail this form to The American Legion, 150 NW 40th Street, Unit A, Lincoln, NE 68528, or you can email the information to awashburn@nebraskalegion.net



It's History

Jennifer Laux
Department Historian



American Legion Department of Nebraska History Word Search



Directions: Search up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the bolded, underlined words described below.

- June 1938 (87 years ago)**
- Kurt D. Meyer of **SEWARD** Post 33 has a record for regular attendance at post meetings that his comrades believe cannot be equaled anywhere in the U.S. or anywhere else. He has not missed a regular monthly meeting of his post in the past 10 years.
 - DUBOIS** Post 39 has the distinction of being the first Nebraska post to send in a check for its 1939 quota. The post this week forwarded a check to Department headquarters for 15 members for 1939, thus already “over the top” for next year.
 - William A. **DAFOE** of **TECUMSEH** was elected Cornhusker Boys State Governor in a spirited election held on June 13 at the Nebraska ag college in Lincoln. Dafoe, “Nationalist” party candidate defeated Robert Schwartz, “Federalist” party candidate, of Broken Bow by a vote of 157 to 91.
 - Grand Island Post 53 will sponsor the first statewide **ARCHERY** tournament July 11 and 12. Plans are to have a big shoot and to bring together all groups that have helped revive this ancient sport.
 - Hard hit by drought that almost paralyzed agricultural activities in recent years, members of **CARLETON** Post 329 felt it was impossible to erect a new building. So they obtained two unused box cars from Union Pacific and spent many hours tearing down, rebuilding and fastening their new post home to a permanent foundation. Converting the two box cars into a new post home is paying dividends in the form of increased support of the Legion program in that community.
 - A big **JUBILEE** was staged at **HASTINGS** on June 10 under auspices of the Legion Post 11. The event was to help raise money to finance the trip of the Hastings DRUM and BUGLE Corps to the National Convention in Los Angeles in September.
 - The **FRAZIER** Trophy, presented by Past Department Commander C.C. Frazier of Aurora, goes each year to the post carrying on the most work for boys, such as Boys Scout work, junior baseball or other activities making better boys. **COZAD** Post has won this trophy the past three years.

Maynard Jensen
Memorial Scholarship



The Nebraska American Legion selected 8 recipients of the Maynard Jensen Scholarship. The Maynard Jensen scholarship began in 1989 as “The American Legion Scholarship” and it was renamed in 1992 in memory of Past Department Commander Maynard Jensen of Aurora.

Jensen was a World War II Navy Veteran who served in the invasion of Normandy and then in Southern France. He served as the Nebraska American Legion Department Commander from 1971-72. Jensen also served on numerous Department Committees within The American Legion.

For the 37th consecutive year, the Nebraska American Legion has done its part in helping Nebraska students with scholarship money. The recipients of \$500.00 scholarships Bree Geschke of Seward, Hannah Beel of Johnstown, Emersyn Shanahan of Cedar Bluffs, Keila Dubas of Fullerton, Brookly Richardson of Central City, Liberty Johnson of Milligan, Jacob Bauman of Lincoln, and Lane Conway of Campbell.

Convention Agenda

Thursday, June 26	
1:00 p.m.	DEC Meeting
Friday, June 27	
8:30 a.m.	DEC Meeting
12:00–4:00 p.m.	Registration
1:00 p.m.	Joint Family Session
4:00 p.m.	Opening Legion Session
Saturday, June 28	
7:30–4:30 p.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m.	Legion Session #2
1:00 p.m.	Legion Reconvenes
5:00 p.m.	Catholic Mass
Sunday, June 29	
7:30–11:30 a.m.	Registration
8:00 a.m.	Joint Religious Service
9:00 a.m.	Legion Session #3

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust



Pictured (L to R) AGIA Senior Vice President Finance Andy Downen, Adjutant Dave Salak, and is LIT Chairman Braxton Bridges.

Nebraska’s LIT Trust Director, Adjutant Dave, just returned from his Trust Directors meeting with the staff of AGIA and all the other Trust Directors throughout the Nation. This year, the Department received its allocation totaling \$30,964. So how exactly does this allocation work?

In the past, many of us heard the allocation was attributed to the amount of Legionnaires that signed up for the free Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) policy provided by AGIA. This is not true! The AD&D policy is a free benefit for all Legionnaires but you must sign up. And to spice it up a little, that free benefit is now also available to Auxiliary and Sons members.

The allocation given to each Department is based on the number of products its members sign up for. Currently, AGIA has 14 very nice products which can be found at www.thelit.com/all-products page ranging from Lifeline Medical Alert Service to Dental and Health Insurance to Vision to Cancer Care to Stolen Identity (ID Resolve).

I encourage all Nebraska Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons to visit thelit.com/all-products and click on products that might appeal to you to learn more about what AGIA has to offer us.



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POW/MIA


Boyd Yochum
POW/MIA Liaison





S.A.L. Notes

Eldon Kramer
Detachment Commander



When Saigon fell 50 years ago, what happened to American Prisoners who had apparently been held back after the POW exchange in 1973?

On March 25, 1971, PFC Manuel R Puentes was a rifleman with B Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 23d Infantry Division (Americal), and member of a 12-man combat patrol operating in northwest Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam, a few miles south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ).

During the patrol, the team was ambushed by enemy forces. It was reported that PFC Puentes was the first to be hit. Puentes was seen wounded, moving under his own power seeking cover. The radio operator reported rapidly deteriorating conditions in which the patrol found itself. The patrol was forced to withdraw. Puentes was left behind. When soldiers were debriefed, they told investigators that “Puentes was not hurt bad” and that his condition was fair, he was trying to take cover behind rocks.

A reaction force made several attempts to reenter the battle site, but well entrenched communist forces blocked each attempt. When American personnel were finally able to enter the ambush site, they found no trace of the missing rifleman. Likewise, they found no sign of freshly dug graves. At the time the search effort was terminated, Manuel Puentes was listed as, “Died while missing in action (MIA), Body not recovered.”

Since the war ended in Southeast Asia, thousands of refugee reports have been received indicating that many Americans were still alive in captivity. Men like Manuel (Manny) Puentes gave all they had for the cause of freedom. Can we afford to turn our backs on these MIAs?

Recently, Manny’s brother Jose and nephew Diego traveled to Vietnam, trying to get more information about what happened to Puentes. During their trip to get answers, Jose and Diego saw where the war was fought, met former warriors, shook hands and saluted each other. They were able to get close to where Manny was last seen. There was a small makeshift memorial, and Jose spent a minute talking to his brother, and talking about family members. They think if Manny is still alive, he may be hiding, in captivity, or leading a different life. We don’t know.

In early 1975, after all American POWs were supposed to have returned home, communist deserters reported that Americans were still being held.

In 1991, during closed door Senate Select Committee on POW/MIAs, there were some records and information that the Committee could not get. WHY?

All records of American POW/MIAs since World War II are classified. Task Force Omega has respectfully asked our President to do what no president has done since WW I, and that is to sign an executive order declassifying all documents (without redaction) in government agencies that have any information on POW/MIAs that never returned from our wars, police actions, or where our military was operating in foreign countries.

Remaining families and the American people deserve to know what happened to our brave Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines. No one family should have to navigate classified files and not be able to know what happen to their service member who never returned.

Greetings from the Detachment of Nebraska Commander Eldon Kramer. Let us remember that membership is very important to our organization as it upholds the Four Pillars of The American Legion. Membership report as of May 15, 2025, shows us with a total of 6,441 members at 90.97%. Remember recruitment and retention of membership is very important! Visit mylegion.org, it has lots of information on there to help you with your job as an officer. Adjutants and Commanders let’s get membership rounded up. Well we did not get that Triple Nickel that I wanted this year, but let’s support that upcoming Commander to try and get that first Triple Nickel for the Detachment of Nebraska. I know it can be done fellas.

“Be The One” Remember that the Crisis Hotline is 988 and press 1, If you have a smartphone remember that you can download the “Be The One” app on your smartphone. Plan to do a Buddy Check throughout the year for your members.

Please remember to get those Consolidated Squadron Reports turned in to Headquarters.

The convention will be held June 26th through 29th in Columbus at the Quality Inn. The Detachment is having a family fun night Friday, June 27th at the Quality Inn from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and will be hosting its 3rd Annual Cornhole Tournament Saturday, June 28th. The entire Legion family is encouraged to join in and have fun. The Detachment Convention delegate and alternate list for the Squadrons went out in mid-May to all Adjutants. I hope to see many of you there.


My Commander’s project for the raised garden beds at the West Nebraska Veterans Home was a big success, making four garden beds out of 55-gallon barrels. You can see pictures on my Facebook page.



Gentleman it’s been a very big honor to be your Detachment Commander for the state of Nebraska for the last 2 years. Legion family, Sheryl and I would like to say thank you to everyone that supported us through this last year, it’s been really rough, with our house fire as well as the loss of my mother she was an Auxiliary member of Gering Unit 36 .

“ Participation leads to Education”

2025 Legacy Run Across Nebraska

2025 LEGACY RUN ACROSS NEBRASKA





1. First Day-July 11, 2025 (Leave United Veterans Club Grand Island 9:30 am)

- a. 1st fuel stop, **Lunch** Arnold, NE 131 miles Kearney’s Glenwood Corner has 88
- b. Fuel Stop, Hyannis, NE 121 miles Stapleton Sinclair has 91 Octane
- c. Night stop, Alliance, NE 56 miles Maverik’s has 91 Octane

2. Second Day-July 12, 2025 (Leave Alliance 8:30 am)

- a. 1st fuel stop, Scottsbluff, NE 56 miles Maverik has 91Oct
- b. 2nd fuel stop, **Lunch** Chadron, NE 116 miles Maverik has 91 Oct
- c. 3rd fuel stop, Gordon, NE 46 miles 91 Octane available
- d. Night stop, Valentine, NE 91 miles

3. Third Day-July 13, 2025 (Leave Valentine 9:00 am)

- a. 1st fuel stop, O’Neill, NE 112 miles 91 Oct
- b. 2nd fuel stop, Norfolk, NE 75 miles
- c. Vets Club Grand Island, NE 79 miles

Hotels: Alliance, NE Alliance Hotel & Suites \$102 with tax & Fees; Quality Inn \$132 with tax; Holiday Inn Express \$177 with tax; Sunset motel \$71 with tax; Value Stay Lodge \$65 with tax
Valentine, NE Trade Winds Motel \$143 with tax; Hamoney Inn & Suites \$152 with tax; Comfort Inn \$198 with tax; Super 8 \$133 with tax; Raine Motel \$116 with tax

The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation, National Commander James LaCoursiere's top fundraising priority, provides vital support for military and veteran parents in unexpected financial crises and support for service officers in their tireless efforts to obtain care and due benefits and opportunities of disabled veterans and families.

The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation was established in 1925 as the American Legion Endowment Fund. Since then, the donation-driven fund has helped millions of disabled veterans and military/veteran families facing unexpected, threatening challenges. The foundation is a separate tax-deductible nonprofit 501(c)3 organization with a dedicated board of directors and national steering committee. It was renamed The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation in 2019 to better reflect those it serves.

1. The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF) delivers needed aid for military and veteran parents who face unexpected financial hardships that threaten the stability of their homes. These one-time Temporary Financial Assistance grants are used to cover housing, utilities, food and other basic needs for families with minor children at home.

2. The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation also trains the organization’s department and post-level accredited veteran service officers who are continuously working more than 750,000 benefits claims for disabled veterans and their families, free of charge.

I’d like to request that ALR Chapters, financially capable, donate \$1,000.00 on behalf of their Chapters. Request donations from Posts, Units and Squadrons. All checks can be mailed to the Department Adjutant

with a note stating that the Donation if for the Legacy Run Across Nebraska so that a list of those donating can be made and presented to the National Commander. I will plan on walking on Stage at the National Convention in Tampa Bay, FL and present our Donations to the National Commander. For individual Riders, if you want a patch and Rocker, please logon to legion.org and search 2025 Legacy Run. Any donations are appreciated. Thank you in advance!

All donations will go to the Veterans and Children Foundation, which benefits Military Veterans and their families. Contact John Arias with any questions johnpaularias32@gmail.com or 308-352-6824.



Straight Talk

Levi Bennett
Detachment Service Officer



**Understanding Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC):
A Lifeline for Survivors of Veterans**

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a tax-free monthly benefit provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to eligible survivors of service members who died in the line of duty, or veterans whose death resulted from service-connected injuries or illnesses. This vital benefit aims to support surviving spouses, children, and even parents as they navigate the loss of their loved one and the financial challenges that may follow.

Who Is Eligible for DIC?

Surviving spouses may be eligible for DIC if they lived with the veteran continuously until their death (or were separated through no fault of their own) and meet one of the following conditions: married the veteran within 15 years of their service-connected illness or injury, were married for at least one year, or had a child with the veteran. Spouses who remarry may still be eligible if the remarriage occurred at age 57 or older after December 16, 2003, or at age 55 or older after January 5, 2021.

Dependent children can qualify for DIC if they are unmarried, not included in the surviving spouse’s compensation, and under 18 or under 23 if enrolled in school. Adopted children may also qualify under the same conditions.

Parents of deceased service members or veterans are also eligible, provided they are biological, adoptive, or foster parents and have incomes below a specified threshold. The foster relationship must have existed before the veteran’s final active-duty enlistment.

What Evidence Is Required?

To receive DIC, claimants must submit evidence proving the service member died in the line of duty or the veteran’s death was caused by a service-connected condition. Even a 0% service-connected rated condition may qualify one to receive DIC benefits. If the veteran’s death wasn’t directly caused by a service-connected illness; however, was rated as totally disabled for a specified period prior to death (100% service-connected disability rating for 10 continuous years before their death or rated 100% disabled for at least 5 continuous years from the date of discharge from active duty), survivors may still qualify.

What’s New in DIC Claims Processing?

Beginning in May 2025, the new “White-Glove” Survivor Outreach Team—based at the Philadelphia VA Regional Benefit Office, have been specially trained to work toward favorable outcomes for DIC claims. The VA has introduced further automation of DIC claims. This automation role has increased to over 1,000 DIC-related claims processed daily.

How to Apply for DIC Benefits

The first step in applying for DIC is connecting with an accredited Veteran Service Officer (VSO). VSOs are trained to guide applicants through the process, including completing the VA Form 21P-534EZ, which covers applications for DIC, survivor pension, and accrued benefits. Survivors can find local service officers by calling (402) 471-2458 or visiting veterans.nebraska.gov/cvso.

For those grappling with the loss of a loved one who served, DIC represents both recognition and support. These benefits ensure that the sacrifices of veterans and their families do not go unacknowledged.

**Edgar J. Boschult
Memorial Scholarship**



The Nebraska American Legion has selected five recipients of the 2025 Edgar J. Boschult Memorial Scholarship. The Edgar J. Boschult Memorial Scholarship is awarded to full-time students in the University of Nebraska system that are enrolled in military science courses or to honorably discharged veterans attending the University of Nebraska full-time.

The Edgar J. Boschult Scholarship was created in 1947 in memory of Edgar J. Boschult. Boschult was a veteran of World War I and Past Department Commander of the Nebraska American Legion. Boschult returned to serve his country in World War

II and was killed in action on November 8, 1944.

The recipients of \$500.00 Scholarships are Rigel H. Rowe, Sacramento, CA UNMC (USAF ROTC); Gabrielle L. Martinez, Lincoln, NE, UNL (Navy ROTC/Marine Corps Option); Emily O. Augustin, Shelby, NE, UNL (Army ROTC/National Guard); Tyson Klinger, Lincoln, NE, UNL (USAF ROTC); and Chloe G. Johnston, Lincoln, NE UNL (Army ROTC).

“Legionnaire in the Spotlight” is a new article in each issue. Please send in submissions to afwashburn@windstream.net or mail them to Headquarters. Please limit them to 800 words and two pictures. Please call Amanda at 402-464-6338 with any questions.

Membership Minute
Steve Bartos, Chairman

As the department convention approaches, it’s a good time to take a fresh look at membership. While we all know that the 2025 membership campaign extends through the end of December, we also know that --- realistically ---- we’re probably not going to pick up a significant number of additional memberships. Keep trying, though. Let’s at least crack the 90% mark.

A year ago, we were looking at some issues that were going to impact membership numbers for a few years into the future. A \$5 national dues increase was going into effect on July 1, and a likely \$5 department dues increase was also being contemplated (and eventually adopted). Historically, dues increases have resulted in a membership decline; but we just had no way to predict how much.

In this day and age, \$10 probably shouldn’t be considered a deal-breaker for someone to choose not to renew. The \$10 dues increase that resulted in Nebraska was probably used as an “excuse” not to renew ---- but, it really shouldn’t have been a reason. We need to remember that the price of a membership increased by \$10.00, but the value of that membership is still well worth it. The 2024 members who did not renew need to be reminded of that.

Nebraska was not alone in experiencing a higher-than-normal decrease in renewals. Nationally, just about every department fell short of its expectations,

A second occurrence that impacted our membership was the fact that a Nebraska dues increase could not be decided upon until we met for our convention. The decision was made to defer our first dues notice until October so that all posts could update their individual dues amounts and have them correctly shown on the dues notices mailed out by the national headquarters. Our first notice was delayed to October --- and was delayed a little more because of some problems in Indianapolis.

It was a double-whammy. The dues increase caused some members to choose not to renew. Missing the July notice, we were already chasing the pack when we got into the race. We can look forward to doing much better this year. The first 2026 dues notice from Indianapolis is scheduled for mailing during the first week of July. Let’s be ready to process some memberships --- and online renewals are encouraged. The Early Bird drawing will return to September --- where it belongs.

In regard to online renewals, a resolution will be presented at the department convention to mandate that any individual post’s dues cannot be less than the sum of current state and national dues. There are a few posts that still subsidize a portion of their members’ state and national dues, but so doing prevents members of those posts from being able to renew online. We should make sure that ALL members who choose to do so can renew online, so I wholeheartedly support this change.

Posts that wish to continue subsidizing their members’ state and national dues can continue doing so. They just need to give the subsidy directly to the members who pay online instead of paying it to the department when they transmit dues.

I close with a few thoughts about our focus. For the last few years, it seems that the national organization has put emphasis on maintaining a renewal rate of 90% or more. Well, if 90% is success, then success means we declined by 10% --- sort of.

National has tried to establish department goals at about 3% more than the current membership in June or July. However, what they fail to publicize is that the base number they use includes those paid members who died throughout the year after paying their dues. If we need to increase 3% but lost 7% to death like my post did, then we have the need of recruiting 10%.

I don’t know the total solution, but we need to start putting more emphasis on recruiting in the coming years. A lot more emphasis.

Have a nice June.

**National Convention in Tampa,
Florida**

The 2025 National Convention will be held August 22 - 28 at the Barrymore Hotel in Tampa, FL. Delegates should plan to arrive Saturday the 23rd and depart Thursday the 28th (late afternoon). Rooms are \$132.48 including tax. Other Departments staying at the hotel are California and Massachusetts. Legion HQ’s, Aux HQ’s and SAL HQ’s are at other hotels. Please call the Department for more information @ 402-464-6338

Crete Post 147 Sponsors “FLAGS FOR CRETE”
By Post Commander Thomas Parker



Since 2021, Post147 has carried out a community patriotism campaign named “Flags for Crete”. This program has answered several needs of both the Post and the community. Among these are the need for the post to generate income to support it’s giving to the community, our youth and of course veterans causes. Additionally, it provides the entire community with a sense of patriotism at key times during the year.

The program is structured around a subscription basis whereby both businesses and individual homeowners “subscribe” to this program which places a 3’X5’ American flag curbside in front of their property. Many merchants and some homeowners even purchase multiple subscriptions. Currently, flags are placed 5 times per year, covering 7 national

occasions. These include Memorial Day (weekend), Flag Day, July 4th (weekend), Labor Day (weekend, and the flags remain displayed through 9/11) and the 10-day period from Election Day to Veterans Day.

Each subscriber pays for this service on an annual basis. The Post purchases, maintains and places all infrastructure including the flags, poles and a ground sleeve receptacle that is installed permanently on the property. All flags are placed exactly 4 feet from the curb which yields the effect that the streets are lined with the flags when they are out on display.

In 2021, 44 flags went on display for the first time for Veterans Day. Since then, the program has grown to over 260 flags that appear all over town. Lots of feedback tells us that the people of the community love the program and look forward to seeing them each time they are placed. Individuals are now contacting the Post to join the program, so basically, it has become self-perpetuating and continues to grow each time the flags go out.

Funds are used to support our scholarship giving and we have become one of the largest scholarship donors for the high school. We use funds to sponsor multiple Boys and Girls State candidates, the Junior Law Academy and other youth programs. We have also donated to various state and national veterans programs and a major contribution is also granted to our local American Legion Baseball operations.

If your Post is interested in this program for your community, feel free to contact the Commander of Post 147 and we will furnish details on how this works, the record-keeping that is necessary and how the infrastructure is handled. It is a great funds provider, patriotic and loved by the community, but it does entail significant planning and work to carry it out.



Crofton Post 128 presented a World War II medal and a special plaque, made by Post members to Gerry Schumacher. Pictured (L to R) Ed Kleinschmit, Francis Guenther, Gerry Schumacher, seated, Jim Hames, Bob Haberer, Commander Bob Suing, and Steve Lammers.



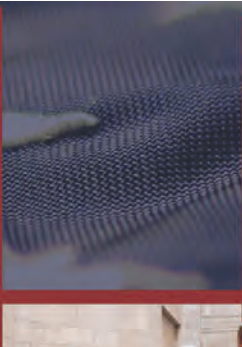
Central City Post 6 presented a World War II medal to Dwayne “Shorty” Hahn at their Legion Birthday Supper. Pictured (L to R) Central City Mayor Tim Bolling and Dwayne “Shorty” Hahn.



Grand Island Post 53 presented certificates of continuous membership to its members. Pictured left (L to R) Commander Brian Rapp and James Brettmann, 50 years. Pictured right (L to R) Commander Brian Rapp and Dean Schuchman, 50 years. Certificates were also presented to Carl Sperling, 60 years, and William Cooper, Dennis Edwards, Dale Lewis, Donald Lindsey, and Willie Skala, 50 years.



Petersburg Post 334 presented a certificate for 70 years of continuous membership to Fred Schrage. Pictured (L to R) Commander Hank Thieman and Fred Schrage.



NEBRASKA
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VETERANS' AFFAIRS



CONTINUING
TO HONOR
NEBRASKA'S
WORLD WAR II
VETERANS.
HELP SPREAD THE
WORD ABOUT OUR
RECOGNITION
PROGRAM.

VETERANS.NEBRASKA.GOV/WW2



Ackerman, Bruce, Fairbury, Korea
Anderson, James R., Ashland, Vietnam
Apfel, Loren, K., Norfolk, Korea
Armstrong, Richard, L., Newcastle, Vietnam
Arthur, Charles, Rushville
Ash, Dean, Arcadia, Korea
Austin, Don, Pleasant Dale, Vietnam
Bain, Robert, Curtis, Vietnam
Bare, James, E., Papillion
Barrett, Marvin, Clearwater, Korea
Barton, Jack, R., Grand Island, Vietnam
Bebbe, Joseph, T., Jr., Omaha, Vietnam
Behrens, Donald, Norfolk, Korea
Bell, James T., Fairbury
Bennett Dick, Elwood, Vietnam
Bertrand, Richard, E., Pleasant Dale, Korea
Blanchard, Robert, Ceresco, Vietnam
Blythe, William K., Lincoln, WWII
Bonness, Bryce, W., Lincoln, Korea
Brown, Roger, A., Culbertson, Vietnam
Brueggemann, Robert, L., Western, Vietnam
Brunkhorst, Mickey, A., Wauneta, Vietnam
Bumgarner, Carl, Merna, Vietnam
Burda, Leo, J., Primrose, Vietnam
Burg, Marlo, Waverly, WWII
Calkin, Everett, D., Curtis
Casselman, Roger, A., Norfolk, Vietnam
Clark, Eric, W., Weeping Water, Lebanon/Grenada
Covert, Ernest, R., Pleasant Dale, Grenada/Lebanon
Crabb, James, C., Wauneta, Korea
Dahlgren, Gordon, E., Wakefield, Korea
Danner, Harry, T., Plattsmouth, Korea
Debevoise, Lee, R., Friend, Vietnam
Duponcheel, Richard, Arnold, Vietnam
Eckert, Karl, W., Stromsburg, Vietnam
Eischeid, Lawrence, T., Omaha, Vietnam
Eisenhart, Russell, Culbertson, WWII
Elrod, Robert, Fremont, Vietnam
Elston, Marvin, C., Columbus, WWII
Fassnacht, Ramer, Hampton, Korea
Finch, Russel, Alliance, Korea
Fischman, Leonard, Gretna, Korea
Fleischman, Morris, Newcastle, Korea
Fletcher, Ronny, C., Alliance
Frede, Steve B., Lincoln, Vietnam
Frye, Dietrick P., Hallam, Korea
Fullerton, Dale, L., Cody Kilgore, Korea
Gaeth, Dean H., Kearney, Korea
Gentzler, Ronald E., Omaha, WWII
Gerlach, Wayne, Cowles, WWII
Gibbs, Howard W., Ponca, WWII
Gochanour, Terry, Blair, Vietnam
Godeker, James, Sutherland, Korea
Goeden, Marvin, J., Crofton, Korea
Granfield, Tim, Hampton, SAL
Gray Steve, York, Vietnam
Gregory, Charles L., Cozad, Korea
Haecker, Dale H., Beatrice, Vietnam
Hagerty, Edgar, W., Millard, Korea

Hanna, Frank, A., Millard, Vietnam
Hansen, Gary, A., Millard, Vietnam
Hansen, Larry, Fremont, Vietnam
Haussler, Doran, D., Edison, Vietnam
Hays, James, L., Beatrice, WWII
Herbolsheimer, D. L. Pierce, Vietnam
Herron, Eugene, Stuart, Vietnam
Heyen, Leonard, Ruskin, Korea
Hinkle, John, R., Millard, WWII
Hoffman, Gary E., Atkinson, Vietnam
Hoffmann, Donald M., Pierce, Korea
Holeman, Eugene, I, Arcadia, Korea
Holly, Michael, D., Lincoln, Vietnam
Hughes, Charles, E., Omaha, Vietnam
Jareo, David, L., Papillion, Lebanon/Grenada
Jenkins, Duane I., Homer, WWII
Johnson, Harold D., Alliance, WWII
Johnson, Lyle, Gretna, Vietnam
Kavan, Norman A., Morse Bluff, Korea
Kazos, Nicholas, Lincoln, Korea
Kelly, Duane E., Hardy, Vietnam
Kenner, James, R., Jr, Hebron, WWII
Kilgore, Owen, Grand Island, WWII
Knapp, Donald, Saint Paul, Korea
Knebel, Donald, E., Atkinson, Korea
Knecht, Vernon C., Homer, Korea
Knopik, Richard, Fullerton, WWII
Kolm, Ronald, Fremont, Vietnam
Kratky, Edward, Jr., Prague, Vietnam
Kuta, Alvin J., Humphrey, Korea
Lacey, Charles L., Wahoo, Vietnam
Leech, Terry, G., Nebraska City, Vietnam
Lowery, Wendell, A., Davenport, Korea
Luchsinger, Marvin, Columbus, Korea
Mackrill, Ronald, Kearney, Vietnam
Malena, Franklin, J., Atkinson, Korea
Marsh, Allen, J., Gretna, Vietnam
Martinez, Tobias A. Sr., South Omaha, Korea
McDonald, Paul, S., Lincoln, Korea
McManigal, Richard D., Creighton, Korea
Menke, Melvin, Superior, Vietnam
Messersmith, Dick, Holdrege, Korea
Meyer, Gaylord, Yutan, WWII
Meyer, Marvin B., Minden, Korea
Miller, Voyle D., Ceresco, Korea
Mueller, Eugene D., Deshler, Vietnam
Mussman, Verlan, Ruskin, Korea
Nun, John F., Gretna
Odell, Jamey, Friend, Vietnam
Olmsted, Roger, A., Edison, Vietnam
Othling, Le Roy, Deshler, Korea
Otto, Marlin R., Ceresco
Overton, Warren M., Lincoln, Korea
Palczynski, Edward D., Millard, Korea
Palmer, Harold, J., Lyons, Korea
Palmer, Walter F., Millard, SAL
Parent, Ted III, H., Hallum, Lebanon-Grenada
Pavel, Leland, D., Lincoln, Vietnam
Peters, Kenneth L., Auburn, Korea

Peterson, Blaine, Gothenburg, WWII
Piller, Norman, Bellwood, Korea
Polacek, Robert, J., Weston, WWII
Powers, Russell M., Dannebrog, Vietnam
Reisen, Charles D., Ashland, Korea
Richardson, James, A., Cowles, SAL
Rickett, Arthur, D., Newcastle, Vietnam
Romans, Ronald, C., Yutan, Vietnam
Ross, Delmar, L., Arcadia, Vietnam
Rutt, Jerry, J., Campbell, Korea
Schmidt, Fred C., Deshler, Vietnam
Schnell, Jack, L., Lincoln, Vietnam
Schroeder, Elmer, W., Millard, Korea
Schroeder, Erhard, G., Madison
Schroeder, Wayne, Grand Island, Korea
Schrum, Fred C., Ashland, Vietnam
Schwedhelm, Kay, Pender, Korea
Sellon, Joseph L., Randolph, Korea
Shipferling, Wayne, D., York, Vietnam
Shrum, Fred, C., Ashland, Vietnam
Sigerson, Wilson Jr., Nebraska City, WWII
Smith, Richard P., York, Vietnam
Soulriere, Kenneth, Norfolk, Vietnam
Stamp, Winfred, J., Yutan, WWII
Stegman, LeRoy, Grand Island, Korea
Stillmock, Robert, G., Omaha, WWII
Stork, Lee, Arlington, Vietnam
Sullivan, Miles, E., Lincoln, Korea
Sunderman, Larry W., Pender, Vietnam
Swanson, Jeff, T., Bassett, SAL
Swanson, Leland E., Ceresco
Swenson, Harry, J., Greenwood, Vietnam
Tabor, Douglas, H., Lincoln, Korea
Taylor, Burt, Lincoln, Vietnam
Thompson, Ronald, Superior, Vietnam
Thulin, Tony, Oxford, Korea
Tielke, John, Stuart, Korea
Timoney, James, Dwight, Korea
Titus, Stephen J., Lincoln, Vietnam
Topil, Le’Roy, A., Shelby, Korea
Trofholz, Fred Sr., Papillion, Korea
Tuning, James, E., Arcadia, Vietnam
Vanderklisch, Robert, Morrill, Vietnam
Vasek, Richard, Jackson, Korea
Vrtiska, Ronald J. Beatrice, Vietnam
Walton, David, Franklin, Korea
Weltruski, Ron, Sr., Primrose, Vietnam
West, Ed, Norfolk, Vietnam
White, William, G., Grand Island, Korea
Wichman, Leon E., Pender, Korea
Willis, Jim, Aurora, SAL
Wollenburg, Alfred, E., DeWitt, Vietnam
Woltemath, Lorin, Pender, Korea
Woods, William, D., Papillion, Vietnam
Yates, Everett, P., Omaha, Korea
Young, Roger W., Gordon, Vietnam
Zarp, Dennis E., Millard, Vietnam

Events Calendar

June

- 1 - 7 Boys State
- 19 Juneteenth - Office Closed
- 23 - 24 Boys Junior Law Cadet - Grand Island
- 25 - 26 Girls Junior Law Cadet - Grand Island
- 26 - 27 DEC Meeting - Columbus
- 27 - 29 Department Convention - Columbus

July

- 4 Independence Day- Office Closed
- 18 - 26 Boys Nation - Washington D.C.
- 24 - 26 Junior Shooting Sports - Hillsdale, MI

August

- 7 - 9 National Membership Workshop - Indianapolis
- 14 - 19 American Legion World Series - Shelby, NC
- 22 - 29 National Convention - Tampa, FL

Check www.nebraskalegion.net under the meetings tab for upcoming National, State, and District events.

Sons of The American Legion Membership As of May 15, 2025

District	2024 Members	2025 Members
1	310	295
2	621	546
3	234	235
4	357	338
5	152	134
6	1,367	1,286
7	741	755
8	836	831
9	307	289
10	356	284
11	1,111	920
12	236	254
13	126	125
15	135	133
Total	6,889	6,426



District 1 Commander Gary Sones presented the District 1 Tom Nollette Membership Award to Valentine Post 90. Pictured (L to R) District Commander Gary Sones and Adjutant Donald Nelsen.



Omaha Post 1 presented Quilts of Valor to five women veterans who all served at the 82nd Field Hospital. Pictured (L to R) Terri Russell, Geri Thomas, Vicky Ross, Theresa Andersen, Adjutant Ruthanne Dimmock-Revers.



Niobrara Post 224 presented a certificate for 50 years of continuous membership to Neil Olson. Pictured (L to R) Commander James Scott and Neil Olson.



South Omaha Post 331 presented a World War II recognition medal and certificate to Marion Griffith Jr. Pictured (L to R) Adjutant Lynn Bergman, Marion Griffith Jr., Commander Mark Drier, and NDVA Director John Hilgert.



Woodlake Post 202 presented a certificate for 60 years of continuous membership to Korean veteran Ralph McIntosh. Presenting the certificate were Post 202 Commander Joe Kreycik, and Broken Bow Post 126 Commander Roger Wenquist. Pictured (L to R) Don Scofield, McIntosh's nephew, Kim Scofield, Connie Lentz, McIntosh's daughter, Post 202 Commander Joe Kreycik, Ralph McIntosh, Post 126 Commander Roger Wenquist, and Sue Simpson, McIntosh's niece.



Sidney Post 17 presented certificates for continuous membership to their members. Pictured top (L to R) Dennis Tuzicka, Dennis Nienhueser, 50 years, and Commander Les Larsen. Pictured bottom (L to R) Commander Les Larsen and Donald Benisek, 60 years.



Genoa Post 144 hosted a World War II recognition ceremony for Bennie Rinkol. Pictured (L to R) Bennie Rinkol and Governor Jim Pillen.



Dodge Post 122 presented certificates for continuous membership to their members. Pictured (L to R) Commander Jerry Schulte, Ken Tomasek, 50 years, and Ray Harms, 50 years. A 70 year certificate was also presented to Jerry Ortmeier.



Table Rock Post 289 presented a World War II recognition medal and certificate to Kenneth Eichenberger. Pictured back row (L to R) Jerry Vrtiska, Adjutant Gregg Clement, Mike Puhalla, Commander Tom Hildebrand, and Ed Raper. Pictured front row (L to R) County VSO James Duff, Kenneth Eichenberger, and Bob Blecha.



Kearney Post 52 presented awards to two University of Nebraska-Kearney ROTC cadets. Pictured (L to R) Lawrence Miller, Military Excellence Award, Tom McCoy, Commander Jason Baker, Mark Dissmeyer, and Senneca Hertel, Scholastic Excellence Award.



The Central Sandhills American Legion Riders presented certificates of honor to the veteran residents at the Burwell and Ord nursing homes. They also presented a World War II recognition medal and certificate to Dale Sheldon. Pictured top (L to R) Dale Sheldon and Chapter Director Brian Waterman. Pictured bottom is the Central Sandhills American Legion Riders with Commander Boyd Yochum.



Broken Bow Post 126 hosted a World War II recognition ceremony for Wayne Mills. Pictured (L to R) Military Order of Purple Heart Department Adjutant Tom McBride, Wayne Mills, seated, VFW Department Commander Kenneth Yount, Military Order of Purple Heart Department Finance Officer Charles Gill, and Department Commander Boyd Yochum.



Ashland Post 129 presented certificates and medals to the Outstanding Boy and Girl in 8th grade. Pictured (L to R) Blake, Commander Kade Bussen, and Felecia.

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT - AMANDA WASHBURN



I don't know about you, but 2025 sure is flying by! I can't believe that in just a few weeks we will be in Columbus for the Department Convention --- and that I will be hitting the gavel to close my term as Department President. Speaking of Department Convention, it will be held in Columbus at the Quality Inn, June 26-29. The schedule is in the paper this month. We would love to see you at any of the sessions --- or the whole weekend if you are able. National President Trish Ward will be in attendance, and she will be doing a presentation on Saturday morning. Let us know if you have any questions.

Membership is always an important topic in our organization, and this is a reminder that members who were not paid by January 31 are delinquent. There are many programs that require three years of membership, so please don't be the reason a member is not eligible to apply. As of May 10, we are in 6th place in our Division at 87.24% of our goal. We currently have 38 Units at 100% or better, and I am so incredibly proud of them all!

I am asking that all units reach out to their members to remind them to pay their dues. Sometimes, all it takes is personal contact with the member for them to remember why they joined in the first place or that they forgot to send in their check. If you need any assistance with membership or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Department Secretary Roxanne, Membership Chair Loree, or me, --- and we will do our best to get you the answer.

I know each President says it, but I was blessed with the best Commanders this past year. I want to say a huge thank you to Commander Boyd and Commander Eldon for their support and friendship this year. We worked great together as a team supporting the American Legion Family.

I couldn't have asked for a better year, and I want to say a special thank you to all of our wonderful members who made it successful and memorable. I have

thoroughly enjoyed my travels, and I am looking forward to a few more exciting events and visits before it is over.

I have been able to meet so many members and hear the wonderful things that our members are doing. I know that Nebraska has a special group of members, and we are doing great things to support our veterans, active-duty military, and our children. It is really important that we report these activities on the year-end report and let everyone know what we are doing!

Again, thank you for making this past year one of the best of my life! I am so blessed to be part of the ALA family and to have had this opportunity.

Amanda Washburn
Department President



Nebraska was recognized for being a Gold Level Donor this year at the donor reception at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival held in Indianapolis, Indiana. Pictured (l to r) are: Kenneth Bicha, Leslie O'Shea, National President Trish Ward, Department President Amanda Washburn, National Leadership Chair Barb Washburn, Dennis Linn, and Sean Connolly.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S OFFICIAL VISIT IN JUNE



Trish Ward is a member of John P. Hand American Legion Auxiliary Unit 250 in Louisburg, KS. She is eligible for membership through her father, John M. Brusati (U.S. Army, World War II) and her grandfather, Edmund S. Lindberg (U.S. Navy, WWII).

Trish has served in several unit, district, and department-level positions and has served as chair of many National committees. She has served as Central Division National Vice President; National Executive Committee member for Kansas; American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board of Directors

member, and on the ALA Centennial Strategic Plan Team.

The Ward family is a proud American Legion Family that shares a passion for engaging in activities that support the mission of the Legion Family. Trish's husband, Steve, is currently National Executive Committeeman for the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Kansas. Together, Trish and Steve bring children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to The American Legion Family experience.

Trish recently retired from Lumen, a global multinational technology and IT company, where she served as a Senior Lead Project Manager. Since retiring, she now focuses on volunteering for The American Legion Family and spending time on her hobbies --- which include studying parliamentary law and Robert's Rules of Order. Trish possesses bachelor's degrees from both the University of Southern California and the University of Kansas. She is also a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

SECRETARY NOTES

We are not far from the completion of this fiscal year. Fun stuff packed into these last 2 months.

Did you know Nebraska has two \$5,000 National Scholarship winners this year? Children of Warriors Scholarship winner Natalia Wiezorek of North Platte and Spirit of Youth Scholarship winner Madelyn Loecker of St. Helena. Congrats to both of you.

Are you going to volunteer at Girls State? Pay attention to emails and mail if you have signed up.

Have you sent your report for the Convention Annual? I guess everyone will know when it is printed.

Have you considered volunteering for an onsite committee for the convention? Please call to let me know --- I have a list of possibles.

Have you sent your delegate names to headquarters? Those received will get pre-printed name tags --- otherwise it's write your own.

Are you a current District President? If so, you need to attend the DEC meeting on Thursday, June 26 at 2:30 pm. If you are an outgoing President, it will be the last one you will attend.

Are you going to begin your second year as District President or are you an incoming new President? Either way you need to be in attendance on Saturday afternoon for installation practice and Installation of 2025-2026 Officers on Sunday morning. You also need to stay for the Post DEC meeting immediately following the closure of the Convention. The incoming president will lay out her expectations for the year, you will receive membership instructions and assignments for the upcoming year, and I'll have much needed paperwork for the Department Office. (Love that word paperwork, don't cha').

This goes for incoming chairman for the 2025-2026 year as well. Do not say you can't stay. You've accepted the responsibility, and it starts now.

Thanks to all the Units that sent reports this year. Great Job, Members!

I'm sure there is much more I should be putting down in writing here, but I really hope this is a great convention to cap off a very good year for our President Amanda Washburn. Thanks so much, Amanda for everything you've accomplished. You made it a fun year.

Roxanne Hiatt
Secretary

DEPT. CONVENTION AGENDA

June 26-29, 2025
Quality Inn, Columbus, NE

Thursday, June 26	
2:30 – 5:00 p.m.	DEC Meeting
Friday, June 27	
9:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Auxiliary session
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Joint session
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.	Auxiliary session
7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	VA&R Meeting
Saturday, June 28	
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	National President Trish Ward
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Auxiliary session
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Children & Youth Luncheon
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Auxiliary session
4:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Candidate Reception
Sunday, June 29	
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	Religious Service
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Auxiliary Session
11:30 – 12:00 p.m.	Post-DEC meeting



This quilt of valor was presented to Denny Lane, a member the Newport American Legion Post # 227 by Brenda Dobrovolny on April 11, 2025. Brenda is a member of the Newport American Legion Auxiliary Unit # 227. Picture (L to R) are Emily Luetkenhau, Chad Lane, Brenda Dobrovolny, Dennis Lane, and Dawn Kastens.



Yutan American Legion Auxiliary Unit 262 presented Allen Arp with a Quilt of Valor for his 5 years of military service and 60 years of service to American Legion Post 262. Pictured are Allen Arp with his wife and their children and Auxiliary President Diane Fchulz.



The Washington State Woodwind Quintet, an ensemble of the Navy Band Northwest, performed at the Lincoln VA Clinic on April 2, 2025.

FUN SATURDAY MORNING SPONSORED BY ALA UNIT #236

April is Children/Youth month for Legion Posts and Auxiliary Units. Unit #236 American Legion Auxiliary in Wolbach held a Fun Saturday Morning on April 12th at the Legion in Wolbach for students K-6th grade, with three home-schooled families also included. Unit President Jan Steenson made invitations, and they were given to the Wolbach elementary students by their classroom teachers. Home-schooled invitations were mailed to one family and delivered to the homes of two families that live in Wolbach.

The event consisted of 21 activity centers that varied in difficulty but were geared to ages K-6th grade. The event started at 10 o'clock and concluded at 11:15. The kids put the activity in its container, and the tables were cleared to play Bingo.



Kearney Unit 52 President Denise Fenster presented a 10-Year Continuous Membership Certificate to her granddaughter, Harley Schrock, at Post 52's American Legion Birthday Party. Denise and Harley are 4th and 6th-generation Auxiliary members.



Barbara Dunse received her 50-year continuous membership certificate at the Ohiova Franklin 193's Legion's Birthday celebration in March. Vicki Ozenbaugh presented Barb with her certificate.

Vicki Cyboron called bingo numbers, and prizes were awarded to winners. Regular Bingo was played with two black outs also being called.

Bingo ended at 11:45, and children lined up --- youngest to oldest --- to get lunch, which consisted of a hot dog/bun, potato chips, deviled eggs, a choice of chocolate or white milk or water, and chocolate chip bars. An ice cream bar topped off the meal. Following the meal, clean-up prizes were selected for the games played earlier in the morning. The morning event concluded before 1:00

There were thirty-three children who attended the event, and all reported having a GREAT time. Our unit is looking forward to having another event in honor of Children/Youth month next year.



Remember to send your assignments a couple weeks before the month they are due.							
2025-2026 CENTERPIECE AND TRAY FAVOR ASSIGNMENTS							
Month	Grand Island VA Med Center 10 Centerpiece	Central NE Veterans Home 215 Tray Fav	Bellevue Eastern NE VA Home 24 Centerpiece	Norfolk VA Home 20 Centerpiece	Western NE VA Home 13 Centerpiece	Western NE VA Home 90 Tray Fav	Omaha VA Med Center 75 Tray Fav
June	#126 Broken Bow	#95 Curtis	#222 Shubert	#175 Jackson	#312 Broadwater	#312 Broadwater	#222 Shubert
July	#95 Curtis	#209 Franklin	#283 Platte Center	#80 Humphrey	#301 Dalton	#301 Dalton	#27 Beatrice
Aug.	#251 Arcadia	#218 Exeter	#266 Bennington	#302 Leigh	#7 Alliance	#36 Gering	#266 Bennington
Sept.	#11 Hastings	#290 Elwood	#353 Louisville	#84 Columbus	#36 Gering	#36 Gering	#222 Shubert
Oct.	#147 Crete	#199 Cambridge	#27 Beatrice	#357 Brunswick	#7 Alliance	#7 Alliance	#27 Beatrice
Nov.	#257 Eustis	#209 Franklin	#243 Plymouth	Private Donor	#17 Sidney	#17 Sidney	#362 Elkhorn
Dec.	#310 Gibbon	#288 Farnam	#27 Beatrice	#327 Bellwood	#7 Alliance	#36 Gering	#27 Beatrice
Please read the ABC book under "Service to Veterans." Some facilities have restrictions as to what you can use for decorations. If you have any questions, please contact the facilities contact person.							
Service to Veterans Chair: Maria Atterberry, 704 Rochelle St, Elwood, NE 68937 · 308-325-2863							

PAPILLION COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER

Picture your veteran friend or family member who has been in the hospital for a serious illness, surgery, or declining mental health. They cannot immediately go home by themselves or are waiting for another VA Facility opening (assisted living or intermediate nursing care). Veterans may need respite, skilled rehabilitation/nursing, or palliative/hospice care.

When this happens in your life, notify your County Service Officer or the VA's Medical Center Social Worker to enroll the patient for the Papillion VA Community Living Center (CLC). (Another Community Living Center is located in Grand Island.) Because a CLC is a "1-B High Complexity" facility, the patient will also need the primary care physician's order for this medical service.

The mission of a CLC is to restore each veteran to his or her highest level of well-being. It is also to prevent declines in health and to provide comfort care. Their stay may be under 2 weeks to over 1 year, if necessary.

American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) volunteers and donors can make a quality impact on this service for veterans. There are friendly, private areas for visiting; and, during warm weather, the outside healing garden. Veterans love BINGO prizes and other treat opportunities, as we all do. ALA can help with their artistic "Recreation Therapies" and other social activities, which are very underfunded by VA cuts. Yet, they still participate in the ALA/VA Veterans Creative Arts Receptions.

The two-year-old Papillion facility is located within CHI Midland and is its first public/private partnership with

the Veterans Affairs of the Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System. The 5th floor is open, and the 6th floor opens as staffing allows for a total of 34 beds.

•Papillion VA Community Living Center is at 11111 South 84th Street, Papillion, NE, 68046-4122 Phone: 402-995-6600.

•Grand Island VA Community Living Center is at 2201 North Broadwell Avenue, Grand Island, NE 68803-2153, Phone: 308-382-3660.

The ALA has contacts to set up events or volunteerism --- check your ABC Book to be current. There are also wish lists that the CLC Recreation Therapists provide.

Paula Pillin
VA Papillion Living Center



SEPTMBER 4TH

CREATIVE ARTS OPEN HOUSE

OMAHA VAMC
4101 WOOLWORTH AVE, OMAHA, NE
AMBULATORY CARE CENTER HALLWAY

10AM-2PM

AWARDS PRESENTATION AT 1PM

COME ADMIRE ART, WRITING, DRAMA, AND MUSIC OF LOCAL VETERANS

WITH THE SUPPORT OF NEBRASKA AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

SNACKS WILL BE SERVED

AMERICANISM

Hello, to all of my American Legion Auxiliary family.

Hope everyone is doing great and staying safe out there. I can't believe how this year is flying by, with all that's been going on. Also, there was a good turnout with the Americanism Essay Contest. I received 91 essays, which I thought was very good, and thank you to all the Units for all the hard work that you put in on the Essay Contest. I'd like to say it is hard to read through so many good essays and pick one to send on. I liked that some of you called and emailed me with questions. I learned a lot as I went through this past year that will be helpful in the future. One question I was asked by a unit president was when the Americanism Essay Contest began. After getting some help from Vicki Ozenbaugh, who she had some help with too. The answer was provided by National. They

stated the essay contest originated with the Legion, and by 1937, the Auxiliary took it over. She found a resolution in 1938. It appears that in many departments, the project was run jointly. So it would be safe to say that the Auxiliary promoted the essay contest during the years it was handled by the Legion and took it over in the late 1930s.

1st Place Winners

Class 1- Liam Ely, Sutton #61
Class 2- Isabel Svoboda, Brainard #273
Class 3- Taylor Slaymaker, Atkinson #86
Class 4- Arlan Lammers, Niobrara #224
Class 5- Alexa Brodd, Ames #340
Class 6- Shawna Miller, Chadron #12
2nd place winners
Class 1- Lenna Poss, Elba #236
Class 2- Kase Schawang, Falls City #222
Class 3- Marvin Najera, Tecumseh #360
Class 4- Zackery Ayala, Beatrice #156
Class 5- Chloe Hanzlik, Niobrara #224
Class 6- Jase Leonard, Rushville #161


Also from the National Americanism Chairman's Challenge. The National Anthem, "Star-Spangled Banner" video. The best overall creative video will receive a trophy from your National Committee Team. One winner from each division, the deadline to submit a video is July 30, 2025. Include Department Americanism Chair's Name and Division. This challenge is to be taken at your Department Convention. All video winners will be announced at your National Divisional Caucus. The winning department will be announced on the National Convention floor. Make sure that the video is clean. No extra added noises, easy to hear the song.

There are 6 classes. 1st and 2nd place in each class. Winners receive \$25 for 1st place and \$15 for 2nd place.


Cie Kauth
Americanism Chair

CANDIDATES FOR DEPARTMENT OFFICES — 2025 - 2026


VICKI OZENBAUGH
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE




RUTH HIETBRINK
PRESIDENT




VICKI CYBORON
VICE PRESIDENT



LORI REIMERS
HISTORIAN



VICKI COLSON
CHAPLAIN



JUNIORS FLEW HIGH IN ST. PAUL

The 82nd annual Department of Nebraska Junior Conference was held on Saturday, April 5, with President Shia Rasmussen calling the meeting to order. Everyone there came together like birds of a feather (following President Shia’s theme) for the morning of learning, getting to know other junior members, and group activities. Oh yes — and a meeting.

After opening the meeting, President Rasmussen welcomed Department Auxiliary members. Department attendees at the Junior Conference included President Amanda Washburn, Historian Vicki Cyboron, National Executive Committewoman Vicki Ozenbaugh, Membership Chairperson Loree Hendrickson, Secretary Roxanne Hiatt, Leadership Chairperson Tina Nelson, and District 6 President Justina Birkel. Thank you to the pages for the day, Harley Schrock and Shirley Schrock.

Junior members started the day getting to know one another based on their interests of either Sudoku, word searches, or coloring pages. Since the junior members started with a common interest, they then shared five things about themselves with the other members in their group.

Eleanor Bauermeister, filling in for Junior Historian Kendall Kasl, gave the registration report, which included 13 juniors, 22 seniors, and 3 guests — with 13 units represented.

Following President Rasmussen’s theme, junior members, Auxiliary members, and guests took part in a Kahoot game relating to birds.



Erica Fuchs, Honorary Department of Nebraska Junior President

Winners were awarded various 3D-printed items.

In addition, all juniors created a birdfeeder ring and a basket of birdseed cakes to either take home or take to a veteran.

Following a pasta lunch, awards for poppy centerpieces, crafts, publicity books, and prayer books were given out and the election of officers was held. Your new Honorary Department of Nebraska Junior President is Erica Fuchs from Arlington. The remainder of the slate of officers includes Vice President Kendall Kasl, Historian Cora Pankoke, and Chaplain Kinleigh Jones.

More details about what Erica has planned for her president’s project will be revealed at the Department Conference.

*Crys Bauermeister
Jr. Activities Chair*

AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary sponsors an Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades 3-12. The grade levels are divided into classes with specific word requirements for each class. The theme for this year’s essay was “What Does America the Beautiful Mean to Me (regarding Veterans and our Military)?”.

The Shubert ALA Unit 222 is pleased that several teachers from the Falls City Schools and Humboldt-Table Rock-Steinauer Schools (HTRS) encouraged students to participate again this year. First place overall winners were sent on to the

state chairman for further judging.

Those were Colby Dunn of Falls City Public, who placed first place in Class I, 3rd-4th grade level; Kase Schawang of Falls City Public in Class II, 5th-6th grade level; and Ava Shupp of HTRS in Class III, 7th -8th grade level.

2nd place for Class I, 3rd -4th grade, was Robyn Howard; 2nd and 3rd place for Class II, 5th-6th grade were Olivia Butrick and Liliana Lira all of Falls City Public. From HTRS, the 2nd and 3rd place winners for Class III, 7th grade were Ty Dunekacke and Elise Dejonge.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH LUNCHEON

Saturday, June 28th, 11:30 a.m.
Columbus Area Children’s Museum

\$10 – RSVP due June 9, 2025, to
Julie Schnitzler
6355 N. Winchester Ave.
Kenesaw, NE 68956

MEMBERSHIP

Congratulations to the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Department of Nebraska for reaching 13,167 members (85%) in order to meet the membership qualification for the National President’s Merit Medallion for Excellence!! It’s worth noting that just 430 more members will get our Department to 90%.

As I write this, Department Reports have been turned in at National Headquarters. Nebraska’s numbers were very impressive:

- The number of annual reports on membership nearly quadrupled from just 34 one year ago to 127 this year.
- Meanwhile, Nebraska units turned in 4,415 volunteer hours for membership in 2024-2025 (nearly 35 hours per unit). That number is practically triple the number of hours turned in last year.
- But, the biggest difference came in terms of dollars, as the amount spent on promoting membership soared from \$875 a year ago to \$6,410 this year (more than \$50 per unit).

Some wonderful quotations came out of those reports as well: “Our Membership Chair has taught us all to just ask.” “Recruits joined simply because members struck up conversations with them. You can’t beat being friendly!” and “One new member travels 120 miles round trip to make it to the meeting [and] another member ... travels close to 200 miles to attend our meetings.”

Wonderful ideas were also included:

- One unit’s Membership Chair contacted a former member and discovered that her family had experienced some setbacks. Rather than just walking away, this Auxiliary member kept coming back to assist the family. Her efforts so impressed the rest of her unit that they chose to donate funds to assist the family and thereby were able to rejoin said member.
- One unit created a list of all the events held and projects worked on over the past year and shared said list not only with all their prospective members, but also mailed it to their current members along with their membership cards.
- My personal favorite story from these reports comes out of District 6. Due to the large area this District covers (13 counties) and

the declining population across this rural area, it has been tough to maintain membership levels for several years now. Justina Birkel, the District 6 President, called not just unit presidents to encourage them to work on membership, but she personally phoned members across her district. Her efforts were successful, as several units reported rejoining members. And the numbers are impressive: District 6 gained nearly 150 members over the past year, and the district’s membership shot up by a whopping 13%!

Finally, we absolutely must give a hearty CONGRATULATIONS to all our districts. Fully eight of our districts have crossed the 90% threshold, and just four more members will get every district past the 85% mark (statistics are as of mid-May). An update on those numbers and the teams from the University of Nebraska Athletic Department who are encouraging our efforts:

1. **District 11** remains in the lead with **95.50%** in membership. They are represented by the Women’s Volleyball team, which not only has a new coach, but some impressive recruits for the fall as well.
2. **District 1** has made a big leap, climbing to **94.88%** in membership. The Women’s Track & Field team are just about to compete in the Big Ten Outdoor Championships and will hopefully be sending athletes to the NCAA Outdoor Championships.
3. **District 13** is boasting **93.63%** membership. Let’s hope their efforts inspire our Men’s Football team this fall.
4. The Men’s Gymnastics team finished strong, coming in fourth at the NCAA Championships and garnering six All-American awards. Likewise, **District 6** is coming on like gangbusters, currently with **91.62%** membership.
5. **District 5** is nipping at their heels with **91.33%** membership. Their efforts must have inspired the Men’s Basketball team, who took a 17-14 record into the post-season College Basketball Crown tournament and went undefeated to bring home that crown.
6. The Men’s Wrestling team finished their season as the

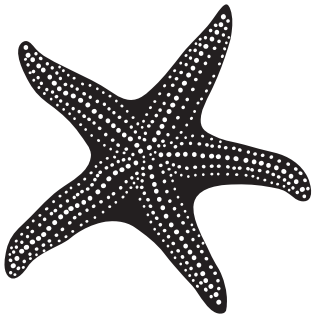
NCAA Runner-Up, their highest showing ever. They also had two NCAA individual champions. This must have inspired **District 9**, as their membership has now climbed to **91.01%**.

7. **District 12** is right behind them with **90.78%** membership. Their team, Women’s Bowling, had an impressive year, winning the NCAA Regional and advancing to be one of four teams in the NCAA Championship.
8. Likewise, **District 7** is also challenging for the #6 spot with **90.63%** membership. Meanwhile, the Women’s Basketball team made the NCAA tournament and finished their year with a loss to a strong Louisville team.
9. The Men’s Track & Field team are getting ready for the Big Ten Outdoor Championships and will hopefully be sending athletes to the NCAA Outdoor Championships. **District 2** will be supportive as they continue to increase their **89.21%** membership up to 90%.
10. **District 4** is at **89.00%** membership and are getting ready to cheer on the Women’s Soccer team this fall.
11. **District 3** is inspiring the Men’s Baseball team with their **88.83%** in membership. The Huskers are just one game away from clinching a spot in the Big 10 Tournament.
12. The Women’s Rifle team attended the NCAA Championships this season. I believe their efforts inspired **District 8** to continue trying to improve their **85.33%** membership mark.
13. **District 10’s 84.53%** membership was not quite enough to will the Husker Women’s Gymnastics team to finish strong, but I have no doubt District 10 will be able to recruit or rejoin just four more members and push themselves over the 85% threshold.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work on membership this year. Your efforts made great strides, and as such, Nebraska will finish stronger than it did last year. Remember that every one of you is a blessing to the veterans you serve so selflessly.

*Loree Hendrickson
Membership Chair*

CHAPLAINS CORNER



The Starfish Story

An old man was walking on the beach one morning after a storm. In the distance, he could see someone moving like a dancer. As he came closer, he saw that it was a young woman picking up starfish and throwing them into the ocean. "Young Lady, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?"

"The sun is up, and the tide is going out, and if I do not throw them in they will die," she said. "But, young lady, do you not realize that

there are many miles of beach and thousands of starfish? You cannot possibly make a difference." The young woman listened politely, then bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the sea. "It made a difference for that one."

Let us pray,
Lord Jesus, heal me. Heal in me whatever You see needs healing. Heal me of whatever might separate me from you. Heal my memory, heal my heart, heal my emotions, heal my spirit, heal my body, and heal my soul. Lay your hands gently upon me and heal me through Your Love for me.

In Your Loving name,
Amen.

Lori Reimers
Department Chaplain

EDITOR’S NOTE

Please send articles and pictures for future editions of “THE STAR” to Lorene Bartos, Editor at 7441 San Mateo Lane, Lincoln, NE 68516 or email to: ALATheStarNE@yahoo.com. Send photos as jpg attachments. Material for the next issue needs to be submitted by JULY 10, 2025.



Beatrice Unit presented continuous membership certificates to Pictured back row (L to R) Department Membership Chair Loree Hendrickson, Janet Byars, 35 years, Department President Amanda Washburn, Annora Schmidt, 25 years, Lori Larson, 45 years, Unit President Trudy Spicer. Pictured front row (L to R) Marian Melcher, 35 years, Marilyn Meyer, 35 years, and Nelvadeen Schwab, 35 years.

In Memoriam

Received March 11,2025 to May 10, 2025

Phyllis J Lambert.....	Lincoln.....	3	Lillian A. Kuryнка.....	David City.....	125
Joann Mertens.....	Hasting.....	11	Carol Ator.....	Crete.....	147
Wanola A Myers.....	Hasting.....	11	Valora L Scott.....	Rushville.....	161
Lola Yetman.....	Hasting.....	11	Yvonne Baldwin.....	Boelus.....	201
Ruth A Connell.....	Chadron.....	12	Lorraine V Hanson.....	Elsie.....	206
Norma Bender.....	Wynot.....	31	Carol J Tramp.....	Gretna.....	216
Shirley B. Bernhardt.....	Gering.....	36	Vivian Ainslie.....	Hay Springs.....	239
Carol Timm.....	Loup City.....	48	Jeris A Miller.....	Yutan.....	262
Debora J. McCully.....	Kearney.....	52	Virginia Krivohlavek.....	Dorchester.....	264
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Verla J Stryker.....	Kearney.....	52	Mary L Zwiener.....	Spalding.....	299
Joann K. Epping.....	Kearney.....	52	Bonnie Kadavy.....	Weston.....	308
Catherine Nelson.....	Pender.....	55	Dolores M Maly.....	Weston.....	308
Mona M Gavin.....	Callaway.....	59	Marcie Stava.....	Weston.....	308
Elva Buoy.....	Ainsworth.....	79	Lois R Gaskins.....	Cody.....	319
Carol L Rystrom.....	Syracuse.....	100	Ramona Pabian.....	Ravenna.....	332
Meryl Hespen.....	Syracuse.....	100	Marilyn Macholan.....	Morse Bluff.....	340
Karen Albert.....	Wilber.....	101	Gloria Reinboth.....	Deshler.....	352
Barbara Blauhorn.....	Palmer.....	120	Eunice Wilson.....	Dakota City.....	376
Bernadean M. Marr.....	Dodge.....	122	Mary Peterson.....	Dept 500.....	500
Beverly A Coufal.....	David City.....	125			

Dear American Legion Family,
My family and I would like to thank you for all your love and support after the passing of my husband, Mike. It has meant so much that I am not alone.

Barbara Skillman
Past Department President

Thank you so much!

DATES TO REMEMBER

JUNE

- 1-7 American Legion Auxiliary Cornhusker Girls State UNL Campus
- 14 Flag Day – Fly your Flag
- 15 Father’s Day
- 26-29 Department Convention – Kearney, NE

JULY

- 4 Independence Day — Department Headquarters Closed
- 10 Deadline for Star Articles — August/September Issue
- 19-26 American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation – Washington, DC

AUGUST

- 22 – 28 National Convention, Tampa Bay, Florida

HISTORY

This has been a fun year as your Department Historian, and I thank you for all your assistance with the requests for the history of your Post Family Name and copies of the charter. We will be giving this to our National President, Trish.

Here and now is your time to Investigate the Story of The Legion Post Family for the Opportunity to

Retain Years of Information. Thank you to Department President Amanda for her leadership this year. History is our past, and let’s recognize it.

Vicki Cyboron
Department Historian



Close to 40 children and many family members turned out for the Annual Easter Egg hunt in the Shubert Park sponsored by the Shubert American Legion Auxiliary Unit 222. The Easter Bunny, a unit member, shared the bench for a picture with the happy winners of the golden egg prize in each age group.

2025 DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

NEBRASKA ALA MEMORIAL - \$500

- Addison Bailey, Callaway, 59
- Katherine Cox, Valentine, 90
- Ava Cramer, Stromsburg, 132
- Lillian Dorshorst, Hay Springs, 239

CAREER & TECHNICAL - \$500

- Cody Brockman, Lawrence, 45
- Casey Conway, Campbell, 169
- Lane Conway, Campbell, 305 Holstein
- Saige Scheele, Ulysses, 49 Utica
- Jack Watts, Clay Center, 87

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL - \$500

- Kaitlyn Kirkendall - PPP, Falls City, 222 Shubert
- Ella Wambold - PPP, Utica, 178 Beaver Crossing
- Jolee DeWeese, Papillion, 143 Springfield
- Rylin Hall, Wayne, 165 Carroll
- Bailey Hafer, Geneva, 68
- Skylar Kaup, West Point,70
- Addison Ketteler, Stuart, 115
- Brianne Kuhr Clarkson, 302 Leigh
- Jager Matson, Nebraska City, 100 Syracuse
- Mallory McConnell, Wallace, 213
- Addison Schmidt, Campbell, 169
- Natalia Wiezorek, North Platte, 163



2024 NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS
FORWARDED ON

CHILDREN OF WARRIORS

- *Natalia Wiezorek, North Platte
- Alt - Kyle Van Sant, Papillion

SPIRIT OF YOUTH

- *Madelyn Loecker, St. Helena
- Alt - Addison Sample, Pleasant Dale

MEMBER LOYALTY

- Lacey Schmidt, Deshler
- KayLynn Novak, Norfolk

NON-TRADITIONAL

- Kelli Kaps, Sutherland

*National Winner

POPPY POSTER WINNERS

Congratulations to all those who submitted posters this year! We had 90 entries, and it was a complete joy to look over every single one of them.

The top three winners from each category will be specially recognized during the Department Convention in Columbus June 26-29.

The first-place winner's poster has been sent to Regionals for the next round of the competition. After Regionals, the winning posters will be sent to Nationals. By the end of June, the national winners will have been selected; but, do be warned --- they may not announce the results until August.

Please keep an eye on the American Legion Auxiliary website for any updates!

Nebraska 2025 Poppy Poster
Winners

- Class I:
• First Place: Kadence Bear Heels,

- Unit 90 (Valentine)
- Second Place: Grayson Arbuck, Unit 240 (Milligan)
- Third Place: Amelia Kriewald, Unit 150 (Scotia)

Class II:

- First Place: Adalynn Gibson, Unit 61 (Sutton)
- Second Place: Cora Paulsen, Unit 120 (Burton Beyer)
- Third Place: Everly Smith, Unit 264 (Dorchester)

Class III:

- First Place: Shelby Miller, Unit 335 (Davenport)
- Second Place: Neleigh Prosser, Unit 138 (Crawford)
- Third Place: Harley Thorpe, Unit 90 (Valentine)

Class IV:

- First Place: Angelina Garcia, Unit 27 (Beatrice)
- Second Place: Payton Skrdla, Unit 115 (Stuart)
- Third Place: Treye Gibbons, Unit

- 138 (Crawford)

Class V:

- First Place: Miranda Betson, Unit 138 (Crawford)
- Second Place: Olivia Schlegel, Unit 164 (Shickley)
- Third Place: Grady Holtzen, Unit 193 (Ohiowa)

Class VI:

- First Place: Jenalee Garwood, Unit 90 (Valentine)
- Second Place: Elissa Schaffer, Unit 335 (Davenport)
- Third Place: Carter Wood, Unit 59 (Callaway)

Class VII:

- First Place: Laelynn Schlichtman, Unit 335 (Davenport)
- Second Place: Blakely Janata, Unit 155 (Howells)
- Third Place: Shawn Sunday, Unit 166 (Bruning)

Elsa Knight
Poppy Chair