

# Douglas Frahm Elected As State Commander



Douglas L. Frahm of Amelia was elected and installed as the Commander of the Nebraska American Legion during the 108th Annual Convention held June 25 - 28, 2026, in Columbus.

Frahm is eligible for The American Legion through his service in the US Air Force and Air National Guard. He has been a member of The American Legion and Post 320 for 20 years. Frahm has served as Department Senior Vice Commander, Area B Vice Commander, District 2 Commander, Post Commander, and is currently the Junior Shooting Sports Liaison.

Frahm resides in Amelia and has a son, Joseph, and four stepchildren, Robin, Jodie, Janet, and Aaron. He lost his wife, Mary, to cancer in 2023. Walters retired from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services after 28 years and then worked seven years as the Veterans Service Officer for Brown, Rock and Keya Paha Counties in Nebraska. She is a member of St. Pius X Catholic Church.

Other officers serving for the 2026 – 2027 year are Department Senior Vice Commander Richard Colson of Paxton, Area A Vice Commander Gary Davis of Pender, Area B Vice Commander Julie Schnitzler of Kenesaw, Area C Vice Commander Don Nelson of Clay Center, and Area D Vice Commander Amie Moores of Elwood, National Executive Committee Jim Costello of Bellevue, Alternate National Executive Committee John-Henry Percy, District 1 Commander Jerry Fullerton, District 2 Commander Kent Von Kampen, District 3 Commander Mike Ellis, District 4 Commander vacant, District 5 Commander Joe Wiezorek, District 6 Commander Brian Rapp, District 7 Commander Virgil Blum, District 8 Commander James Carmona, District 9 Commander Brent May, District 10 Commander Mike Goebel, District 11 Commander David Bruns, District 12 Commander David Stander, District 13 Commander Kevin McKinney, and District 15 Commander Richard Lemmerman.

## College World Series Team Host



The Nebraska American Legion just completed its fifth year as just one of eight organizations to be a Team Host to the Men’s College World Series. Past Adjutant Dave Salak and NECman Jim Costello take the lead in working directly with the team to ensure their time in Omaha is memorable. This year, we hosted the Georgia Bulldogs and met a lot of great coaches and talented ball players.

Head Coach Wes Johnson was presented with a Nebraska Admiralty by Jim and Dave at their team lunch on Sunday of the tournament.

Jim and Dave want to send a personal “Thank You” to the Nebraska Printing Center who donated a beautiful banner for us to use to advertise the Nebraska American Legion involvement with the Men’s College World Series and to all of the volunteers that helped this year.

They will be sure to keep all of you updated as to the 2027 season when it rolls around.



Homecoming Banquet

Department Commander  
Douglas L. Frahm  
Chambers Post 320 – Chambers, NE

Saturday, October 31, 2026  
Chambers American Legion Post 320  
103 N Norvell Street – Chambers, NE 68725

Come join Department Commander Doug Frahm for dinner.

Social Hour is 5:30 p.m. and Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Price: \$12.50 per plate

Contact Doug Frahm for more details at 402-336-6088 or mail checks to:  
Doug Frahm  
85627 Iris Street  
Amelia, NE 68711

Make checks out to “Doug Frahm” and indicate how many tickets are desired and all the names of those attending. Please RSVP by October 16.

Reminder: There will be a cash bar for all to enjoy during dinner.

Dress is Business Casual

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY



The Nebraska Legionnaire

150 NW 40th St, Unit A  
Lincoln, NE 68528

COMPASSION, CHARACTER, & COMPETENCE

2026 MEMBERSHIP GOAL: 20,388 JULY 15TH TOTAL: 19,632 – 96.29%

DISTRICT 3 - 100.33%    DISTRICT 7 - 97.74%    DISTRICT 12 - 97.58%    DISTRICT 1 - 97.01%    DISTRICT 8 - 96.96%

DISTRICT 4 - 96.85%    DISTRICT 6 - 96.78%    DISTRICT 5 - 96.53%    DISTRICT 15 - 95.20%    DISTRICT 2 - 95.03%

DISTRICT 9 - 94.70%    DISTRICT 11 - 94.64%    DISTRICT 10 - 94.01%    DISTRICT 13 - 90.79%





# Commander's Corner

**Douglas L. Frahm**  
Department Commander



It is an honor and privilege to serve as your newly elected Department Commander. I would like to thank you all for your support and the faith that you have placed in me. I would like to thank Commander Judy Walters for her service to the Department and the entire American Legion Family. Her selfless service to the Department of Nebraska over the past year shows her devotion to The American Legion.



I look forward to the task ahead and will do my best to insure that the business of the Department is complete in a manner befitting the Department. I will work closely with the Department Staff, the Department Executive Committee, our Committee Chair, and the entire Nebraska American Legion Family ensuring our future.

The programs that I wish to support this year are Operation Comfort Warriors, Gifts for Yanks, and Dollar Days.

The Leadership Training and Commander's Homecoming is scheduled for October 31st at the Chambers American Legion Post 320. Further information and flyers are included in the newspaper and will be sent out in the September newsletter.

My motto this year is "Family Aiming Higher"  
As a family we need to ensure that our membership stays strong so we can continue to support our vital programs. I look forward to working with you all this year!

"Family Aiming High"



# S.A.L. Notes

**Larry Einspahr Jr.**  
Detachment Commander





**2026-27 Detachment Officers: Commander Larry Einspahr Jr., Senior Vice Commander Robert Lawrence, East Area Vice Commander Gabriel Schmid, NECman David Rippe, and Alt. NECman Willy Foster.**

Eldon Kramer of Gering Squadron 36, East Area Vice Commander Gabriel Schmid of Brainard Squadron 273, National Executive Committeeman David Rippe of Ohioa Squadron 193, and Alternate National Executive Committeeman William Foster Osceola Squadron 91.

Other appointed offices include:  
Adjutant Harold Thompson, Jr. of Norfolk Squadron 16, Assistant Adjutant Landon Carlson of Millard Squadron 374, Chaplain Danny Stefka of Comstock Squadron 220, Historian Adam Schmid Brainard Squadron 273, Sergeant-at-Arms Kolton Kramer of Gering Squadron 36, and Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms Ayden Ballheim of Gering Squadron 36.

If your American Legion Post does not have a Sons of The American Legion Squadron, take some time to check out the history of the organization on the American Legion Family website and consider the benefits a Squadron can offer.

This year's team looks forward to Unification through Communication and to working together with The American Legion Family in service to our Veterans and communities.

If you would like to contact me, my email is [jmeinspahr@yahoo.com](mailto:jmeinspahr@yahoo.com). I am looking forward to a great year for the Nebraska Detachment!

## NEBRASKA AMERICAN LEGION

### Department Headquarters Office

Physical/Mailing Address:  
150 NW 40th Street, Unit A, Lincoln, NE 68528  
Phone Number.....(402) 464-6338  
FAX.....(402) 464-6330  
Business Hours.....8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (CST), Mon-Fri  
Web site.....<http://www.nebraskalegion.net>  
E-Mail Address.....[emartin@nebraskalegion.net](mailto:emartin@nebraskalegion.net)  
Editor.....[awashburn@nebraskalegion.net](mailto:awashburn@nebraskalegion.net)

Department Officers

|                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Commander.....                    | Douglas Frahm, Amelia       |
| Senior Vice Commander.....        | Richard Colson, Paxton      |
| Area A Vice Commander.....        | Gary Davis, Pender          |
| Area B Vice Commander.....        | Julie Schnitzler, Kenesaw   |
| Area C Vice Commander.....        | Don Nelson, Clay Center     |
| Area D Vice Commander.....        | Amie Moores, Elwood         |
| Adjutant.....                     | Eric Martin, Lincoln        |
| Programs Director.....            | Vacant                      |
| Chaplain.....                     | Steve Witmer, York          |
| Historian.....                    | Vacant                      |
| Judge Advocate.....               | Joshua Stevenson, Papillion |
| Finance Officer.....              | Mark Novak, Dawson          |
| Sergeant-At-Arms.....             | Gerald Bouska, Atkinson     |
| Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms.....   | Gene vonForell, Crawford    |
| Service Officer.....              | James Foster, Lincoln       |
| National Executive Committee..... | Jim Costello, Bellevue      |
| Alternate NEC.....                | John-Henry Percy, Papillion |

District Commanders

|               |                              |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| Dist. 1.....  | Jerry Fullerton, Cody        |
| Dist. 2.....  | Kent VonKampen, Norfolk      |
| Dist. 3.....  | Mike Ellis, Jackson          |
| Dist. 4.....  | Vacant                       |
| Dist. 5.....  | Joe Wiezorek, North Platte   |
| Dist. 6.....  | Brian Rapp, Grand Island     |
| Dist. 7.....  | Virgil Blum, Omaha           |
| Dist. 8.....  | James Carmona, Omaha         |
| Dist. 9.....  | Brent May, Indianola         |
| Dist. 10..... | Mike Goebel, Red Cloud       |
| Dist. 11..... | David Bruns, Fairbury        |
| Dist. 12..... | David Stander, Weeping Water |
| Dist. 13..... | Kevin McKinney, Tecumseh     |
| Dist. 15..... | Richard Lemmerman, Lincoln   |



## The NEBRASKA Legionnaire

Official Publication of and Owned Exclusively by  
The American Legion Department of Nebraska.

**Amanda Washburn, Editor**  
**Eric Martin, Publisher's Representative**

First published in 1923, The Nebraska Legionnaire is in its 103rd year of publication. It is published bi-monthly; February, April, June, August, October, and December by The American Legion, Department of Nebraska, 150 NW 40th St, Unit A, Lincoln, NE 68528. Periodicals postage is paid at Lincoln, Nebraska at additional mailing offices. The Nebraska Legionnaire is a member of the Nebraska American Legion Press Association.

**Subscription:** \$10 for non-members. Members receive the Legionnaire as part of their dues.

**Advertising Rates:** Contact Amanda Washburn at 402-464-6338. 150 NW 40th St, Unit A, Lincoln, NE 68528. Nebraska Legionnaire, (USPS 376-180) (ISSN 0028-1875)

Did you know you can read the Nebraska Legionnaire online at [www.nebraskalegion.net](http://www.nebraskalegion.net)?

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Member ID: \_\_\_\_\_

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](mailto:awashburn@nebraskalegion.net)



# Rider's Rally

Dan Willets  
ALR Liaison



Greetings fellow American Legion Riders and American Legion Family!

Riding season is a little over half gone but there's still some worthwhile events to support before things slow down. For a full list of known events please checkout the Nebraska American Legion Riders Facebook page.

Jerry Lemmon, ALR Chapter 138 in Crawford was chosen as the Robert N. "Corndog" Swanson Memorial Award winner (Rider of the Year). Congratulations Jerry and thank you for all you do for your community and the ALR.

Thank you to all of you who attended the Department Convention and/or our Riders meeting at the end of June. At our Riders meeting several items were discussed and some certificates of appreciation were handed out in reference to the Ride for America 250th Flag Escort. Also of note are some changes in the Assistant Liaison positions; West – Casey Walton, Northeast – Bill Jepsen, Southeast – Jennifer DeBruin, and South Central – Jason Baker. Thanks to each of you for your willingness to serve in these positions and to Danny Stefka and Marty Timberlake for your time spent as Assistant Liaisons. The minutes from the ALR meeting will be posted to the Facebook page.

The Ride for America Nebraska 250th Flag Escort took place June 13 and 14; the ride ended at the State Capital with a short ceremony followed by the flag being raised on the capital flagpole (flown until July 4th). This flag is now on display (or will be) at Department Headquarters in Lincoln. Thanks again to the organizers and to all who took the time to participate.

We have two more statewide events coming up in September. First is the Medal of Honor Highway 20 ride on September 7th and 8th. The ride will begin at 1: p.m. on the 7th in South Sioux City with an overnight stop in Valentine. We'll depart Valentine at 7:00am CST arriving in Chadron at approximately 8:15am MT to join up with the Travelling Vietnam Wall escort group. The escort group will then travel to the Whitney Spur to meet up with the Travelling Wall, the official escort into Crawford will start at 10:00 a.m. MT. The Traveling Wall will then be on display in Crawford from September 8th – 13th. For more information, please visit our Nebraska ALR Facebook page (Medal of Honor Ride) and the Crawford Serving Humanities Facebook page (Traveling Vietnam Wall). Looking forward to seeing many of you during these two events, the Traveling Wall is going to be something you aren't going to want to miss.

Reminder, please follow our Facebook page "Nebraska American Legion Riders" for the latest information on rides, events, etc. throughout the state.

Please remember to forward all your Chapter activities, i.e., updated officer list and contact information, mileage, group events, volunteer hours, and any other information you feel is noteworthy to your area Assistant Liaison.

My contact info: phone 308-550-2648, email: dwillets61@gmail.com, Facebook or Messenger. My Chapter email is grandislandne.alr53@gmail.com.

As always, ride safe and God Bless America and the American Legion family!

## In Remembrance

### PDC David A. Bruckner



David A. Bruckner, age 77, of Columbus, died Tuesday, June 2, 2026, at his home surrounded by family and friends.

Mass of Christian Burial was Tuesday, June 9th at St. Isidore Catholic Church, Columbus at 10:30 a.m. Internment was at Roselawn Cemetery following the church service on Tuesday with Military Honors provided by the American Legion Honor Guard Hartman Post #84.

Dave was born to Mary Agnes (Brockman) and Duane Buckner in Omaha. He grew up in Platte Center and graduated from Platte Center High School in 1966. He attended Kearney State College and Platte College after high school until joining the US Army where he served from 1968-1970 being stationed in Okinawa, Japan.

Dave married Ardis (Evans) Linder on April 30, 1988, in Columbus where they enjoyed spending their life together. He helped Ardis raise two sons, Dan and Clint, through the years and enjoyed spending time with his four grandchildren. Dave was co-owner of Platte Center Mercantile Store in Platte Center for 17 years. He then worked at Saunders Archery and then in his retirement worked for Godfather's Pizza.

Dave was an American Legion member since 1971 and held numerous Post, County, District, Area and State positions, including Nebraska State Commander in 2013-2014.

He was an avid NASCAR race fan, attending races at over 24 tracks. He and Ardis loved to travel and were fortunate to visit 45 states, including Alaska and Hawaii, and 10 foreign countries.

Dave is survived by wife, Ardis, stepsons, Daniel (Amy) Linder and Clinton (Angelique Boyer) Linder and four grandchildren, Aubrey, Sebastian, Samantha (Dan) and Owen (Clint) Linder. Sisters Jeanette (Mike) Pollard, Mary Kay Wilke, Nancy (Fritz) Schwank, Brother John (Lori) Bruckner, Brother-in-laws Russ (Sue) Evans and Roger (Rena) Evans, 19 nieces and nephews, 27 great nieces and nephews, many cousins and special fur baby, Maximillian.

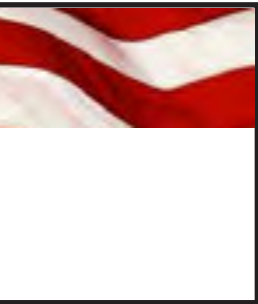
He was preceded in death by his parents, Duane and Aggie Bruckner, in-laws Angeline (Angie) and Blayne Evans and step mother-in-law Dorthy Evans, grandparents Leona (Lammers) and Felix Bruckner and Margaret (Hoelting) and William Brockman, infant grandson Wyatt Linder, nephew Alex Evans, Brother-in-law Barry Wilke and many aunts and uncles.

Memorials can be given to the American Legion for boys state and the baseball fund or to the donor's choice.



# Straight Talk

James Foster  
Department Service Officer



**The VA is recognizing the threat to veterans benefits and has been promoting ways for veterans to protect themselves from scammers.**

Below is a summary of what the VA is suggesting veterans to do to protect their earned benefits.

"The VA cares about your financial safety and wants to help keep you and your loved ones safe from scammers pretending to be government officials. These folks are out there, and their tricks can be convincing."

What are government imposter scams?

Scammers pretend to be from the VA or another government agency, like the Social Security Administration or FBI.

Their goal? To cheat you out of your money or get your personal information.

They'll tell you scary stories — like that your Social Security number is "suspended" or something's wrong with your VA benefits — to get you to act fast.

They may even fake caller ID info or send you official looking papers or emails. Some even have fake badges!

Common tricks:

You get an unexpected call from someone saying there's "suspicious activity on your account."

One person says they're with your bank or a business, then "transfers" you to someone who claims they're from the government.

That person will tell you to move your money, maybe by sending it to a special account, buying cryptocurrency, or turning your cash over to a courier.

They might threaten to cut off your benefits if you don't do what they say — and demand you pay using things like gift cards, wire transfers, or payment apps.

Don't fall for it! Remember:

The government will never ask you to move your money to "keep it safe"

The government will never threaten to cut off your benefits if you don't pay right away.

The government will never tell you to pay them with gift cards, cryptocurrency, wire transfers, or payment apps.

If you're unsure or worried, talk to someone you trust or contact your local Veteran Service officer.

You can always check for more information at [ejcc.acl.gov/](http://ejcc.acl.gov/) imposters.

If you think you've been targeted, or something feels wrong:

If you miss a VA payment, notice problems, or think your direct deposit was messed with, call your local veteran service officer or the VA right away at 1-800-827-1000.

If you suspect a scam or fraud, contact VSAFE at [VSAFE.gov](http://VSAFE.gov) or call (833) 38VSAFE (833) 388-7233). It is always better to ask then to give out your personal information.

# ESCORTING

## THE VIETNAM WALL & COST OF FREEDOM TRIBUTE

SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2026  
CRAWFORD, NE



**FORMATION ORDER:**

STATE PATROL → LEAD ESCORT MOTORCYCLES → TRIBUTE TRUCK & TRAILER → FLAG MOTORCYCLES → OTHER MOTORCYCLES → FIRST RESPONDER VEHICLES → FIRST RESPONDER VEHICLES → OTHER VEHICLES

ESCORT FORMING AT WHITNEY SPUR OFF HWY 20 MILE MARKER 45 TURN NORTH AND FALL INTO SOUTHBOUND LANE SAFELY ON SEPT. 8TH, 2026 AT 9:40 AM

CALL JERRY LEMMON 308-665-5375



# POW/MIA

Boyd Yochum  
POW/MIA Liaison





# Chaplain's Corner

Steve Witmer  
Department Chaplain





Major Larry Warren Robinson joined the U.S. Marine Corps from Randolph, Nebraska, and was a member of Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11, Marine Air Group 11, 1st Marine Air Wing. He was the pilot of “Playboy 15-02” when it went down. He was lost with the Aircraft. Major Robinson was 32 years old, and a 14 year Marine Corps Veteran when the F4B he was piloting went down.

Both Robinson and his backseat Robert Burnes were declared killed in action, bodies not recovered.

On January 5, 1970, an F4B Phantom II carrying two crew members took off on a reconnaissance escort mission over Laos. While making a pass over the target area, “Playboy 15-02” was hit by anti-aircraft fire. The Phantom crashed and exploded in the vicinity of 154658 North 1060459 East.

No parachutes emerged from the aircraft before it went down. An extensive search of the area was made, but there were no signs of survivors. Both men remain unaccounted for. Based on all information available, DPAA has assessed the individuals in this case to be in the analytical category of Active Pursuit.

Robinson is among nearly 600 Americans who were lost in Laos, THE SECRET WAR, during U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. Laos was not included in the agreements ending America’s involvement in the war. The U.S. has not negotiated with Laos. Consequently, not one American held in Laos has ever been released, and no remains have ever been returned. Families of these men still wait for answers. All files from Laos are classified. The SECRET WAR in Laos was not under Department of Defense Command, Laos was a CIA operation.

Major Robinson is memorialized on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. His name is also inscribed along with all his fallen comrades on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.

Nearly 2500 Americans remain missing or otherwise unaccounted for in Southeast Asia since the war ended. Many experts are completely convinced that hundreds of Americans were held captive after the war ended. Are we doing enough to bring these men or their remains home?

Rather than a humanitarian obligation, Vietnam has transformed the POW/MIA accounting issue into a revenue generating enterprise. Hanoi demands as much as \$10,000 per document and \$15,000 per artifact, in effect selling back to the U.S. evidence gathered on missing American service members. Vietnam’s operational cooperation is centered more on financial benefit than bilateral relations. At the same time, Vietnamese officials continue to access U.S. military archives at taxpayers’ expense, with no reciprocal transparency.

DPAA continues to profess that Vietnam is still the highest operational priority, meaning that the largest portion of its budget goes to Vietnam because of the prohibitive costs imposed by Vietnam’s Office for Seeking Missing Persons.

Hanoi has never cooperated fully on providing the U.S. with all its information on missing Americans.

We must never allow the POW/MIA issue to be forgotten.

I have shared messages on this subject before, but with what is going on in our country today, it bears talking about it again. When our nation was formed, our founding fathers were from different churches and lived different lifestyles, but they all had one thing in common. They all believed in our creator God, and had faith that Jesus was their Lord and savior. This faith was a central driving force when they met to create our Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

One of the rights given our citizens by the constitution is the right to worship in the manner we see fit, or to not worship at all. The government has no say in the matter. The reason for this is that in England, the Church of England was the only church as mandated by the King. This is one of the rights endowed by our Creator, and our founding fathers recognized that right.

As veterans, we swore an oath to protect and defend this nation against all enemies both foreign and domestic.

Now, more than ever, our nation needs us to publicly stand up and keep both of those promises. Psalms 33:12 says; Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage. As Christians, we have been chosen by God as adopted children. Our first step is to humble ourselves before God every day and pray in everything we say and do. 2 Chronicles 7:14 says; if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

I think President Ronald Reagan said it best; “If you remove the basis from which a government was formed, you remove the government”.

The Nebraska Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Association’s membership drive has been extended until September 19, 2026. Our next meeting will be at PK’s Revival located at 304 Sherman Street, Benedict, NE at 11:30 a.m. We always have a good time! Remember to bring a copy of your DD-214 and you friends with! Contact Dale Cooper at 402-367-74031 with any questions.

## Membership Minute

Steve Bartos, Membership Chairman



**Post Membership Achievement Awards from the 2026 Department Convention. Category I – Cambridge Post 199; Category II – Lincoln Post 1919; Category III – Genoa Post 144; Category IV – Elkhorn Post 211; Category V – Osmond Post 326; Category VI – Dwight Post 110; and Category VII – North Platte Post 163.**

were deceased but had not been reported to the Department or had their membership record in MyLegion updated by the Post to reflect their passing. There were about 10 more who were more than likely deceased. I found 1 member who died about 10 years ago --- and the Department has been paying his dues all that time. Clearly, we have to do a better job of keeping the roster of Department Life Record accurate. Unfortunately, any of the deceased members I found who died prior to the start of the 2026 membership year --- and were not reported --- will be considered to be alive when it comes to the national goal-setting process for 2027. I intend to follow up on this situation and ask every post to be sure to keep their records and rosters current. Please report ALL deceased members promptly in the MyLegion database. If you can’t or won’t do that, a courtesy email to Amanda will be greatly appreciated.

We are having an Early Bird Drawing again this year for “regular” members. Dues must be received in Department Headquarters or paid online by September 8th. Have a nice August.

The Department Convention is history, and we’re off and running with Commander Frahm in the 2027 membership year. Let’s make it a good one.

While the collection of renewals for 2026 continues, our emphasis has realistically shifted to recruiting and renewing members for the 2027 membership year. We may not have achieved 100% of our goal for 2026, but we did much better than usual. Part of the success can be attributed to more realistic Department goals --- but extra effort on our part gets some credit, too.

I am happy to report that --- for the first time in several years --- we have a full complement of members on the Department Membership Committee. Gary Sones (Rushville Post 161) replaces Richard Baxter in Area D (and I thank Richard for his service to the committee). With the passing of Dave Bruckner, Dan Benes (Valparaiso Post 371) has been appointed as the representative from Area B. Jeff Conrad (Elkhorn Post 211) has been appointed to be the member from Area A.

Nebraska’s membership goal for 2027 will be established at the National Membership Workshop held in Indianapolis in early August. Hopefully, we will be able to convince incoming National Commander Jay Bowen that reasonable goals translate to encouragement for our membership workers --- and growth for the organization.

I will calculate and distribute Individual Post goals for Nebraska shortly after our national goal is established in Indianapolis.

In June, I did an audit of the members on our list of Department Life Members --- members whose department and national dues have been paid by the Department since the fund that supported it was discontinued. In simple terms, I did an obituary search on just about every member on that list --- about 1,400 members. To my dismay, I confirmed about 65 members who

# Area and District News

## District 1 Commander – Jerry Fullerton



Greetings from District 1 in Northwest Nebraska. On Thursday, July 30th we start our 3rd annual District 1 Summer Membership Tour. It had always been held in late November for years, but inclement weather and older drivers forced a change. This year our special guests so far will include our new Department Commander Doug Frahm, our Past Department Commander Judy Walters, Senior Vice Commander Richard Colson, and newly elected Area D Commander Amie Moores. Detachment Senior Vice Commander Robert Lawrence joining us. Department Legion Auxiliary President Vicki Cyboron and Department Historian Vicki Colson are scheduled to join, along with District 1 President Jean Vackiner.

Starting at Ainsworth Post 79 we will have breakfast and Wood Lake Post 202 will also be there. After breakfast we will have our meeting and then head to Newport Post 227, followed by Bassett Post 123 for meeting and lunch. Next stop will be Springview Post 98, then onto Valentine.

After folks get check into to their rooms in Valentine, I will bus them to Niobrara Valley Vineyard south of Nenzel for an evening meal and entertainment, hosted by Valentine Post 90, Cody Post 319, and SAL Squadron 90 of Valentine. The beloved Mike and Linn Baxter of Ainsworth will be providing music.

Friday morning, we will meet in Cody at Post 319 for breakfast and a meeting, then on to Gordon Post 34. The next stop will be Rushville post 161 for lunch and meeting followed by Hay Springs Post 239, Crawford Post 138, and end the day in Chadron for an evening meal and meeting.

Saturday morning, we will meet at Chadron Post 12 and then head to the Hot Springs VA for a picnic with the Veterans that are being treated at the domiciliary. This last stop is always a very rewarding experience.

The tour is a great way to visit our posts in the District, to share with them information from Department convention; also, it is their chance to share any issues they may have that we can help them with.

Also – a reminder that the Vietnam Traveling Wall will be in Crawford NE Sept 8-13, 2026. All are welcome! The Crawford Post has put in a lot of work to make this happen.

## Area B Vice Commander – Julie Schnitzler



Area B is in the center of Nebraska and has 113 Posts and over 6,800 American Legion members. And it seems that there are even more Post, State and community events that are hosted for and by ALL Veterans. Are you enjoying any of them? Just by perusing your Facebook or completing a Google search to be held this summer. You can find dinners, motorcycle rides, baseball games, health events, and meetings and celebrations of all kinds for veterans and their families. For the artists, enter your work in the Grand Island VA Creative Arts Festival by July 31 of each year. Wood River Post 314 is holding their steak feed on July 21 at 6pm and the community of Boelus is celebrating “Stars, Stripes and Boelus Nights” on August 8 to celebrate America’s birthday. In District 7, on August 28 a VetCOM dental clinic is available in Yutan and District 2 Post 16 in Norfolk is hosting Veterans from the Norfolk Veterans home on July 22. The final event I’ll mention here is the Nebraska State Fair. Plan to attend on Labor Day, September 7; there’s a full day of events. All Veterans have free admission and will get to hear Astronaut Clayton Anderson speak.

There’s not enough time or space to list all the events and the details, so make the effort to find them online and attend. Why should you attend? There’s so many reasons and here’s a few: 1) It’s a great reason to get out of the house, 2)

Ask another veteran to attend with you - they may need a friend and an outing themselves, and 3) the American public sees how many veterans that have served in defense of our freedoms, and 4) finally, veterans being active keeps our communities, our state, our nation as well as our organization, The American Legion, strong. AND Area B District and Post Commanders, invite me. I’ll come if I have the date open. My email is schnitzlerjulie17@gmail.com

## Area C Vice Commander – Don Nelson



Hello I'm wanting to introduce myself to the members of Area C that may have not made it to your District Convention or to the Department Convention. I'm Don Nelson from Clay Center and I was elected to serve as your Area C Vice Commander for the next year.

I served in the Navy Seabees from the mid to late 80s. Just like all members I should talk about membership. We need it. That's enough about that.

It is my passion to get members the most help possible in getting the benefits you deserve. I have attended as many trainings as I could to continue learning how to do that. I have also attended many Department and National Conventions.

If I can help you with this, please let me know. If I don't have the answer, I will do my best to find out.

I hope to see everyone at your District Oratorical contest, District Convention, or other events.

For God and Country.

## Area D Vice Commander - Amie Moores



Greetings Fellow Legionnaires, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself as your new Area D Commander.

My name is Amie Moores, and I currently live in my hometown of Elwood, Nebraska. After growing up here, I left to join the military and retired after 28 years of honorable service in the Air Force. Several years after retiring, I moved back to Elwood. I have one adult son who is a Eagle Scout and then went on to earn his BSN degree and now works as a travel nurse. He also recently received a direct commission into the

Air Force Reserve as a 1st Lt and will be training to become a flight nurse.

I attended the National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis in July 2024, which was a great learning experience. This will be my third year attending the National Convention. If you ever have the opportunity to attend, I highly encourage it, as it offers valuable information and the chance to network with members from all over.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions. I am here to help our Area and local Posts be the best they can be.

As a reminder, "Be the One" remains a vital initiative for the American Legion. We can take care of our fellow veterans and service members through simple buddy checks. If you haven't heard from a fellow veteran lately, please reach out just to ask how they are doing.

I look forward to meeting more of you soon. My goal is to attend as many Fall Round-ups and District Conventions as possible. Additionally, please try to attend the Homecoming for our new Department Commander, Doug Frahm, on October 31st in Chambers, Nebraska. More details will follow in the Department newspaper and newsletter.

Thank you, and I look forward to serving you this year.  
cell: 308-408-1164 - email: amielynn073@gmail.com

IMMEDIATE  
OPENINGS  
IN ASSISTED  
LIVING!

STATE-OF-THE-ART RECREATION FACILITIES, INCLUDING A  
WOOD SHOP AND CERAMICS ROOM, GYM, AND  
FISHING POND

PRIVATE ROOMS WITH  
ATTACHED BATHROOM

DEDICATED TEAM WITH 24-HOUR RN COVERAGE,  
ONSITE MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES, AND  
IN-HOUSE PHARMACY

RETIRE IN STYLE AND COMFORT TO THE

CENTRAL NEBRASKA VETERANS' HOME

TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION OR LEARN MORE, CALL 308-865-3424  
VETERANS.NEBRASKA.GOV/CNVH

NEBRASKA  
Good Life. Great Sacrifice.  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

2026 Department Convention - Columbus



NEC Jim Costello presented National Commander Dan Wiley with an Admiralty for the Great Navy of Nebraska. Pictured (L to R) NECman Jim Costello, National Commander Dan Wiley, and Commander Walters.



National Commander Dan Wiley presented Steve Bartos with a plaque thanking him for his 39 years of dedicated service on the National Membership Committee.



Commander Walters presented citizenship medals to outstanding Legionnaires in the different Districts. Pictured front (L to R) Commander Walters, District 5 recipient Tom Gann, District 9 recipient Amie Moores, District 6 Commander Brian Rapp, District 15 recipient Ed Schnabel, and District 13 Vice Commander Larry Borchert. Pictured back (L to R) District 4 representative Clint Thompson, District 2 recipient Dale C. Powers II, District 7 recipient Dan Benes, District 11 recipient Jerry Lamkin, District 1 Commander Jerry Fullerton, and District 3 Commander Mike Ellis.



Commander Walters and Adjutant Eric Martin presented Past Adjutant Dave Salak with a plaque thanking for his years of service as a Department Adjutant from the National Ye Steivos group. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters, Dave Salak, Adjutant Martin.



Commander Walters presented the 2026 Nebraska Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award to Noah Zach. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters and Noah Zach.



The Cody Kerr Award was presented to Richard Baxter. Pictured (L to R) Richard Baxter, Don Suchy, and Commander Walters.



The joint session of the Annual Department Convention was held with many American Legion Family members in attendance. Pictured (L to R) Sons National Vice Commander Chris Casey, Detachment Commander Todd Kabella, National Commander Dan Wiley, Department Commander Judy Walters, Department President Ruth Hietbrink, National President Pam Ray, and ALR Liaison Dan Willets.



During the Department Convention, two Korean War veterans were honored with Nebraska's Korean medals for their service. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters, John C. Hoebing, and Raymond Staroscik.



The Insulter's Award was presented to Martin Neal. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters, Martin Neal, and Rod Rose.



The Crowbar Award was presented to Geoff Florom. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters, Geoff Florom, and Martin Neal.



Commander Walters presented the 2026 Teacher-of-the-Year Awards. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters, Elementary School Teacher Laurie Schlautman of Howells Community Catholic Schools, Middle School Teacher Angela Anderson of Cody-Kilgore Schools, and High School Teacher Patricia O'Malley of North Platte Catholic High School.



Commander Walters presented the Eagle Scout of the Year award to Ian Baker of Kearney. His father, Jason, with the plaque. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters and Jason Baker.



Allen, Lou V., Litchfield, Vietnam  
Alley, James I., Ashland, Vietnam  
Allgayer, Louie, Elmwood, Korea  
Apking, Richard, Hooper, Vietnam  
Aronson, Robert W., Tekamah, WWII  
Avers, Dennis L., Hastings  
Axtell, Raymond D., Minden, Korea  
Baer, Joseph Z., Bellwood, Vietnam  
Barritt, Ronald, Norfolk, Korea  
Beitler, Robert H., Cowles, Vietnam  
Bellamy, James D., Herman, Vietnam  
Bern, Don L., Wahoo, Korea  
Berney, Ron R., Albion, Vietnam  
Bessler, Emery W., Plymouth, WWII  
Bishop, Harry, Hyannis  
Blazek, L Rodney, Valparaiso, SAL  
Boggess, Helen A., Pender, Vietnam  
Bohaty, Carroll G., Valparaiso, Vietnam  
Bornemeier, Joel E., Elmwood  
Bosilijevac, Ronald P., South Omaha  
Boyer, Thomas P., Fairmont, Vietnam  
Brader, Herbert H., Craig, Korea  
Brejcha, Leonard E., Swanton, Korea  
Brogan, Colleen, Paxton, Vietnam  
Brown, Robert D., Tilden, Vietnam  
Bruckner, David A., Columbus, Vietnam  
Bruner, H. J. Jr., Columbus, Vietnam  
Burrows, Bryan P., Hay Springs  
Buss, Darrell, Lincoln, Vietnam  
Campbell, Donald R., Aurora, Korea  
Carney, Joe L., Gretna, Vietnam  
Carrillo, Albert J., Nebraska City, WWII  
Case, Donald L., Papillion  
Cather, James E., Lincoln, Korea  
Clark, Lamar, Weeping Water  
Cool, Harold B., McCool Junction  
Cooper, James D., Adams, Korea  
Crewdson, Dean L., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Crick, James R., Kearney, Korea  
Dagley, Delbert G., Lincoln, WWII  
Dallegge, Dale O., Bartlett, WWII  
Davis, Jerome C., Lincoln, Korea  
Davy, Wayne R., Columbus, WWII  
Dearden, Martin G., Plattsmouth, Persian Gulf  
Deines, Lee, Gordon  
Dickes, Gary L., Norfolk  
Dolezal, Alfred W., Columbus, WWII  
Dondlinger, Eugene, Shickley  
Dugger, Stephen R., Palmer  
Dwyer, Edward V., Lincoln, Korea  
Edwards, Glenn, Hardy  
Erwin, Richard D., Laurel, Vietnam  
Fairbanks, Bernard, Spalding  
Fehringer, Mark E., Bloomfield, Korea  
Flock, Russell M., Omaha, SAL  
Fuller, George E., Yutan, Vietnam  
Gall, Leroy, Howells, Persian Gulf  
Gaver, Gary E., Omaha, Vietnam  
Gill, Dennis M., Stuart, Vietnam  
Glaessmann, Daniel, South Omaha, Vietnam  
Grosch, Alden, Albion  
Hamann, Lauren T., Lincoln, Korea  
Harbottle, Douglas, Norfolk, Vietnam  
Harmon, Raymond, Page, Korea  
Hathaway, Leo F., South Omaha, Korea  
Haugen, Terrence G., Crawford, Vietnam  
Healy, John P., Millard, Vietnam  
Hedges, G. D., Central City, Korea  
Hergott, Lawrence E., Columbus  
Hernandes, John S., Benson, Korea  
Hessler, Richard A., Chadron, Vietnam  
Heule, Raymond E., Fullerton

Hinrichs, Dale, Glenvil  
Hirt, Phillip, Bellevue, Vietnam  
Hoatson, Lee F., Sutherland, Vietnam  
Holly, Evan, Millard, Korea  
Hosick, Darryl J., Curtis, Vietnam  
Howell, Edward L., Albion  
Hubl, John W., Lawrence, Korea  
Huckeby, Mack C., South Omaha, Vietnam  
Hunzeker, Lloyd, Hay Springs  
Hyde, Gordon C., Comstock, Korea  
Jackson, William C., Lincoln, Lebanon/Grenada  
Jacob, Herman H., Arlington, Korea  
Jenkins, Robert L., Winside, Vietnam  
Johns, Maybre L. Jr., Benson, Vietnam  
Johnson, Steven R., Ashland, Vietnam  
Joslyn, Duayne L., Columbus  
Kanger, Peter, South Omaha, Korea  
Kean, Eugene J., Dawson, Korea  
Kennedy, Barry L., Pawnee City, Vietnam  
Kennedy, Jimmie D., Brewster, Korea  
Kern, James M., Rushville, Vietnam  
Kittrell, William C., Omaha, Vietnam  
Klinger, Richard J., South Omaha, Panama  
Knight, Amos, Rushville, WWII  
Kroeger, William, Schuyler, Korea  
Kubicek, Elmer, Wilber, Vietnam  
Kula, Mark A., Grand Island, SAL  
Leland, Le Roy W., Lincoln, SAL  
Leshovsky, Howard G., Norfolk, Korea  
Lonewolf, Charles C., Winnebago, Vietnam  
Lorenzen, Eldon H., Bancroft, WWII  
Lovenburg, Harvey D., Wauneta, Vietnam  
Lupori, James, Lincoln, Vietnam  
Maulding, Don, Clearwater, WWII  
Maybre, Johns L. Jr., Benson, Vietnam  
McAdams, Darryl F., Millard, Vietnam  
McKee, Michael B., Gering, SAL  
Mellor, Murray D., Atkinson, Korea  
Messerli, Robert, Edgar, Korea  
Messerli, Tad E., Edgar, Persian Gulf  
Meyer, Bryan L., Bertrand, Vietnam  
Minola, Norman A., Wakefield  
Miska, Joe L., Ord  
Moore, Albert L., North Platte, Vietnam  
Moore, Joseph D., Denton, Vietnam  
Morrison, Gerald W., Lincoln, Korea  
Myers, Bruce B., Pleasant Dale, Vietnam  
Naughton, Donald J., Havelock, Vietnam  
Nelson, Stanton L., Curtis, SAL  
Newquist, Arnold O., Belgrade, Korea  
Novak, William M., Herman, Korea  
Novotny, Frank, South Omaha, Korea  
Obermeier, Melvin H., Aurora, Korea  
Ojeda, Rene J. Jr., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Oppliger, David R., Columbus, Persian Gulf  
Ortleb, Charles D., Papillion, Vietnam  
Owen, Raymond L., Kearney, Vietnam  
Pedersen, Vernon C., Gering, Korea  
Peters, Franklin E., Springfield  
Peterson, Leonard L., O’Neill, Vietnam  
Petrick, Robert D., Vietnam  
Pettigrew, Roger, Dwight, Vietnam

Pfeifer, Dennis B., Lindsay, Vietnam  
Phillips, John D., Humbolt  
Poe, Jerel E., Campbell, Korea  
Rickert, Alvin, Columbus, WWII  
Riedel, D. J., Randolph, Vietnam  
Riha, Frank, Springfield  
Ritzdorf, Richard, Columbus  
Roche, Donald J., Wymore, Vietnam  
Rodekohr, John D., Battle Creek, Korea  
Roesler, Glenn B., Geneva  
Roosa, Richard L., Valentine, Vietnam  
Rudloff, Howard C., Omaha, Korea  
Rudolph, Janice M., David City, Korea  
Rudy, Robert K., Alma, Vietnam  
Rullo, Donald, Columbus, Korea  
Rush, Lloyd D., Minden, Korea  
Scharnhorst, David, Gering  
Scharton, James G., Rushville, WWII  
Schreiner, Billy B., Weeping Water  
Schropgfer, Francis L., Geneva, Vietnam  
Schulte, Leo H., Butte, Vietnam  
Seim, Dennis G., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Sensibaugh, Joe E., Wahoo, Vietnam  
Serres, Floyd J., Crawford, Korea  
Siebrandt, Frederick R., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Siercks, Gerald, Wahoo, Vietnam  
Simpson, Robert J., Norfolk, Korea  
Skokan, Dean, Hooper, Vietnam  
Slattery, William, Atkinson, Vietnam  
Sliva, Virgil, Columbus, Korea  
Smith, Donald R., Wymore, Korea  
Smith, Thomas H., Kearney, Vietnam  
Sorensen, Alvin D., Bancroft  
Spangrud, Don M., Oxford, Korea  
Steele, Dale R., Pierce, WWII  
Stilwell, Jack, Palmyra, WWII  
Stitt, Charles E., Mc Cook, Vietnam  
Stromquist, Kenneth D., Oakland, Korea  
Sullivan, Michael L., Papillion, Vietnam  
Sullivan, Patrick, Spalding, Vietnam  
Swanson, Larry L., Wahoo, Korea  
Sweet, Harold, Hardy, Vietnam  
Teten, Dennis, Talmage, Vietnam  
Teten, Eldon, Nebraska City  
Thompson, Grover, Alliance, Vietnam  
Tingler, Arden C., Valley, Vietnam  
Tollman, George J., Madison, SAL  
Trenkle, Kevan, Rushville  
Trout, Donavon W., Beatrice  
Vavrina, Ronald E., Howells, Korea  
Vilcinskaskas, Zigmas A., South Omaha, Vietnam  
Waak, Don, Schuyler  
Weinman, Brian, Bennington, Vietnam  
Welte, Carl J., Alliance, Vietnam  
Wheeler, David K., Shubert, Lebanon/Grenada  
Whitlock, Robert O., Alliance, WWII  
Wicht, Robert J., Grand Island, Vietnam  
Widhalm, Dale W., Millard, Korea  
Wieser, Jerome, Lincoln, Korea  
Willig, Phil E., Chappell, Vietnam  
Wojtowicz, Richard J., South Omaha, Korea  
Wolf, Gerald C., Lincoln, Vietnam  
Yauk, Victor W., Paxton, Persian Gulf  
Zieg, Alfred, Scribner, WWII  
  
**Correction: Randy L. Engel of Friend and Gary N. Greer from Brainard are alive and well. Darrel Babcock of Naponee was a Vietnam veteran. Paul Richter was from Lincoln not Bellevue.**

## Events Calendar

### August

13 - 18 American Legion World Series - Shelby, NC  
23 - 27 Legacy Run - Kicks off from Lincoln HQ  
29 - Sep 3 National Convention - Louisville, KY

### September

29 - Sep 3 National Convention - Louisville, KY  
7 Labor Day - Office Closed  
18 - 20 Americanism Conference - Indianapolis, IN

### October

2 - 8 Fall Meetings - Indianapolis, IN  
12 Columbus Day - Office Closed  
31 Commander’s Homecoming - Chambers, NE

Check [www.nebraskalegion.net](http://www.nebraskalegion.net) under the meetings tab for upcoming National, State, and District events.

\$ 1000



### NEBRASKA LEGIONNAIRES

### BE AN EARLY BIRD FOR 2027!

The first NATIONAL renewal notice to Nebraska for the 2027 membership year HAS BEEN mailed from Indianapolis, and the Department Membership Committee is again this year sponsoring an Early Bird Drawing.

ALL regular members (those who pay their dues annually or are multi-year members) whose 2027 dues are paid and received in Department Headquarters by September 8, 2027 will be in a drawing for \$1000.

5 names will be drawn for a \$200 prize each this year!

HELP US BUILD MEMBERSHIP MOMENTUM!!  
BE IN THE DRAWING!!

## Non-political Organization

This is a reminder that The American Legion Family is a non-political organization. Do not wear your cover, branded shirt, or any other branded item at any political rally or at any campaign event. Furthermore, any Post holding a political forum must extend an invitation to all those running for office and remember to remove any trademark items from view. Contact Adjutant Martin with any questions.

## Sons of The American Legion Membership As of July 15, 2026

| District | 2025 Members | 2026 Members |
|----------|--------------|--------------|
| 1        | 299          | 311          |
| 2        | 564          | 608          |
| 3        | 237          | 238          |
| 4        | 341          | 363          |
| 5        | 138          | 134          |
| 6        | 1,317        | 1,354        |
| 7        | 785          | 786          |
| 8        | 856          | 797          |
| 9        | 289          | 294          |
| 10       | 303          | 298          |
| 11       | 1,005        | 1,124        |
| 12       | 257          | 305          |
| 13       | 126          | 114          |
| 15       | 133          | 134          |
| Total    | 6,650        | 6,862        |



Fremont Post 20 presented Don Steinike with a certificate for 50 years of continuous membership.



Benson Post 112 presented Quilts of Valor to six of its members. Pictured (L to R) David Dohse, seated Randy Davis, Bruce Husted, Tom Robbins, Jan Robbins, and Ken Nisley.



Cozad Post 77 presented a certificate for 50 years of continuous membership to Richard Krushenisky. Pictured are Commander Scott Schmidt, Richard and his wife, Beverly, and their family.



Newport Post 227 presented a certificate for 60 years of continuous membership to Lewis McKenny. Pictured (L to R) Commander Robert Duke and Lewis McKenny.



During the Open House at Department Headquarters, Department Commander Judy Walters presented Korean War medals to two Korean veterans. Pictured (L to R) Commander Walters, Robert Ruyle, and Curt Sanford.



Hooper Post 18 participated in Hooper's 150th Celebration event. This Conestoga wagon was built by Fred's grandfather in 1967 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Nebraska's statehood. Pictured (L to R) Commander Fred Fachman, Allison Fachman, and Ron Rossnow.



Louisville Post 353 Family is hosting a Toys for Tots event with the US Marines starting on October 18th. They will be having a car and motorcycle show that day to kickoff the event.



Grand Island Post 53 presented certificates of continuous membership to its members. Pictured (L to R) Commander Brian Rapp, Oscar Bredthauer, 60 years; Thomas Dunning, 50 years; and Roger Luebbe, 60 years.



Kearney Post 52 had District 6 Commander Brian Rapp conduct their installation ceremony for their newly elected officers on July 13.



Wilber Post 101 sponsored students for a trip to Washington D.C. Three students were able to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.



Area B Vice Commander Julie Schnitzler installed the newly elected officers at Grand Island Post 53 on July 14th.

LegionCare: \$1,000.00  
Accidental Death Benefit at  
NO COST\* To You

Anyone enrolled in LegionCare will be covered for as long as they maintain their membership in the Legion Family – TAL, ALA, & SAL. The LegionCare program will continue to cover you for \$1,000 of AD&D coverage. If the accidental loss occurs when on official Legion Family Business, we will cover you for \$5,000 of AD&D coverage.

For more information, Visit [www.theLIT.com](http://www.theLIT.com) or call toll-free at 1-800-235-6943.

# Mail Call

Dear American Legion,  
Thank you for the award recognizing me as an Elementary School Teacher. I love teaching and will continue to promote the importance of remembering our veterans and all they did for our country! Thank you for all you do in your organization.

Laurie Schlautman.

Dear Boys' State,  
Thank you for making Boys' State possible. Because of your hard work, I had the opportunity to learn about leadership, citizenship, government, and brotherhood.

Carter Kreifels  
(Syracuse)

Dear Boys' State,  
Thank you for hosting the program. It was an amazing experience and I have learned much about leadership. The speakers and fellow staters have given me a week that I will never forget. Boys' State has changed me and I you continue to operate for years to come.

Jalen Schultz (Seward)

Dear American Legion,  
Thank you for organizing Boys' State. I really enjoyed the experience and learned a lot. I appreciate all the time and effort that went into making it such a great program.

Noah Russell (Lincoln)

Dear Boys' State,  
Thank you for all of the hard work and coordination your team put into Boys' State. I learned so much during the week and made so many new friends. This is a great program and I hope it continues to thrive into the future. Thank you again.

Josh Stinson (Syracuse)

## DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT - VICKI CYBORON



Happy Day, my Legion family! My name is Vicki Cyboron from Shipman – Mogensen Unit 201 in Boelus. My eligibility is from my dad's service. He was a Vietnam veteran. My parents were both very active with the American Legion Family.

I want to say THANK YOU for electing me your 2026-2027 American Legion Auxiliary Department President for Nebraska.

I love this organization. We do so many good things. Remember --- it is okay if we do only one thing a year, but I bet you do more than you realize with all the community events you support. Thank you for all you do.

My theme is Families Accomplishing Rewarding Memories.

If you look at the first letter of each of those words, it spells FARM. This is another way to honor our parents. FAMILY is very important to me. There are different types of families. It can be blood, it can be our church, or it can be our community and our Legion Family. The word ACCOMPLISHING is a word my dad used in his saying when he was Department Commander. Plus, we know it is always REWARDING when you are with family because you make many

wonderful MEMORIES.

One of my projects this year will be raising funds for The Gift Shop. This program is completed in December at the Grand Island and Omaha VA Medical Centers and the Papillion Community Living Center. For those who do not know, this is where we provide our veterans who are patients at the VA Medical Centers with gifts or gift cards. The veterans shop for gifts for themselves or for 3 family members. We even wrap the presents for them.

One year, I had a veteran come in who wasn't going to get anything, as he wasn't going to be with his family for Christmas. I said we would mail the presents to them. The smile of appreciation that came on this veteran's face is something I still see each time talking about this program. I am choosing this project also for my mom --- as this was her

favorite program of those we do each year.

Another project is honoring our caregivers. This will be a caregiver who is a Legion Family member. More information on caregiving and how we will honor them will be coming out.

For me --- when I see a barn --- the first thing I think of is, "did they milk cows like we did growing up?" The barn can symbolize different things for each of us because barns provide families with a means of purpose. When you drive around and see a barn, do you see the same barn each time? No, you do not. It is like each of our units; we are not the same.

I would love to come and visit your meetings or events, so please send me your invitations. We want to know about the meetings and events and share them on

the Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary Group Facebook page. If you are not a friend on this page, please add us.

So, to quote our dad when he was Commander, "Working together as a team, we can and will accomplish our goals."

I am looking forward to being your 2026-2027 Department President for Nebraska.

*Vicki Cyboron  
Department President*



## GIRLS STATE IS . . . DYNAMITE!

Another "dynamite" session of Girls State (GS) is in the books. The closing ceremony on Saturday, June 6, welcomed 308 GS alumnae into the special sisterhood of Girls State. What a week it was!

The week-long program was jam-packed with filing, campaigning, and voting for city, county, and state offices, holding town hall meetings, party caucuses, visiting the Capitol and different offices, and discussing policy topics, city problems, and school board issues. Add to that, twenty different presentations ranging from Senator Deb Fischer, Governor Jim Pillen, former Senator Julie Slama to Dr. Jo Owens Nausler and Grace McDonald. Add in General Craig Strong, Military Women Panel, National Guard, and K9 Trooper Austin Donner with his dog, Tilt — plus topics on political science, Lincoln Community Foundation, and preparing for college.

Of course, we included American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) presentations of parliamentary procedures, Children's Military Table and POW/MIA Empty Table ceremonies, meaning of the thirteen folds of our flag, poppy presentation, history of the ALA and our scholarships, The American Legion youth programs, and Girls Nation. And, we cannot forget their involvement in Community Service, Places of Interest, Media, Band, and Chorus. Oh yeah, we took time to eat three meals a day and sleep! Whew!



*Community Service making plams*

All of this could not happen without the 42 volunteers for the week, the 18 volunteers for helping with the General Election on Wednesday, and the ALA units and other sponsoring organizations that work the program to select a delegate. We cannot forget the many units that donate towards the Girls State Program. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Here is a brief summary:

- Snack night continued with 40 units donating \$30 towards the purchasing of a variety of items such as granola bars, trail mix, chips, clementine oranges, Capri sun drink, etc. The leftovers were donated to the Malone Center (which was one of the Community Service projects).
- Mercy Meals this year proved productive with 23,146 bagged meals being made. Unit and individual contributions to this project allowed GS to cover \$3,000 of the total cost this year.
- Your support of providing plastic bags was phenomenal! So many were donated that we were not able to use them all. But we made enough plarns to make eight beds.
- The All-Star Activities night was another success! And if you remember the staff challenged the counselors to a rematch from last year; and the staff was victorious!
- Band and chorus were well accepted and WOW, can they put together a remarkable concert in just three days of practice.
- The Pocket Flag project added 328 flags to be presented to the Offutt Air Force Base where they will be given to those being deployed.
- "Thank You's" were written by each girl and handed out at the Department Convention and mailed to the units and individuals/organizations that

sponsored them. However, there is one that was not delivered as not sure who "Mom" was. The card was "Thank You Mom!! – Thank you so much for choosing me for the 85th Cornhusker Girls State. It was such a great experience! I will forever cherish the memories I made things I learned! THANK YOU!" If you are the "mom," please contact me and I'll send you the card.

- Talent Night is always a fun time. This year, City of Penney (Floor 5) included Lorene Bartos in their performance!



*City of Penney Talent Night*

- Elected as the 2026 Girls State Governor was Hadassah Rankin from the Federalist Party. She is from Central City and attends Nebraska Christian School. Hadassah was sworn in at the Capitol on Thursday by Lieutenant Governor Andrea Hu, from Lincoln East.



*2026 Governor Hadassah Rankin*

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...



## JUNIOR PRESIDENT

Wow! It has been such a great year of "Quilting and Comforting for our Veterans' Valor."

I would like to thank everyone for supporting me in my journey as the 2025-2026 Honorary Dept. Jr. President. It was amazing! Thank you for buying raffle tickets, donating in a "pass the hat," or showing support with your words by coming to tell me what I'm doing is so touching.

The total amount we raised together was \$5,791! I will be working with Department Headquarters in the coming weeks to send the money raised to the Quilt of Valor Foundation to be divided and earmarked for the quilting groups in Nebraska that make the Quilts of Valor for our veterans.

I feel all veterans who serve our country should be honored in some



way, and helping with the cost of these quilts will help make that possible. To everyone who helped in my journey, I thank you.

I would also like to thank everyone who was able to join the Juniors in Arlington on Saturday, April 11 for the 83rd Annual Department of Nebraska Jr. Conference. The Juniors had a busy day filled with many activities.

In addition to conducting the business of the Nebraska Junior Auxiliary, highlights from the day included hearing a woman veteran, Jennifer Kmitta, speak of her experiences in the military and why she chose to serve her country, honoring Jennifer by awarding her a Quilt of Valor during a Quilt of Valor ceremony, conducting the Military Child's Table Setting Ceremony to celebrate the Month of the Military Child in April, making a fun craft by creating poppies from cut-out foam pieces, and --- of course --- drawing the winner of the quilt I was raffling to raise money for my President's Project.

It was exciting to have the winner, District 11 President Mary Beth Coffey, in attendance at the Jr. Conference that day. We were able to personally present the quilt to her!

Once again, thank you for supporting me this past year as the 2025-2026 Honorary Dept. Jr. President, and thank you for helping support Nebraska's Quilt of Valor groups so that we can continue to honor more veterans for their much-appreciated service to our country!

Respectfully,

*Erica Fuchs  
Honorary Dept. Jr. President*

GIRLS STATE IS . . . DYNAMITE!

...CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

- The 2026 Girls Nation Senators were announced at the closing ceremony on Saturday. They were Kailey Hartman (Pawnee City) and Avery Nordhues (Lincoln East), who attended the 2026 Girls Nation in Washington DC, July 18-25.



2026 Girls Nation Senators Kailey Hartman and Avery Nordhues

- The 2026 Samsung Scholarship winner was Jayleen Good from Ainsworth.



2026 Samsung Scholarship winner Jayleen Good

What do the participants think of the week? The evaluations showed

an overall rating of 4.4 out of 5 for the week. Would they recommend GS to other girls at their school to attend? 96% said yes. Will they use what they learned to make a difference in their school or community? 99% said they would. The evaluations are reviewed and used to continue to improve the program.

From those percentages, please reach out to your delegate when you begin the process of selecting your 2027 GS citizens. Utilize them to promote this outstanding program. And, if you have not asked them to report about their week at your unit meeting, please do so.

A video of the week was shown at the Department Convention. If you would like to see it, you can visit the Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary Facebook page or the Cornhusker Girls State & Alumni Facebook page. It is also available on the ALA website. Or contact me.

Now it is time to pass on the GS Chair to Vicki Colson. It has been a rewarding two years of serving as the Chair (thanks Amanda Washburn for asking!). I am beyond pleased that I was asked to serve on the GS Advisory Board (thanks Vicki Cyboron); so, YES, I will be back in 2027 as Girls State is... DYNAMITE!!

Vicki Ozenbaugh  
Girls State Chair

2026-2027 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS



2026-2027 Department officers are (L to R): Secretary Roxanne Hiatt, Chaplain Lindsay Brown, Historian Vicki Colson, Vice President Lori Reimers, President Vicki Cyboron, Treasurer, and NEC Vicki Ozenbaugh



Pictured is Charlene Remmenga from Elwood ALA Unit 290. She won the Department Quilt Raffle at the Department Convention. We surprised her at Monday morning coffee after the convention. She exclaimed, "I won that? Can you put this in the Star?"



Well, it wasn't common knowledge, but Maria Atterberry won the raffle for the commemorative rifle. The raffle started at Mid-year by the Norfolk Legion Riders Chapter 17, and they drew for the rifle on June 1st. This Auxiliary member is a proud owner of a Henry American Eagle 22LR! Her smile is genuine.

100% MEMBERSHIP PARADE



Thank you to all the units that participated in the 100% membership parade at the Department Convention 250-Year USA Birthday Party.

| Remember to send your assignments a couple weeks before the month they are due.                                                                       |                                           |                                       |                                            |                                |                                   |                                |                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2026 - 2027 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 |
| Sept.                                                                                                                                                 | #288 Farnam                               | #126 Broken Bow                       | #353 Eddyville                             | #283 Platte Center             | #10 Morrill                       | #200 Bayard                    | #354 Pleasant Dale              |
| Oct.                                                                                                                                                  | #257 Eustis                               | #52 Kearney                           | #27 Beatrice                               | #62 Newcastle                  | #10 Morrill                       | #160 Wilcox                    | #232 Malmo                      |
| Nov.                                                                                                                                                  | #225 Eddyville                            | #209 Franklin                         | #27 Beatrice                               | #322 Monroe                    | #57 Hyannis                       | #57 Hyannis                    | #222 Shubert                    |
| Dec.                                                                                                                                                  | #109 Mullen                               | #288 Farnam                           | #27 Beatrice                               | #327 Bellwood                  | #7 Alliance                       | #145 Bloomington               | #27 Beatrice                    |
| Jan.                                                                                                                                                  |                                           |                                       |                                            |                                |                                   |                                |                                 |
| Feb.                                                                                                                                                  |                                           | #141 Hampton                          |                                            |                                | #7 Alliance                       | #7 Alliance                    |                                 |
| Some facilities have restrictions as to what you can use for decorations.<br>If you have any questions, please contact the facilities contact person. |                                           |                                       |                                            |                                |                                   |                                |                                 |
| Service to Veterans Chair: Mary Ann Boldt · 79006 Drive 419, Callaway, NE 68825-2556 · Phone (308) 870-4772                                           |                                           |                                       |                                            |                                |                                   |                                |                                 |

2026-2027 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS & CHAIRMEN

Department Officers

|                |                 |                                                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| President      | Vicki Cyboron   | 2454 7th Ave., Boelus, NE 68820                 |
| Vice President | Lori Reimers    | 2011 24th Street, Central City, NE 68826        |
| Historian      | Vicky Colson    | PO Box 61, Paxton, NE 69155                     |
| Chaplain       | Lindsay Brown   | 20 S 41st Street #111, Council Bluffs, IA 51501 |
| Secretary      | Roxanne Hiatt   | 150 NW 40th Street Unit B, Lincoln, NE 68528    |
| Treasurer      | Vicki Ozenbaugh | 515 Road 18, Ohiowa, NE 68416                   |

National Committeeperson

|                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Vicki Ozenbaugh | 515 Rd. 18, Ohiowa, NE 68416 |
|-----------------|------------------------------|

District Presidents

|          |                  |                                           |
|----------|------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| One      | Jean Vackiner    | 35878 Boiling Springs Rd., Cody, NE 69211 |
| Two      | LaRee Kubes      | 205 West 10th St., Madison, NE 68748      |
| Three    | Jacki O'Neill    | 1018 Gordon Drive, Lincoln, NE 68522      |
| Four     | Dot Hall         | PO Box 142, Dalton, NE 69131              |
| Five     | Merle Konken     | PO Box 232, Hershey, NE 69143             |
| Six      | Barbara Dorsey   | 47069 Hwy 70, Arcadia, NE 68815           |
| Seven    | Mari Melcher     | 27318 340 Ave., Monroe, NE 68647          |
| Eight    | Lee Brauer       | 15015 Chicago Cr., Omaha, NE 68154        |
| Nine     | Lana Bennett     | 706 Ontario Ave., Elwood, NE 68937        |
| Ten      | Tina Nelson      | 503 N Brown, Clay Center, NE 68933        |
| Eleven   | Mary Beth Coffey | 209 Road M, McCool Jct., NE 68401         |
| Twelve   | Erma Naber       | 1110 Road V, Waco, NE 68460               |
| Thirteen | Bobbi Albers     | 71493 HWY 50, Pawnee City, NE 68420       |

Department Chairmen

|                          |                  |                                                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Advisory                 | Lisa Moore       | 318 N Railroad, Wilber, NE 68465                 |
| Americanism              | Adeline Hanel    | 706 Sherman St., West Point, NE 68788            |
| Auxiliary Emergency Fund | Lisa Moore       | 318 N Railroad, Wilber, NE 68465                 |
| Cavalcade of Memories    | Vicki Colson     | PO Box 61, Paxton, NE 69155                      |
| Children & Youth         | Tina Nelson      | 503 N Brown Ave., Clay Center, NE 68933          |
| Community Service        | Maria Atterberry | 704 Rochelle St., Elwood, NE 68937               |
| Constitution & Bylaws    | Gayla Schmid     | 303 Esplanade St., Bellwood, NE 68624            |
| County Government        | Mary Eickoff     | 1915 Nemaha Ave., Falls City, NE 68355           |
| Distinguished Guest      | Vicki Ozenbaugh  | 515 Road 18, Ohiowa, NE 68416                    |
| Education                | Sara Fuchs       | 7271 County Road 11, Arlington, NE 68002         |
| Finance                  | Donna Hatfield   | PO Box 841, Lexington, NE 68850                  |
| Girls State Advisory     | Nicole Vance     | 52 Meadowbrook Court, South Sioux City, NE 68776 |
| Girls State              | Vicki Colson     | PO Box 61, Paxton, NE 69155                      |
| Junior Activities        | Laura Novak      | 1006 Dakota St., Emerson, NE 68733               |
| Leadership               | Vicki Ozenbaugh  | 515 Road 18, Ohiowa, NE 68416                    |
| Legislative              | Amie Moores      | PO Box 207, Elwood, NE 68937                     |
| Membership               | Justina Birkel   | PO Box 64, North Loup, NE 68859                  |
| Music                    | Jean Vackiner    | 35878 Boiling Springs Rd., Cody, NE 69211        |
| National Security        | Amanda Washburn  | 5230 N 148th St., Lincoln, NE 68527              |
| Parliamentarian          | Lynne Wild       | 1510 N 71st St., Lincoln, NE 68505               |
| Past Presidents Parley   | Amanda Washburn  | 5230 N 148 St., Lincoln, NE 68527                |
| Poppy                    | Nancy Niemann    | 100 Trudy Ann Cr., Raymond, NE 68428             |
| Public Relations         | Meri Hietbrink   | 4816 Kingsley St., Lincoln, NE 68524             |
| "The Star" Editor        | Lorene Bartos    | 7441 San Mateo Lane, Lincoln, NE 68516           |
| Service to Veterans      | Mary Ann Boldt   | 79006 Drive 419, Callaway, NE 68825              |

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

|             |                 |                                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Chairperson | Amanda Washburn | 5230 N 148 St., Lincoln, NE 68527 |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|

Veterans Administration Medical Center Representatives

|              |                |                                       |
|--------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lincoln      | Linda Varejcka | 450 Conestoga Ave., Hickman, NE 68372 |
| Omaha        | Paula Pillen   | 6001 N 147 St., Omaha, NE 68116       |
| Grand Island | Carmen Larson  | 866 HWY 58 St., Libory, NE 68872      |

Veterans Administration Medical Center Associate Representatives

|                 |               |                                 |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Hot Springs, SD | Roxanne Sones | PO Box 623, Rushville, NE 69360 |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|

Nebraska Veterans Home Chairmen

|                   |               |                                         |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Central Nebraska  | Kathy Fisher  | 703 W 13th St. Place, Kearney, NE 68845 |
| Norfolk           | LaRee Kubes   | 205 W 10 St. Madison, NE 68748          |
| Eastern Nebraska  | Donna Smith   | 15103 S 84th St., Papillion, NE 68046   |
| Western, Nebraska | Cecil Doshier | 1960 Kings Rd., Gering, NE 69341        |

Honorary Department Junior Officers

|                         |                |                 |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Honorary President      | Kendall Kasl   | Dorchester      |
| Honorary Vice President | Cora Pankoke   | Beaver Crossing |
| Honorary Historian      | Kinleigh Jones | Grand Island    |
| Honorary Chaplain       | Kelsey Woods   | Shickley        |

Department Headquarters

|            |                                               |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Address:   | 150 NW 40th Street Suite B, Lincoln, NE 68528 |
| Telephone: | 402-466-1808                                  |
| Email:     | nealasec@gmail.com                            |
| Web:       | nebraskalegionaux.net                         |

# 2026 CONVENTION REPORT

The 104th Annual Department Convention is now history.

The DEC meeting was held Thursday afternoon with a quorum present. The Committee approved previous minutes, heard the Finance Committee report (our department is in good shape financially), and acted on three (3) Finance rules and all budgets. They acted on three (3) Constitution & Bylaws Standing Rules, accepted the surrender of two (2) unit charters, gave District reports, and heard the 2026-2027 Officer candidate declarations.

On Friday morning, we opened our session with the Processional of Past Department Presidents, District Presidents, and Department Officers. Our special guest, National President Pam Ray of the Department of Illinois, was introduced, and National Officers/Appointees were recognized. With 64 units

registered, a quorum was declared. An overview of the DEC meeting held the previous day was read by the Secretary. The Constitution & Bylaws Committee presented two (2) proposed Constitution amendments and five (5) Bylaws amendments. All were approved by the membership. Program Chairs began their reports along with their program awards and continued throughout the Convention.

Friday afternoon began with the American Legion Family joint session, where National Commander Dan Wiley and National President Pam Ray both spoke to the membership. Post 84 of Columbus performed the Post Everlasting Ceremony, and we heard The American Legion Chaplain Steve Witmer give the Eulogy, followed by the Memorial Prayer from Auxiliary Chaplain Lori Reimers.

The Auxiliary then returned to regular business with more Chairman Reports and District Caucuses. The Nominating Committee met following recess.

Saturday morning, we heard National President Pam Ray speak on her year and how her pin design of wings came about. She is a big supporter of Honor Flights for Veterans to Washington, D.C. National appointments were then introduced, and they gave their reports.

Honorary Department Junior President Kendall Kasl was introduced. She announced she had some raffle items out in the lobby. We also heard the amount collected in total for Immediate Past Honorary Junior Department President Erica Fuchs was \$4,362.00 for her Quilts of Valor project.

The Chaplain honored Gold Star members present and everywhere.

We are humbled by their sacrifice. Four Past Department Presidents lost this year were remembered by fellow Past Presidents.

A large crowd attended the Children & Youth luncheon, and the speaker was from a group known as Connected Forever. They offer support to families of premature babies.

In the afternoon, we heard the VA & R and Facility reports and endorsements for candidates for office. Nominations closed with the following names for office appearing on the ballot Sunday: President – Vicki Cyboron, Vice President – Lori Reimers, Historian – Vicki Colson, Chaplain – Lindsay Brown, NEC – Vicki Ozenbaugh.

There was a candidate reception following recess, where attendees met National President Pam Ray along with Department candidates for office.

Sunday saw a total of 76 units present with 124 total registered. Elections were held, followed by the installation of the 2026-2027 Department Officers.

Newly-installed President Vicki Cyboron announced that her theme for the year would be “Families Accomplishing Rewarding Memories” or FARM. Her symbol is a tractor and barn.

The gavel was returned so President Ruth could close the 2026 Department Convention. What an amazing year. Thank you, Ruth. You are gracious and so kind. Consider this year successful and a job well done!

*Roxanne Hiatt  
Secretary*

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY CAROL VAN KIRK

Past National and Department ALA President Carol Van Kirk is celebrating her 90th birthday on August 19, 2026. An Open House will be held Sunday, August 16th at the Fox Hollow Golf Course located at 500 Fox Hollow Lane in Sutton, Nebraska from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Birthday wishes may be sent to Carol at 207 W Ash Street, Sutton, NE 68979.



York Unit 19 helped Lucille Reichlinger (center) celebrate her 99th birthday. Lucille doesn't miss many meetings and plays the piano for our meeting.

### IN REMEMBRANCE - JOANN WARD



Over her 41 years, she served in all the unit and district offices and, at the Department level, Historian, Vice President, and President from 2013-2014. Her theme was “Soaring into Service.”

She attended 13 National Conventions from 1998-2016 and 4 Washington Conferences in Washington D.C.

In 2017, JoAnn received the District Nine Cornerstone Award of SW Nebraska at the District Convention in Curtis, NE. She was the first Auxiliary member to receive this citation and pin.

JoAnn was preceded in death by her daughter Glenda, husband Harley, infant brother Kenneth Clude, her parents Kenneth and Lena Sailors, in-laws Bill and Clara Ward, and son-in-law David Dunham.

She is survived by her daughters Cindy (Tom) Monnahan, Palisade,

NE, Cathy Dunham, Bennington, KS, Cheri Ward (Randy Wilcox), McCook, NE, Dwana (Ed) Flaig, Palisade, NE, and son William Ward of Palisade, NE. Grandchildren: Brett (Shannon), Bethany, Brian and Bart Monnahan; Jeremy, Nathan and Joshua Dunham, Vanessa Sherman, Larissa (Shane) Gerhartz, Sabrina Ward, and Andrew Ward, Kasey (Tori) and Kody Hahn; Shawn, Cory (Shailey), Chardric (Taylor) Flaig and Katie Jo (Jeremy) Mathews and 12 great-grandchildren. Also surviving is one brother, Keith (Ruby) Sailors of North Platte, along with several nieces and extended family and friends.

JoAnn loved her family dearly, and serving the American Legion Auxiliary was her passion. She will be sorely missed.

### AEF THANKS YOU

Nebraska is AEF! Absolutely, Exceptionally, Fantastic!

For this year, President Ruth's project is showing \$10,504.01 in donations. These are from unit donations, Fall Round Up contributions, personal donations, raffle ticket sales, and the M & M game.

The National AEF totals are \$14,257.24 --- that amount coming from unit donations, county donations, a generous personal donation from Pat Classen, special fundraising at unit and district levels, the Silly Tax Assessment game, and the District Basket Auction at the Department Convention.

Doing the math --- that is \$24,761.25 that members from across Nebraska played a role in collecting. But, wait! There is more!

Nebraska's contribution to National this year was boosted by the funds

collected in the 2024-2025 year, as the reporting period is June 1 to May 31. The 2024-2025 AEF donations of \$8,898.87 were sent last July. Therefore, Nebraska's AEF donations through May 31 totaled \$31,379.91, with a carryover amount of \$2,280.21 in the AEF fund that will be included in the 2026-2027 donations.

As the 2025-2026 AEF chair, I applaud and thank everyone for your generous support for this very important ALA program. Nebraska can be proud that ten members will benefit from a grant of up to \$3,000 for a disaster (natural) or hardship (personal crisis) in their lives. Remember. It is Members helping Members!

*Vicki Ozenbaugh  
AEF Chair*



### IT'S HISTORY

Do you know the stories of your Legionnaires?

Do you have any veterans who were killed in action, prisoners of war, or missing in action? Do you know their story? We would like you to share any of these stories.

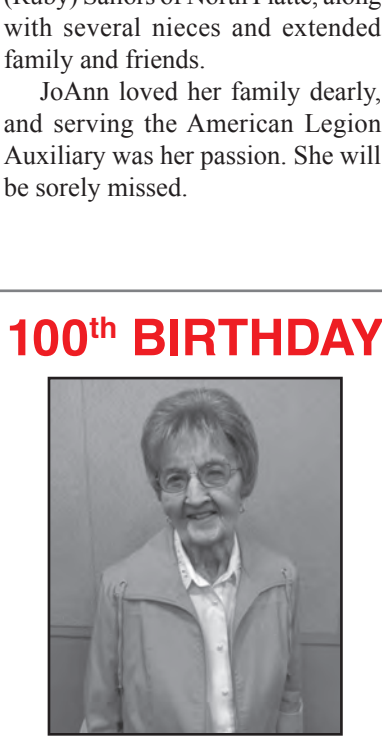
I would also like stories about your “Cavalcade of Memories,” like things on your walls, in cabinets, or in scrapbooks.

You all have a lot of history just waiting to be dusted off.

Send to Vicki Colson, PO Box 61, Paxton, NE 69155.

*Vicki Colson  
Department Historian*

### 100<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY



Wilma Dopson joined the Stanton American Legion Unit 88 in 1947 and has been a continuous member to this day. She has been a color or flag bearer since becoming a member and retired a few years ago. She held all officer positions numerous times through the years.

As a member of the Auxiliary and the Stanton VFW Auxiliary, she has volunteered many hours at the Norfolk Veterans Home. Along with being a member of these auxiliaries, she was a member of The Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary.

This dedicated lady will be celebrating her 100th birthday on October 19, 2026.

### BROKEN BOW

Palmer-Lomax Unit 126 of Broken Bow donated \$250 to the Broken Bow Salvation Army to be used to buy 250 notebooks for their Backpack Program (school supplies). President Nancy Harrold and Treasurer Jan Doggett presented the check. All members of our “Legion Family” are encouraged to support their communities during this special year.



Pictured L-R are Salvation Army and Auxiliary members Adrienne Grafe, Ken Pitken, Phil Sloat, Connie Scott, Debbie Moniger, Carol Allen, Auxiliary President Nancy Harrold, Auxiliary Treasurer Jan Doggett, and Vicki Oxford.

### HONOR FLIGHT

My name is Elizabeth Ketner, and I am a dual member of both Shubert Post 222 and Shubert ALA Unit 222. I had the honor of being on the ALA-sponsored Honor Flight in April.

It was a WONDERFUL experience. Enjoying perfect weather, we got to visit Arlington and saw the changing of the guards. We also visited the Marine Memorial, visited the Navy building, and had a great lunch near the future FDR Memorial. We visited the Vietnam Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, and the WWII Memorial --- and then had a great supper at the Military Women's Museum.

I got a picture with National President Pam Ray. She had supper with us on the 13th, plus spent all



day with us touring Washington on the 14th.

There were almost 50 veterans with their guardians and service animals on this Honor Flight. We came from all over, and I think all branches were represented. I highly recommend that if the opportunity comes along, jump on it.



CHAPLAINS CORNER

Hello, everyone. I just wanted to reintroduce myself. My name is Lindsay Brown of Unit 216 in District 8. I want to thank everyone for this opportunity to serve as your Department Chaplain.

A new year with new officers is starting for not just the Department, but for the districts, counties, and units --- and I would like us all to say a prayer for them for a good year of leadership.

As well, a new school year is coming upon us --- so let’s keep all our students from grade school to college in our thoughts and prayers for a good year. Lord, please watch over all our students that they will prosper in learning and guide them in the right direction to make thoughtful decisions in everything they do. In God’s name, Amen.

Lindsay Brown  
Chaplain

**A prayer for leaders:**  
*Father, thank you for calling each one of us to be a leader.  
Help us lead with both confidence and humility.  
Remind us that, at its core, leadership is about serving a need, empowering others, stewarding what You’ve entrusted to us.  
Give us courage to act even when we’re uncertain and eyes to see problems as opportunities.  
Teach us to value progress over perfection.  
May we resist the urge to grow too comfortable or afraid to fail.  
Help us love deeply, lead wholeheartedly.  
And inspire others—all for Your glory.  
And as we take small, faithful steps today, may You use them to bring an eternal impact tomorrow.  
In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

POLK CONTINUOUS MEMBERSHIP

The American Legion Auxiliary in Polk celebrated members' years of continuous service and dedication. One special honoree was Alvertus Jones, who received a certificate recognizing an incredible 80 years of continuous membership. To help celebrate this milestone, two of her four daughters, four granddaughters, and six great-granddaughters surprised her by attending the event. Together, Alvertus and her family

represent more than 663 years of Auxiliary membership. Alvertus remains a very active and valued member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She is well known for her homemade noodles (which she prepares for our annual soup and pie fundraiser) and for always lending a helping hand at all of our events. Thank you, Alvertus, for your many years of hard work, dedication, and service to our veterans! Also recognized and in attendance were --- with years of service shown: (front row) Alvertus Jones (80), Becky Carlstrom (56), and Julia Schank (68). Back row: Connie Ang (31), Donette Shenk (68), Lynda Sundberg (70), Nancy Gondringer (74), Louise Logston (56), and Kay Neuhaus (56). Unable to attend were Leslie Branting (65), Carita Albin (67), Linda Kisler (75), Jane Goertzen (60), McKenzie Schwarz (27), and Shelby Schwarz (23).



DATES TO REMEMBER

AUGUST

29-Sept. 3 National Convention, Louisville, Kentucky

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Rosewood Gavel Award Deadline
- 7 Labor Day — Department Headquarters Closed
- 10 Deadline for Star Articles — October/November Issue
- 11 Patriots Day
- 18 POW/MIA Recognition Day
- 28 Gold Star Family Recognition Day

OCTOBER

- 12 Columbus Day — Department Headquarters Closed
- 24 ALA Leadership School & President Vicki’s Homecoming - Boelus, NE
- 31 Halloween



Mintken-Davison Unit 301 in Dalton donated \$25 in gold dollars stuffed into eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt. Pictured is Dalton Unit 301 President Dot Hall and her granddaughter, Tillie, who found one!



Virginia American Legion Auxiliary Unit 367 held its annual Mother’s Day Luncheon on April 25, welcoming approximately 140 guests from the Virginia community. The event, held each year as a community service project, featured an all-you-can-eat buffet of sandwiches, salads, and desserts --- along with live entertainment. The luncheon provides an opportunity for community members to gather for an afternoon of food, fellowship, and celebration. Approximately 90 volunteer hours were dedicated to planning, preparing, and hosting the event. Members of Unit 367 worked together to ensure a successful gathering, demonstrating the Auxiliary’s commitment to serving others and strengthening community connections.



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 SEPTEMBER 10, 2026.

READ THE ROOM, BACKWARDS

A funny thing happened at the Department Convention this year. In my last article, I lectured on making sure you knew your elder audience when it came to entertaining them; how the latest praise genre would not reach them in ways they expect.

I was honored to serve President Ruth at the piano this year. I am nowhere near a ‘pianist’ --- more of a hymn-pounding-joyful-noise level of player. I’ve served at least a dozen presidential terms, and each has been different – some want the old military marches, others love the whimsy of 60’s/70’s tunes. Occasionally, I get called on to provide some fun songs to break up the monotony of standing rule reading or to fill the silence waiting for speakers.

This year, I was called upon far more often to “sing a happy song.” At first, it was easy. “If You’re Happy and You Know It” and “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” got the crowd singing and smiling, and I was feeling downright adequate.

But, as the convention went on, I found myself digging deeper for songs the Auxiliary members would enjoy without a song sheet. I began to notice several lovely young ladies in the crowd looking a bit

bored. Some looked as though they were trying, others not so much. I began quizzing these young ladies throughout the day on songs they knew. “Camptown Ladies?” Nope. “Home on the Range?” Nope. “America the Beautiful?” Well, kind of.

So, now what? It’s no one’s fault. 250 years has seen a whole lot of music. I guess we can’t expect every generation to know every singalong song. I have to admit, I felt a twinge of sadness with the potential loss of these lovely tunes. A number of years ago, rock legend Sting recorded an album of 16-17th century Elizabethan melodies. Gorgeous, but, you know.... I felt a little like him last weekend.

Never give up; never surrender. Next convention WILL have song sheets, and more emphasis will be placed on teaching these good old songs. Please --- teach them to the young, and KEEP SINGING!

*You will never look into the eyes of someone God does not love.*

Jean Vackiner  
Music Chair



2026 POPPY POSTER WINNERS

- Class I**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... Berkany Dugan. .... Greeley Unit 186  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Amelia Kriewald ..... Scotia Unit 150  
3<sup>rd</sup> ..... Cole Sikes. .... Brewster Unit 323
- Class II**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... Lexi Holcomb. .... Arcadia Unit 257  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Eliot Schultz. .... Cook Unit 360  
3<sup>rd</sup> ..... Kasidy Cox ..... Valentine Unit 90
- Class III**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... DeNeil Ammon ..... Valentine Unit 90  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Alexandria Schaaf ... Farley-Tushla Unit 86  
3<sup>rd</sup> ..... Regan Moore Minden ... Davison Unit 301
- Class IV**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... Havyn Huffman ..... Chadron Unit 12  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Lainey Skrdla Farley ..... Tushla Unit 86  
3<sup>rd</sup> ..... Nora Noel ..... Shickey Unit 164
- Class V**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... Ami Gartner ..... Crawford Unit 138  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Paizley Zutavern. .... Brewster Unit 323  
3<sup>rd</sup> ..... Laramie Duffield ..... Hyannis Unit 57
- Class VI**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... Dylan Frye ..... Hyannis Unit 57  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Haley Hovan. .... Crawford Unit 138
- Class VII**  
1<sup>st</sup> ..... Laelynn Schleitman .... Davenport Unit 335  
2<sup>nd</sup> ..... Shawn Sunday ..... Brunning Unit 166



The 2026 Poppy Poster winners at Ashton Unit 108 were McKenna Kaslon, Lexie Wooden, and Lydia Tedford. Auxiliary members pictured include Julie Skibinski, President Maxine Hurt, Linda Garvel, Joey Allen, Cindy Long, and Laura Kugler (seated).