THE CONNECTICUT AUXILIARE #8/ April 2026
American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Connecticut, Inc.
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Department Office Hours: **Monday/Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-5:30**

Department President,

As we welcome the month of April, we also welcome the beauty and renewal that spring brings. It's a time of growth, fresh beginnings, and continued dedication to our mission of service to veterans, military members, and their families.

I hope many of you will be able to join us for our Past Presidents' Spring Parley on April 25th . This is always a meaningful opportunity to come together, share ideas, celebrate our accomplishments, and strengthen the bond we have as members of the Department of Connecticut. Your presence and participation truly make a difference.

April is also recognized as the Month of the Military Child—a time to honor the strength, resilience, and sacrifices of the children in military families. These young individuals serve in their own way, facing unique challenges with courage and pride. I encourage each of you to take a moment this month to recognize and support military children in your communities, whether through a small act of kindness, a program, or simply raising awareness.

As always, thank you for your continued commitment, compassion, and service. Everything you do helps make a lasting impact.

For God and Country,

Kristin Jones

ALA Dept of CT President

Membership

Auxiliary Members,

Membership is the heart of our organization, and every renewal matters. Each member represents support for our veterans, our military, their families, and our communities. When dues are paid, members remain in good standing and continue to have a voice, a vote, and access to the programs and benefits of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Lisa LaCoursiere Senior Vice President/Membership Chairman

Finance

Hi, Everyone!

I think Spring is finally coming!

April is the month of the Military Child with the 15th being Purple up Day! Just a reminder that we have Purple up shirts available to purchase. Contact me and I can meet you at the office.

Starting in mid April the Finance Committee, along with anyone else that would like to help, will be folding letters and stuffing envelopes for our Spring raffle. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year so a lot of help is greatly appreciated. As I was once told, "Many hands make light work."

Thank you all for supporting our Department.

Marge Sunbury
Finance Chairman
860-639-3011
margesun1955@gmail.com

Notes From the Department Office

REMIT TO FORM – attached find the form for the 2026-2027 membership year. It is very **important** that this is completed and returned by **May 1, 2026** to ensure that membership dues for the upcoming year will be sent to the proper address for each unit.

All Consolidated Unit Reports are due to the **office** by May 5th. Unit program **narratives** are due to the **individual Department Chairmen** by May 5th.

Children and Youth

Members,

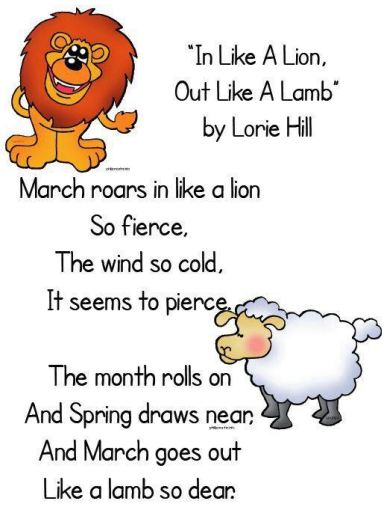
Spring has finally arrived. Let's get walking so we will be ready to do our American Legion Family Walkathon for CT Children's Hospital on April 25th.1st and 6th District walk together. Contact Louie Robinson in 1st District for Walk information. 2nd District walk is in North Haven on the Green across from TAL Post 76. 3rd District will be walking in Monroe contact site chairman. 4th District Contact is Manny Rodriguez.

Purple Up Day for Military Kids is on April 15th - wear **Purple** that day. I need my end of year reports by May Any questions let me know.

Chairman Ruth Morgan 203-215-9236 or email Morgan71676@gmail.com

Education

Happy Spring. March did indeed come in like a lion, but it is going out like a lamb.



By the time you read this, my Education Committee and I will have submitted the winners of **ALA National Scholarships** after grading their entries. There were 8 applicants for Children of Warriors, 0 for Spirit of Youth, 1 for Member Loyalty, and 2 for Non-Traditional Student. That was about the same number as last year. I hope we get the word out more for next year. Let's wish the winners from the Department ***Good Luck*** as they advance to the Eastern Division.

Also, the March 30, 2026 deadline for the **Department of Connecticut Education Grant** will have passed. I hope all applicants are able to receive the grant and come to the Convention to thank us.

I just bought Lucky Charms cereal to make treats for Saint Patrick's Day. I earned Box Tops for Education (https://boxtops4education.com/) by my purchase, which supported my local school. Are you scanning receipts?

Contact me at ALA_CT_Education@yahoo.com if you have questions, need ideas, or want to share something unique your Unit is doing.

All my best,

Elaine Kotler, Education Chair

"*To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow*." — Audrey Hepburn

Girls State

Dear Members,
ALA Laurel Girls State tuition will be **$450.00** per delegate for the 2026 session.

The application is LIVE on the Department website . Complete application deadline is JUNE 1, 2026 to the committee.

Please let us know if you have any questions. We can be reached at alalgsofficial@gmail.com
We look forward to hosting another delegation of driven and civically engaged young women.

All the best,
Pamela and Sue (Chairman & Director, respectively)

Leadership

Basic Protocol — Distinguished Guests

In the audience, when visiting other than their own Unit, District etc. they should be escorted. Remember that an error in protocol is not a major crime. If you are the Officer or Chair don't be offended be gracious.

When the speaker concludes, you rise and thank them. If a gift is to be presented, do it at this time.

If newspaper or newsletter publicity appears following your guests appearance or if photos or informal pictures are taken during the meeting, it is a nice gesture to send these to your guest.

A letter of appreciation from you is a must; and an informal note from the President or chairman is a nice gesture. Remember your organization is indebted to any guest, speaker or entertainer who has taken time, trouble and expense to attend your meeting.

When there are distinguished guests present, Chairmen and Officers making reports address the Chair only - "Madam President". The only exception given by Robert's Rules of Order is that the speaker may address the Chair - "Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen"

Lorraine Dixon, Leadership Chair dixonlorraine@aol.com

National Security

"**Meet the Donut Dollies, the unsung women who gave out sweet treats on the front lines**". Millions of Americans were overseas fighting in wars and while most bore arms and wore battle dress, some of the most intrepid wore baby blue of the American Red Cross. Instead of weapons, they carried coffee and donuts – serving them to soldiers in the most forward of the front-line posts. So, who were the Donut Dollies, these young women who left home were chosen for their spunk, optimism, flexibility, know-how and craftiness? They had to be at least 21, have a college education and have that "girl next door" look.

During World War II numerous teams of three female Red Cross volunteers operated club mobiles equipped with a kitchen area with a stove for heating water for coffee and a built-in donut-making machine. These club mobiles traveled with the rear echelon units, but each day their teams ventured out to different operating areas to visit Soldiers, play Victrola records, pass out sundry items, and serve hot coffee and fresh-made donuts to the troops.

Female Red Cross workers answered the call to duty again during the Korean War. In its early stages, they earned the endearing nickname, "Donut Dollies," turning out up to 20,000 donuts a day for American Soldiers disembarking troop ships in Pusan.

The Donut Dollies were most visible to troops serving in Vietnam and they didn't pass out a single donut! Instead, they brought smiles, songs, games, and a touch of back home to the troops. They trained for only two weeks in Washington, D.C. as Red Cross recreation workers, then packed off for Vietnam where they set up recreation centers before the USO and Special Services arrived. They also visited hospitals to hand out activity books and spent time in evac hospitals with the wounded.

No one appreciated the presence of the Donut Dollies more than the troops on the remote firebases. Minutes spent talking about home or sports or music or wives and girlfriends with a fresh-faced American girl with a pony tail wearing a tinge of lipstick and a splash of perfume was a terrific morale boost. And the fact that these young women had the guts to brave incoming mortars, sniper and ground- to-air fire, and other wartime hardships and dangers to visit the firebases earned them the unarguable respect and admiration of the troops. And that's exactly how Vietnam veterans remember the Red Cross Donut Dollies nearly forty years later— with unarguable appreciation, respect, and admiration.

Gladys DiDia – National Security Chair/cmeow26@sbcglobal. net

Past Presidents' Parley

Dear Past President Parley Members and Members of the ALA Dept. of CT,.
With warmer weather and spring approaching, it is time to look forward to our upcoming PPP Breakfast.
The event will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2026, at Post 128, located at 16 York Ave., Hamden, CT 06357. Doors will open at 10:00 AM, and the meeting will begin promptly at 10:30 AM, followed by a buffet breakfast and the business meeting. The cost to attend is $17.00.
During the event, we will hold a "Parade of Checks" for our Education Grant. We ask that members, units, and districts consider making a donation to support the students who have applied for grants to further their education. Grant winners will be announced during the meeting.
We are also excited to host a "Past Presidents Baby Picture" contest. Please bring some spare change to vote on the identities of the babies in the photos. Additionally, we will have a drawing for gifts provided by Past Presidents and enjoy entertainment by Past President Rosemarie LaBossiere.
Please plan to join us for this fun-filled day. A registration form is included; please return it by April 17, 2026. Please note that tickets will not be available at the door.

We look forward to seeing you there.
Best regards,
Sandra L Cruz Chairman

VA&R

Reminders - the Food Pantry at Newington VA is always in need non-perishable food items and gift cards ($25 Walmart, Stop & Shop and Aldi's). West Haven VA and Newington VA are always in need of toiletries-(travel size Fixodent and toothpaste, non-alcohol mouthwash, shampoo, shower gel, bars of soap, lotion, powder), tee shirts, underwear- male and female, feminine hygiene products, sweat pants, socks, playing cards, word search and crossword books.

You can drop items off at the office and I will make sure they get to the VA or you can take them to either facility. If you are unable to shop for the items, you can send a monetary donation and I will be more than happy to go shopping!

It's never too early to think about knitting/crocheting hats/scarves or collecting socks for Stand Down which will be held on September 18, 2026.

Thank you for all your support of our deserving veterans.

Karen L Thompson, Chairman kari2001ala@gmail.com

Chaplain

The month of April, the first full month of Spring. Easter is celebrated, as well as Passover. It brings to mind how children are so excited to look forward to "a new outfit" a visit from the Easter "bunny" and so outwardly happy to enjoy the season.

BLESS the children of the earth with abundance of a happy, secure life. Each child deserves no less, each child is precious as they are the future, the living legacy of our ancestors. They are the future. Amen

Lorraine Dixon Chaplain dixonlorraine@aol.com

Dates to Remember

April 2026	May 2026
1 April Fools Day	1 2026-2027 Unit Remit To forms due
1 Passover	5 Unit Consolidated Reports Due
3 Good Friday	5 Cinco de Mayo
5 Easter	10 Mother's Day
15 Tax Day	16 Armed Forces Day
22 Earth Day	22 National Poppy Day
24 Arbor Day	25 Memorial Day
25 Past Presidents' Parley (flyer attached)	29-31 National President's Visit
25 Kids Walk	30 – National Presidents Dinner (flyer attached)

FUTURE DATES

June 27 – July 2 ALA Laurel Girls State
July 4 – Hall of Flags Capitol Hartford 9:00 am
July 10-12 Department Convention
August 28-September 3 – National Convention Louisville Kentucky

Past Department Presidents' Birthdays – April

17- Joan Schaefer Poach
301 Julianne Rd
Cheyenne, WY 82007

23- Raelene Miller
4222 Ashlar Village
Wallingford, CT 06492-3084

24 – JoAnne Jackson
110 Turnbull Rd
New Hartford, CT 06057

26 – Janet Jefford
8360 E Club Rd
Boca Raton, FL 33433-1579

IN MEMORIAM

Unit 80 Beverly Ballette Unit 101 Aileen Szoka
Unit 140 Elizabeth Washington