Department of CT National Security Program 2024-2025

"ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU -
ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY."
INAUGURAL ADDRESS ~ JOHN F. KENNEDY ~ JANUARY 20, 1961

We welcome you to join us in the variety of ways you can support our National Security Program. It is up to you, as members of your Unit, to decide what works best for you, the list of possibilities are endless for how you want to support our active military, their families and your communities.

Get everyone involved from unit members right through to the military communities, your local organizations and neighborhoods. Everyone needs to be aware and play a part in making our surroundings safe, not only for today but for our future. Providing the opportunity and information to bring everyone together, when it counts for the most, and it is of the upmost importance.

If you have lived in your town for years, do you remember what it felt like to be new to the area, and to send your children to a different school? Did you wonder what services were available and how to get the support you might need? We are giving you various ways to obtain and share the knowledge to work with our military families and throughout your communities.

We must all work together to be safe when unexpected events take place around us.

The smallest thing may be the most meaningful thing to someone who really needs your knowledge, encouragement and support.

- ✓ The purpose of the National Security committee is to maintain and promote a strong national defense, strengthen our military families, and prepare our population to response to natural and other disasters.
- ✓ The purpose of our active military is to protect the security of the American people.
- ✓ The purpose of the Dept of CT National Security Program is to help you as a member and a Unit to enable this program to be a success through everything you do.

National Security Committee

Chair: Judy Lehosky ~ Unit #104 ~ text or call 860-235-9586, lehoskyj.ala@gmail.com

Members ~ Gladys DiDia Unit #12 and Marsha McCarty Unit #72

Department of CT National Security Program 2024-2025

We ask you to try something new with this amazing program and we will offer suggestions in the monthly Auxiliare, and at the September 28th PIC (Program Informational Conference) you will be given a wealth of knowledge, we will also highlight one or two topics each month.

1. **POW/MIA and Families Recognition Day** is always the third Friday in September (20th). The focus is to ensure that America remembers its responsibility to stand behind those who serve it and to make sure that we do all that is possible to account for those who have not returned.

More than 80,000 American service personnel are missing from previous conflicts and 38,000 are estimated to be recoverable. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (**https://www.dpaa.mil/**) remains relentless in its mission to provide the fullest possible accounting to their families and the nation, until they're all brought home.

Dr. Eleanor Ardel Vietti was America's first female POW in Vietnam in 1962, and the only American woman POW from the war whose fate is still unknown (there is no compelling evidence that proves that any American remains alive in captivity is Southeast Asia).

2. **The POW/MIA flag**, which is black with white details and lettering, shows the profile of a soldier's head, a guarded watch tower, barbed wire, and a wreath. It has the words 'POW/MIA – You Are Not Forgotten'.

The National POW/MIA Flag Act states the flag is displayed every day at federal locations already designated under existing law, including every post office building.

3. **The POW/MIA Empty Chair** covering should be at all official meetings at your unit, the Ceremonial Table setting should be somewhere within the Post home. These items may be purchased through **https://emblem.legion.org/**.

The POW/MIA remembrance Service wordage can be found at:

https://member.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/National-Security/Missing-Man-Table

4. **'America's White Table' book** - Author: Margot Theis Raven, Illustrator: Mike Benny, Publication: 2005 by Sleeping Bear Press, Genre: Fiction, Military, Picture Books, Pages: 32 Your unit can purchase this book to read to children or donate it to a local school or public library.

"the white table" originated during the time of the Vietnam War as a symbol for and remembrance to service members held prisoner of war or missing in action.

Solitary and solemn, it is the table where no one will ever sit.

5. **POW/MIA Bracelet** – There are 1,579 who remain missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia). Order your bracelets through: Ohio Chapter MIA/POW, PO Bos 14853, Columbus, OH, 43214 (National League of Families of American Prisoners & Missing in SE Asia, **www.pow-miafamilies.org**)

Just a final note, what separates us from the VA & R (Veteran's Affairs & Rehab program), is the National Security Program is concentrating on – **NOW** - our Active Military, their families and communities. We are facing everyday emergencies, storms, and surprises we aren't ready for. The National Security Program offers you ways that you can do your part to keep everyone safe and informed within your own family too!

We look forward to answering any of your questions, and to getting every Unit on the National Security program. Let's try for 100% reporting, let's start **NOW**!

PIC-28SEPT2024

DEPT OF CT NATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM 2024-2025

Below please find suggestions and ideas you can reference for yor National Security projects within your Auxiliary Units and/or with your American Legion Family.

Deployed Military

- Care Packages (POC, Point of Contact needed)
- Pocket Prayer Quilts
- American Pocket Flags – americanlegionflags.Pocket-Flags or pocket flagproject.com (POC needed to send flags)
- https://www.dogsonduty.org/military-k9-dogs
- Military Appreciation Breakfast or Lunch
- RED (Remember Everyone Deployed) every Friday
- Distribute - Support Our Troops signs (Flag & Emblem Sales)

Military Families (November)

- Armed Forces Day – activities or meals (Military, EMT, Police, Fire)
- Military & Family Readiness Group
- Operation Comfort Warriors gift cards
- Military Spouse Day
- United Through Reading (in schools' program)
- CT National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
- USO (United Service Organizations)
- Blue Star Commentary materials & banners
- Troop Welcome Home and Send Off events
- Holiday Food Baskets
- Sesame Street for military families' programs (7 adult & 47 children's topics)
- New Home Baskets for military

Military Child (April)

- Military Child's Table
- Brave Like Me (book Author Barbara Kerley)
- The Saluting Marine (book Author Tim Chambers)
- One Nation (book published by LIFE)
- Hero at Home (Author Sarah Verardo)
- Don't Forget, God Bless Our Troops (Author Jill Biden)
- Purple Up Day for Military Children
- Connecticut Children's Hospital Walkathon (American Legion Program)
- Big Brothers & Big Sisters (Savers Thrift Stores in CT)
- New Baby Shower or Basket

- Boys & Girls Clubs of America (Big Brother/Big Sister Program)

- Armed Services YMCA program

CT National Guard
- Breakfast with the Easter Bunny (April)
- Back 2 School Bash (August)
- Service Members & Child Dinner Dance (November)

POW/MIA
- POW/MIA (Prisoners of War/Missing in Action) Bracelet
- POW/MIA/KIA Recognition Ceremony
- America's White Table (book)
- Flag & Emblem Sales Table Settings, Chair Panel and flag

Programs & Training
- Suicide Prevention (Be The One Legion program)
- AED (Automated External Defibrillator) Training - Red Cross or EMT providers
- Hands Only CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) - Red Cross or EMT providers
- Stop the Bleed (treatment of traumatic hemorrhage) Red Cross or EMT providers
- TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program) for surviving military families
- Fire Safety & Crime Prevention (program through local Fire & Police Department)
- CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) – local Police Department

Red Cross
- Holiday Cards for CT and RI Active Military
- First Aide Classes (offer program to any youth organizations)
- Baby Sitting Classes (offer program through schools or youth organizations)
- CPR (**C**ardio**P**ulmonary **R**esuscitation) Classes

Military Appreciation Events
- VA Stand Down (September), different locations around the state
- Any event where your military are given free access – attend and support
- Quilt of Valor Foundation, presentation of quilts for Service Members touched by war
- Recognition breakfast, lunch or dinner specifically for a brand of service, fire and/or police departments, pre-registration and attend in uniform.
- Support fundraising events where donated monies go directly to our military

The 2024-2025 End of Year Reports may be mailed (7 Noble Hill Rd, Bozrah, CT 06334-1511) or emailed (lehoskyj.ala@gmail.com) on or before May 1, 2025. Your narrative report will give details and include pictures of the program events your Unit accomplished during the year. Please include the Chairman's name, Unit number and Post name at the bottom of your report. Thank You to every Unit for submitting your reports!

ALA National Security Program

Committee Contact Information nationalsecurity@ALAforVeterans.org

What can you do?

Support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve and transitioning military servicemembers and their families.

As a Member

• Let your unit know of any military families or businesses that should receive a Blue Star or Gold Star Banner in recognition of a service member's service.

• Provide support on a spouse-to-spouse or family-to-family basis, such as to a family member, neighbor or another military family. Refer to the ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide for specific suggestions of the type of support military families may value.

• Provide assistance to service members and their families directly affected by current conflicts. Get to know your local Legion Service Officer, they may be able to help you in your efforts.

• Become more informed about issues affecting a military family's home life and the resources available to help, such as PTSD, TBI, domestic violence, financial literacy and other issues.

• Refer servicemembers with financial assistance needs to the American Red Cross Armed Forces Call Center at 1 (877) 272-7337. Unit

• Support active-duty military families by working with an installation Family Readiness Group (FRG). Contact the Family Readiness Center at your nearby military installation for more information.

• Support reserve and transitioning servicemembers and families by working with a returning National Guard or Reserve unit or an individual transitioning servicemember or family. o Note: Units may find servicemembers and families independently or by working with the servicemember transition programs of the U.S. Department of Defense, the military service branches or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Members may provide support on a spouse-to-spouse or family-to-family basis, such as to a family member, neighbor or another military family to which they come in contact. Refer to the ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide for additional information and specific steps.

• When a service member or military family you're working with is relocating to a different community, help identify an ALA unit in the new community and make introductions.

• Greet service members and families as they deploy and/or return from a deployment.

• Work with a Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program office of a local military unit (Reserve or National Guard) or a state National Guard Joint Force Headquarters to show patriotic and moral support at Yellow Ribbon events; offering hospitality, refreshments or children and youth activities; or making presentations on Auxiliary resources and services to family members of returning servicemembers.

• If you're near a military installation, a U.S. Department of Defense policy makes it easier for you to get and provide information about our services and programs to servicemembers and military families. Refer to the How to Support Troops and their Families on Military Installations for additional information and specific steps.

• Organize a Welcome To Our Hometown event to welcome military families that are moving or transitioning out of the military to your community. Refer to the Welcome To Our Hometown Action Guide for additional information and specific steps.

• Coordinate community donations and assemble service member care packages and family member support packages.

• Work with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and refer a survivor or caregiver for specialized support. Refer to How to Collaborate with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors for information and specific steps. Department

• Include information about military spouse job fairs in your department newsletter.

• Provide information about what Legion Service Officers do and sign members up to help them. B. Assist military spouses in getting and maintaining employment. Ideas: Member

• Serve as a mentor in the career e-mentoring network through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Employment Program and Academy Women. Current military spouses will be virtually paired with more experienced spouses and/or corporate and career mentors for guidance and support.

• Promote military spouse job fairs in your community and volunteer to help.

• Help staff an information booth about the ALA at a job fair for military spouses.

• Write an editorial about why military spouses make good employees.

• Contact school guidance counselor in your local area and offer to be "on call" for assistance with military children.

As A Unit

• Support military spouse job fairs organized by U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation or The American Legion, or host one in your own community. Encourage local business to participate and hire veterans and military spouses.

• Help to implement a Legion-sponsored job fair and/or co-host a Legion Family information table at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation-sponsored job fair.

• Seek grant funds to help military spouses start small businesses. Promote participation among military spouses at www.theveteranmarket.com.

• Create a scholarship fund for military spouses learning a new skill. Department

• Assist units and members with specific idea plans outlined above. C. Support the National Security programs of The American Legion. Ideas: Member

• Complete a Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) course. Refer to How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams for information and specific steps.

• Build and/or help a neighbor build an emergency preparedness kit and plan. o Remember, new military families in your community may not be familiar with the types of emergencies that affect your area. As needed, help them update their emergency kit and plan.

• Sign up for the Legion's Legislative Action Alerts and be sure to act on the ones regarding a strong national defense and affecting current and transitioning servicemembers and their families.

• Donate blood. Unit

• Get involved in the Citizen Corps Council (www.ready.gov) to ensure citizens are prepared to respond to natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, blizzards and manmade disasters and emergencies.

- Junior members can get involved in and/or start a Youth Preparedness Program in their community.

• Collect supplies for emergency preparedness kits and distribute them in your community.

- Remember: new military families in your community may not be familiar with the types of emergencies that affect your area. As needed, help them update their emergency preparedness kit and plan.

• Encourage members to complete Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). Refer to How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams for information and specific steps.

• Have a training exercise in your post home to give training in first aid, CPR or other types of emergency skills.

• Join with your Legion post to host a POW/MIA ceremony on National POW/MIA Recognition Day, commemorated annually on the third Friday of September.

• Follow the Legion's POW/MIA Empty Chair Resolution 288 for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings.

• Host a remembrance event for any MIA servicemembers who have been identified from your area.

• Work with Legion posts to honor ROTC and JROTC cadets by having dinners and recognizing their accomplishments.

• Support future military by presenting ROTC and JROTC recognition awards.