

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The Message

North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary
 1801 23rd Ave N, Rm 113, Fargo, ND 58102-1047
 701-253-5992 • www.ndala.org • facebook.com/NorthDakotaALA

2026 Winter Conference

National Auxiliary President Pam Ray will be a guest of the Department of North Dakota at the 2026 Winter Conference to be held in Mandan on January 23-25. She will be the keynote speaker at the Auxiliary workshops on Saturday, January 24.

Pam is a 69-year PUFL member of the Department of Illinois. She has been an active member of the Auxiliary since her parents signed her up as a child. She served in all Junior offices in her Department, including serving as honorary Department Junior President in 1972. She continued her service as a Senior member including serving

in various offices in her Unit, as District President, and as Department President in 2010-2011.

Pam dreamed about becoming a nurse from an early age. She achieved that dream in 1977 and had a wonderful 47-year career, working in and caring for people in a burn center, pediatrics, and neurosurgery. Pam spent much of her career caring for head and neck cancer patients and their families.

Pam has been married to Harl (Butch) Ray for 46 years. They are the parents of two beautiful daughters and two grandchildren. Pam's passion has always been helping

people and she has found that the ALA's 'Mission' is a way to continue to do that. Her family is her other passion, and what better way to bring the two together than with her theme of 'Mission Driven, Family Focused.'

The Department of North Dakota welcomes National President Pam Ray.



Pam Ray National President

Gackle Shows Community Spirit

American Legion Auxiliary Mayer-Morlock Unit 250 of Gackle supports numerous community service projects, recently donating funds to the following organizations:

- \$12,965 to Legion Post 250 of Gackle to refurbish its kitchen.
- \$1,062 to the Gackle-Streeter Public Schools to be applied toward the monthly Scholastic book order to place a personal book into the hands of each elementary school student.
- \$900 to the Gackle Community Food Pantry
- \$900 to the Western North Dakota Honor Flight, serving veterans from western North Dakota.
- \$100 to the Gackle-Streeter Public School to be applied toward student school supplies.

Members of the Gackle Unit are proud to support these worthy community causes.

Article and photos submitted by: Elaine Ackerman, President Unit 250



Gackle - Streeter School students with their books



Western ND Honor Flight Donation. Western North Dakota Board Members Crystal Strand and Patience Mosbrucker with Gackle Auxiliary member Marella Koenig (middle).



Gackle Food Pantry Donation. Pictured (l-r): Gackle Food Pantry representatives Jane Schoonover, District 4 President and Peggy Schroeder with Elaine Ackerman, President Unit 250.

Membership and Education in McVile

Being creative can be a big plus when it comes to getting membership dues paid. For many years, Ole Semling Unit 135 in McVile has written a letter to each member, telling of the events and programs that we have taken part in the past year. We share what we did to accomplish program goals and what we do to make our community and our veteran's lives better as well as how we serve our active military members. The letters are also accompanied by the membership card for the upcoming year. The letters are always well accepted and membership seems to come in more quickly with a personal letter.

Well, we decided that a new wrinkle to membership collection would be a fun undertaking. A plan was made and things were under way. Several members contributed coffee cake. Coffee was prepared by the Legion Café and a postcard was mailed to all local McVile Auxiliary members to come and do 'Membership and Coffee' on a Monday morning.

We had a nice turn out with a lot of visiting taking place and dues got paid too. We know area towns do membership picnics and include the Legion members as well, but this seemed like an easy, 'Ladies Morning Out' thing to do. Perhaps this is an idea your unit could utilize in the future.

Prior to the start of school this fall, the Nelson County Welfare Office contacted our Unit asking if we could donate school supplies for four students in the District who might not otherwise have them to fulfill the teacher's requests.

With school about to start, a unit member who has four small children of her own gladly volunteered to pick up the extra supplies. With a long list of supplies in hand, this young unit member set off to complete her assigned duties and delivered the supplies for distribution to the children. From crayons to backpacks each of the four lists was complete. This was quite a task and we are so proud of her for taking on this project, doing her part in our mission to support our children and youth, veterans, and our communities. Thank you Kia.

Articles and photo submitted by: Judy Twete, President Unit 135



Americanism is Alive in Scranton

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 151 of Scranton is proud to announce that Natalia Martinez was a winner of the 2025 Americanism Essay Contest at the Northwestern Division. Terry Freymiller and members of Unit 151 presented a certificate, gift cards, and a journal to Natalia at Bowman High School with her instructors and many of her peers in attendance.

Congratulations Natalia!

The Scranton unit thanks Bowman High School instructors Lisa Halstrom and Jace Myrnak for encouraging their students to participate in the Americanism Essay Contest.

Articles and photos submitted by: Terry Freymiller, President Unit 151



Natalia Martinez, Americanism Essay Contest Northwestern Division Winner (left) and Terry Freymiller, Unit President.



Pictured (l-r): Auxiliary members Anne Gruber; Donna Robinson; Cindy Miller; Lisa Halstrom, instructor; Natalia Martinez, contest winner; Jaci Myrnak, instructor; Terry Freymiller; Carol Miller; Devin Anderson; and Laci Coates, Bowman County Veterans Service Officer.

American Legion Auxiliary 2026 Winter Conference

January 23-25, 2026

(Tentative schedule/subject to change)

Baymont by Wyndham

2611 Old Red Trail, Mandan, ND
 Hotel Direct Phone: 701-663-7401

Friday, January 23

- 2:00 – 7:00 PMAuxiliary Registration
- 3:00 – 4:00 PMDepartment Executive Committee Meeting
- 7:00 PM.....Joint Opening Session

Saturday, January 24

- 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM ..Auxiliary Registration
- 8:30 AM – 9:15 AM.....Joint Session / Membership Workshop
- 9:30 AM.....Auxiliary Workshops – National President, Pam Ray
- 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Auxiliary Workshops Department Chairmen
- 12:00 PM.....Lunch
- 1:00 PM.....Legion Family Programs Joint Session
- 1:30 PM – 4:00 PM ...Oratorical Contest Finals
- 4:00 PM.....Reception for National President
- 5:00 PM.....Winter Conference Banquet Social
- 6:00 PM.....Winter Conference – Commanders Banquet

Sunday, January 25

- 7:00 AM.....Catholic Mass
- 9:00 AM.....Worship Service



Follow us on our NEW Facebook page! See what the Department of ND is doing to help veterans.

Search:

www.facebook.com/ndamericanlegionauxiliary

Department President

Hello Auxiliary Members,

A quote from John C. Maxwell, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This famous quote has been a favorite of mine since I first saw it about 20 years ago. As Auxiliary members and spokespeople and advocates for this organization, it is a reminder of our "why." It reflects our legacy of supporting this organization and its mission with a caring and supportive attitude.

Recently, I realized I am one-third through my year as your Department President. I have been reflecting on my year so far, and as I do so, I cannot help but smile at the great honor it has been. I had the pleasure of attending the 2025 Fall District Meetings across the state. The food, the fellowship, the meetings, and special moments before, during, and after the gatherings were very valued. The American Legion Family atmosphere at the District meetings was inspirational, and I am thankful to have a Department Commander whose theme and goal is ALA Family focused as "We are one."

During District meetings, I asked each of the Districts to consider bringing a basket or items for the "Chinese raffle" that will take place at Winter Conference with proceeds going to my president projects. I would gladly also accept any personal/individual items that people would like to donate to the raffle. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like to donate.

During District meetings, I also distributed a check-in sheet with options for committees and information to fill in. Thank you to all who provided me with information. I am reviewing the details and will be formulating a plan for next steps toward goals for the year.

Winter conference is soon upon us. We are planning a great event that we hope many are planning to attend. Please fill up your vehicles and bring as many members with you as possible. National Auxiliary President Pam Ray is planning to attend our conference and will provide inspiration to all in attendance.

My team of program chairmen have been working diligently on their programs and positions. Updated information on our programs and the 2025-2026 Department year can be found on the Department website at www.ndala.org. For even more information, visit the National website at www.alaforveterans.org. A lot of work goes into these websites, so please check them frequently for updates.

One of my goals this year is to increase the number of people involved in leadership through opportunities for growth, education, and refreshment. I want to empower more members to become confident leaders for the future of the Auxiliary. Online ALA Academy training courses are free, self-paced, and take about an hour to complete per module. Online training can be found at: www.legion-aux.org/ala-academy

Thank you to all who have donated toward my president projects: the Honor Flight Network for Eastern/Western North Dakota and the NDSU Bison Strides Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies Program for Veterans and their Families. I am getting to the end of my supply of pins, so if you are interested in one, please reach out to me as soon as possible to reserve one.

The new North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Facebook page is now active. I encourage individual members to share Auxiliary activities going on in your communities. The page is there for everyone to be uplifted and inspired by what others are doing across the state. Please share pictures and a few short sentences or an article on this site: www.facebook.com/ndamericanlegionauxiliary

With the 2026 membership year in progress, statistics show that North Dakota is sitting at 45% of goal as I write this article. We are nearly halfway to our goal of 100%. Every member is on the membership team and every moment is a potential membership moment. Kudos to everyone helping with membership! There are three easy options for paying membership: (1) through your unit, (2) through the Department, (3) paying online or by calling National HQ at (317) 569-4570. If you have questions, I encourage you to contact the Department Office at (701) 253-5992.

I am immensely proud to be a part of the American Legion Family and working to make this Auxiliary year the best possible. Let us continue to humbly pay it forward, as the ND American Legion Auxiliary team, supporting each other and continuing to be inspired by our mission to serve our military, veterans, and their families.

Candace Berg



Candace Berg

Department Chaplain

My hope today is that you are enjoying this lovely autumn as much as I have. In all my years, and believe me there are many, I have never been more content to sit on my patio reading a book and enjoying a cup of coffee while enjoying the peace and quiet. Then I read the newspaper or listen to the news and realize things are not quite so peaceful.

Returning from Tampa Bay where the National Convention was held in August, many hours were spent on issues that needed to be ironed out. Through all the discussions, I marveled at the ability of people to discuss and state opinions and still be civil. No one left the convention center in anger and went home. Our Auxiliary was a shining star as an example of how to deliberate. Even if we disagree about everything, we can still be kind to each other. Disagreements are an inevitable part of life, a testament to the diversity of thought and experience that enriches our world. But even when our beliefs clash, even when our perspectives diverge, we can still choose to treat each other with kindness and respect. Kindness is not a sign of weakness but a testament to strength, a recognition that our shared humanity transcends our differences. By extending compassion to those who hold opposing views, we create bridges instead of walls, fostering dialogue instead of division. May we remember that kindness is a universal language, a powerful force that can soften hearts and build bridges even in the face of disagreement.

Winter Conference is coming up in January. There will no doubt be issues to discuss that likely will have a multitude of opinions. That's just fine. We can practice deliberation, discourse and parley, and go away loving one another and perhaps being educated by the process.

I often revert to a song by Tim McGraw entitled "Always be Humble and Kind." Included in the verses is a message saying "Hold the door, say please, say thank you, Don't steal, don't cheat, and don't lie. I know you got mountains to climb but always stay humble and kind. When those dreams you're dreamin' come to you, when the work you put in is realized. Let yourself feel the pride but always stay humble and kind. Don't take for granted the love this life gives you when you get where you're going don't forget to turn back around and help the next one in line. Always stay humble and kind."

There is so much value in that song that I challenge you to research.

Matthew 5:44-48

But I say: Love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way you will be acting as true sons of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust too. If you love only those who love you, what good is that? Even scoundrels do that much. If you are friendly only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even the heathen do that. But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Virginia Satrom



Virginia Satrom

Department Secretary

Greetings Auxiliary Members,

The Department Office has been busy keeping up with membership and working on Unit Mailing packets, Flickertail Girls State, 'The Message' articles, and archiving old membership and Department records when time allows.

The 2026 Winter Conference is just a few short weeks away and I encourage everyone to attend. National President Pam Ray will be a special guest of the Department and you do not want to miss meeting her in person. President Candace and her team of Department Chairmen are putting together workshops for members planning to attend. You will find a 'tentative' schedule and pre-registration and banquet ticket order forms printed elsewhere in this publication. I encourage anyone who is planning to attend to make your hotel reservations early! Let us make this a memorable event for National President Pam and Department President Candace.

Thank you, Unit Membership Chairmen, you have done an amazing job getting dues in.

North Dakota 2026 membership goals are at 45% as I write this. Armed with the dedication and hard work of all Auxiliary members we can make 100% well before convention next summer. Unit membership chairs, do not hold memberships, pay them in the ALA MIS program if you can or send them to the Department office as soon as they arrive.

My family and I wish everyone a wonderful Holiday season. Stay well, stay safe, and I will see you in Mandan at the 2026 Winter Conference!

Marcy Schmidt



Marcy Schmidt

Department Treasurer

As we enter this season of giving, I am so grateful for each and every one of you! Contributions from Units across our beautiful state have been coming in at a faster pace than this time last year! This means that the Department will have more funds to disperse from Unit contributions at the end of this calendar year. I can't wait for our veteran's programs to receive the checks that are made possible as we pool our funds together to give back to our veterans. This is our stated purpose—we are a Veterans Service Organization. I know that your generous contributions make a difference to these programs and those they serve. Thank you to each and every Unit – you are all a blessing!

As we go into the New Year, let's do our best to keep up the good work of 'Service not Self.' It can be hard to keep a cheery attitude through the dark, dreary days of winter.

My hope is that Units continue to reach out – perhaps making a monthly or quarterly calendar of one thing the Unit can do each month or quarter to keep those generous vibes going. Maybe it's sending birthday cards to Unit members and veterans in the local nursing home. Another favorite is sharing a meal with your American Legion Post. Everyone loves a potluck, and the combination of foods always seems to come together just right.

Enjoy the season – then keep it going. One moment at a time. Thank you for your generosity.

Susan Degner, CPA



Susan Degner

District 4

We had a great District 4 Fall Meeting. At the joint session, Auxiliary President Berg presented Lynn Helm, a member of James Roberts Unit 124 of McClusky, with a framed certificate for being chosen North Dakota's 2025 Unit Member of the Year.

At the ALA meeting, our special guests were Department President Candace Berg, President-Elect/Membership Chairman Sandy Smith, and myself as Department Junior Activities Chairman. We talked about getting the Junior members involved. If we can get just one Junior member participating, hopefully more will follow.

We voted to donate to President Berg's project by purchasing something for the Chinese Raffle to be held at the Winter Conference in January. District 4 also elected to form its own Facebook page to keep up with Unit events. Our Facebook page is: ND American Legion Auxiliary District 4. If you have an event you would like to share for your Unit, please contact me so we can share it with the members of District 4.

Legion Department Commander Mike would like us to help with each other's events when possible. Auxiliary President Candace suggests that we visit the Department website at www.ndala.org and the National website at www.legion-aux.org for more information. There is a wealth of helpful material on these two websites.

I hope to see many of you at the 2026 Winter Conference January 23-25 in Mandan.

**Jane Schoonover
District 4 President**



District 10



Hello District 10 Auxiliary Members!

My name is Leila Ptacek, and I was recently elected President of District 10. I have been an Auxiliary member for 34 years. I joined under my father, who is a World War II and Korean War veteran. I am excited to see what this position entails and what I can do to improve membership numbers. The current goal is 60% membership by November 10th.

Our District meeting was held on October 4th in Hankinson. I want to thank members of the Hankinson Unit for preparing and serving a delicious meal. We were honored to have Department President Candace Berg in attendance, along with Sandy Smith, Department President Elect & Membership Co-Chairperson, and Carol Wolf, Poppy & VA&R Chairperson.

President Candace encouraged units to put any information or unit events on the new Facebook page, "ND American Legion Auxiliary - www.facebook.com/ndamericanlegionauxiliary". Her President's projects are the Honor Flight Network for Eastern/Western North Dakota and NDSU Bison Strides Equine Therapy for Veterans. Both are excellent choices to help our veterans. Think of what your unit can do when you donate to these worthy veterans' groups. Ask around for ideas.

The 2026 Winter Conference is scheduled to be held in Mandan on January 23-25 and the 2026 Department Convention will be June 26-28 in Fargo. Fargo is close to District 10 units, so please make plans now to attend.

I have a lot to learn but I am willing and will do my best to help keep your units thriving. If you are on Facebook, take note of who is posting about their veterans on Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, military birthdays, etc. Send them a letter inviting them to be a member and brag your unit up on what your events and activities are. Be sure to include a membership application with a benefits flyer. Do not forget to sign up potential Junior members too!

I would love to visit with members of all District 10 units, so if you are planning a meeting or unit event, please send me an invitation. I am looking forward to meeting and visiting you.

Leila Ptacek
District 10 President

Community Service

Hello Auxiliary Members!

Community Service is one of the many important programs that are part of the American Legion Auxiliary. It is one where our members have an opportunity to engage with the public and show them what we do, how we do it, and why we do it.



There are a number of community events to take part in:

- 11/11/25 – Veterans Day Programs
- 1/19/26 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service
- 4/25/26 - American Legion Family Day
- American Legion Family Day- Start planning now. Involve the entire American Legion Family.

Share pictures and information about your event to receive an American Legion Family Day Citation from ALA National President Pam Ray, National Commander Dan Wiley, and SAL National Commander Bill Clancy III. Must have participation from members of all the American Legion Family.

Other types of Community Service events include: 5K freedom walks with proceeds going to Auxiliary programs, clothing drives, volunteering to serve a meal at a homeless shelter, hosting a blood drive, volunteering at church or school, sew or knit for a nursing home, donate food for a food drive (do a Truck or Feed instead of Trunk or Treat), parades. These are just a few examples of the almost endless list of community events. Some community events are considered part of other programs like: Children & Youth, Education, Americanism, VA & R, National Security.

If you are unsure how to count your volunteer hours, let me know and I will find the answer for you. Submit your event photos, and include who, what unit, and what event. Send pictures in high resolution JPG or PNG format. I will forward them to our Northwestern Division Chair for her monthly newsletter. Email to communityservice@ndala.org or KLSSCS@gra.midco.net

I look forward to hearing from every unit. Let us help North Dakota stand out with all our Community Service events! Thank you.

Shelley Schuster
Community Service Chairman

Are you signed up for monthly Department e-newsletters?

Send an email to news@ndala.org with 'subscribe' in the subject line. In the body of the email, please list your name, unit number, and position held (if applicable). You will be added to the Constant Contact group list.

Children & Youth

Hello Auxiliary Members!

As your Department Children and Youth Chairman, I was able to attend a few District meetings this fall as well as the Homecoming Celebration for Department Commander Mike Weyrauch and Department President Candace Berg. It was wonderful to get together and have some great conversations at these events.



I'm looking forward to spending more time with our Legion/Auxiliary family at the Winter Conference.

Remember to keep an eye out for youth in our state doing incredible things! We would love to show our appreciation by nominating them for an award. We have two categories:

- **GOOD DEED AWARD** - Youth should demonstrate a leadership role in the community.
- **YOUTH HERO AWARD** - Youth has demonstrated a physical act of valor.

Nominate these exceptional youth at: www.alaforveterans.org. In the menu, simply click on **HOW WE SERVE** for more information on how to complete your nomination. You may also visit the nomination webpage at: www.legion-aux.org/youth-hero-good-deed-awards

I also encourage each of you to invite a fellow Auxiliary member to join us at Winter Conference. Let's have a great turnout in Mandan! See you there!

Jill Carstens
Children and Youth Chairman

Belfield Auxiliary Donation



American Legion Auxiliary William C. Blair Unit 144 of Belfield donated five gift cards to be given to local veterans in need. Pictured are Cheryl Evenson, Unit 144 Treasurer (left) and Jessica McClellan, Stark County Veterans Service Officer.

Education

Scholarships Sponsored by American Legion Auxiliary

Supporting military veterans, current military members, and their children and grandchildren is the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Considering this mission, the following educational scholarships sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary are available. Each scholarship has unique criteria and deadlines. All are available online. Some require membership in one of the American Legion Family organizations, others do not. I encourage local senior and returning college students to review each scholarship's criteria and apply if he or she meets the criteria.



The following scholarships are sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary Department of North Dakota and may be downloaded at www.ndala.org/education/

- Past Presidents Parley Grace Holmes, MD, Nursing Scholarship
- Past Presidents Parley Nursing Scholarship
- Department of North Dakota Education Program Scholarship

The following scholarships sponsored by the National American Legion Auxiliary are available online at: www.alaforveterans.org/scholarships/

- Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship
- Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior Members
- Member Loyalty Scholarship
- Non-traditional Student Scholarship

For any scholarship application, I encourage parents to work with their child to stress authenticity as AI detection is utilized as well as promote neatness and completeness (especially being specific on all activities, awards, volunteer work, leadership positions, obstacles overcome). Are all questions answered and required documents included? Following specific letters of reference is important as is adherence to due dates.

Lynn Tomlinson
Education Chairman



At ALA Girls State, participants don't just learn about the government process- they are the process! North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Flickertail Girls State is for girls who have just completed their junior year of high school. We would love to have you join us this year! Scan the QR code below to fill out the online application form, or print out the application and return the completed form to the unit sponsoring you. Need a sponsor? No problem. We can help you find one! Contact ndgirlsstate@gmail.com for assistance.



ndgirlsstate.org/registration/

<p>JUNE 14-19, 2026 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA</p>	<p>CONTACT US NDGIRLSSTATE@GMAIL.COM (701) 213-3908</p>
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In Memoriam

District 1
Elizabeth A Hanson, Hillsboro
"Catherine A Swenson, PUFL", Finley

District 2
Esther Estvold, Lakota
Lavon G Dardis, Lakota
Denise A Mork, Lakota
Helen L. Schumacher, Grafton
Shirley Vavrovsky O'Toole, Grafton
"Joann Votava, SLM", Park River
Mary Ronkowski, Minto

District 3
Janet Norsby, Rugby
"JoAnne A Curl, HLM", Cando
Irma N Dulmage, Leeds
"Hollys Peterson, PUFL", Minnewaukan
Fern Simons, Rolla

District 4
Marlys Boughton, Jamestown
"Sharon Merrick, SLM", McHenry
Lillian Ward, Gackle

District 5
Frieda Szczur, Garrison
Sandi Lawler, Linton
"Eugenia Schumacher, HLM", Linton

District 6
Phyllis Allen, Minot
Donene Gjellstad, Velva
"Minnie J Flynn, SLM", Bowbells
"Sue Ann Locker, PUFL", Butte

District 7
Frances Bohl, Flasher
Georgene Vredenburg, Mandan

District 8
"Charlotte Wanner, PUFL", Dickinson
Betsy Wiegand, Mott
Ella S Pederson, Richardton
"Ann Bogers, PUFL", Halliday

District 9
"Ottilia P Johnson, HLM", Crosby
"Loretta Bird, PUFL", Little Shell
Clarine Packineau, Little Shell

District 10
Darlene J Olson, Lamoure
Eileen L Overby, Wahpeton
Regina Frigen, Oakes
Patricia G Bardell, Oakes
"Elsie Schock, HLM", Ellendale
"Patty Enderson, HLM", Wyndmere

We apologize for any omissions or incorrect information.
Key: HLM - Honorary Unit Member; SLM - State Life Member; VIM - Life Member/PUFL

VA & R and Poppies

I thought I would catch you up on what is happening at the VA Medical Center in Fargo. The medical center is doing great, having recently undergone and successfully passed several facility inspections. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) ensure healthcare providers and supplies meet federal health and safety standards needed to participate in Medicare/Medicaid programs. The organization recently awarded the VAMC-Fargo the only 5-star facility in North Dakota. The Joint Commission, an organization that accredits more than 22,000 health care organizations and programs had minimal findings in the Fargo facility.



Carol Wolf, Department VA&R Chairman (left), presents a check to volunteer services personnel in support of the North Dakota Creative Arts Festival held at the Fargo VA on August 21-22, 2025.

The Outpatient Mental Health Building foundation work in the north parking lot is complete with steel construction currently in progress. Great progress has been made to the south addition of the hospital, which will serve as an extension of primary care. Steel framing is complete, and concrete work for floors and roofing is currently underway. Completion of both building projects is set for Fall 2026.

The design for a parking ramp is nearing completion; however, construction is delayed due to budget limitations and logistical considerations (impact on parking) associated with simultaneous construction of the Mental Health Building, Outpatient Mental Health Building, and parking facilities.

Fisher House land acquisition and due diligence are in

progress. The project is being managed externally from the Fargo VA. Officials are confident that a suitable location will be secured soon for meaningful progress to get underway.

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of North Dakota is again sponsoring the annual "Gift Shop" on Wednesday, December 3, at the VA Medical Center-Fargo. Residents of the North Dakota Veterans Home-Lisbon have elected to have a catered meal again this year.

Poppy orders continue to arrive, and I will be mailing them out soon. I am looking for units who wish to sponsor a "Little Miss Poppy" this year. We have not had one in North Dakota, and it would be nice to have one this year.

Carol Wolf
VA&R and Poppy Co-Chairman

2026 Dates and Deadlines

Winter Conference – January 23-25
Americanism Essays Due – March 15
Reporting – March and April
Department Scholarships Due – April 1

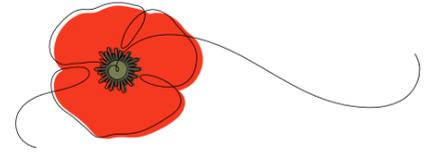
Unit Member of Year Due – May 1
Poppy Posters Due – May 15
Flickertail Girls State – June 14-19
Department Convention – June 26-28

Poppy Poster Winners

Members of American Legion Auxiliary Paul Farup Unit 147 of Park River presented a certificate, gift card, and art supplies to Kain Lee, Northwestern Division 2025 Winner (Class IV) Poppy Poster Contest. Kain was one of many contestants who participated in the Poppy Poster Contest sponsored by the Park River unit. Kain's artwork was judged and sent to Northwestern Division in May 2025. Congratulations Kain!



Front (l-r): Susan Degner, Department Treasurer; Ms. Kain Lee, and Laura Rutherford, Unit 147 Poppy Chairman, Back: Kyann Lee (Kain's mother).



American Legion Auxiliary Mayer-Morlock Unit 250 of Gackle sponsored a Poppy Poster Contest at the Gackle-Streeter Public School. Twelve winning posters were selected. Those twelve winning posters were then forwarded to the North Dakota Department Poppy Chairman for judging.

Six winning poppy posters were selected at the Department Level. Three of the six state winning poppy posters were from Gackle-Streeter. Department winners were announced at the Gackle-Streeter All School Assembly on October 9, 2025. Each winner received a certificate, a \$25.00 gift card and 10 note cards personalized with their poppy poster on the front. Congratulations!



Students with winning poppy posters. Pictured (l-r): Jenna Homola, Emma Heller, and Courtney Remboldt. Article and photo submitted by Elaine Ackerman, Unit 250 President.

2026 Winter Conference Pre-Registration

Pre-order your conference banquet tickets for \$40, no later than Wednesday, January 6, 2026.

Banquet tickets will increase to \$45 after January 6, 2026

(Menu: Slow-cooked beef served with gravy, dinner roll, salad, potatoes and a vegetable)

Meetings – January 23-25, 2026
Baymont by Wyndham, 2611 Old Red Trail, Mandan, ND
(Hotel was formerly known as Seven Seas)
Phone: 701-663-7401

Member Name	Auxiliary Registration	Banquet Ticket Orders		Total Amount
		Number of banquet tickets ordered	\$40.00 each	
	\$15.00			
	\$15.00			
	\$15.00			
Total Amount Enclosed				

Please send this form along with payment to the
American Legion Auxiliary Department Office, 1801 23rd Ave N, Rm 113, Fargo, ND 58102-1047
Auxiliary registrations received after January 6, 2026, will be held for on-site registration at Winter Conference.