

North Dakota Americanism Report
Submitted by Arliss Koski, Department Americanism Chair

In North Dakota, a total of 18 essays were received and judged for the Americanism Essay competition. This year's theme was "Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans that Fought for Our Freedom". Winners of each division were notified by Marcy Schmidt, Department Secretary. Winning essays for each division were forwarded to the Northwest Region for further judging.

Quarterly National Americanism zoom meetings were held. Ideas were shared at the Winter Conference on ways to promote Americanism within our communities. This year emphasis was on promoting America's 250th Birthday.

Reports from various Units from North Dakota included the following information:

Treumann-Webb-Phelps, Unit #6, Grand Forks

We received one entry for American Essay Contest. We had no entrants for the Oratorical contest. We had two programs at two schools for flag care and proper respect for the flag. We participated in Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and Flag Day Programs. We encouraged our members to support the flag amendment program. We just started the shooting program so have not been involved yet. We work the gate at all American Legion baseball games and three tournaments. One member presents a plaque and a check for \$100 to a senior member on the team and a name plate for the perpetual plaque. We have done this for 26 years. We wear Auxiliary branded clothes, hats, and emblems with ALA when we attend any functions.

Lavern J. Thompson Unit #11, Cavalier, ND

Auxiliary members participated in the American Legion's Memorial Day activities on May 26, 2025. ALA members provided a wreath that was tossed into the river by Legion members in a touching ceremony. After Legion members visited local cemeteries, they returned to the Legion for

lunch. Denise Papenfuss set up and delivered an explanation of the POW/MIA table. During the reading of the roll call of deceased veterans, family and friends were invited to pick up a poppy and place it in a wreath prepared by Jean Elke and Corene Vaughn. ALA President Furstenau maintains the roll call of deceased veterans. The Legion Commander and his wife provided barbecues, while ALA members provided potluck dishes, along with the setup and cleanup after the dinner.

Auxiliary members provided support and assistance to Future Business Leaders of America who organized Cavalier School's Veterans Day program for November 5, 2025. ALA members set up a POW/MIA table in the lunchroom at the school and explained the meaning and significance of the table elements as part of the Veterans Day program. The program ended with a video offering thank you's from students to veterans and a parade of veterans through the hallways of the school as students and faculty lined the hallways and cheered.

Ms. Tunks, 4th and 5th Grade Language Arts instructor at Cavalier Public School, submitted 38 essays written by her students for the 2026 Americanism Essay Contest with the essay title, "Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans Who Fought for Our Freedom." Cavalier High School English teacher, Michele Moquist, submitted nine essays written by high school students. ALA officers judged the essays and submitted the top five essays in each category to the rest of the members at the March meeting. Members evaluated the essays to determine the top three in each category. The top essays were submitted to Arliss Koski, Department Americanism Chairman. Certificates and cash awards will be presented to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners at the school where both essay and poster winners are recognized. All students who participated will receive a poppy. Winners may be invited to read their essays at the Memorial Day program scheduled for May 25.

VICTOR B. WALLIN UNIT #12, WASHBURN

Poppies were handed out and donated money collected Memorial weekend, and also at the Memorial Day Program. A meal was served after

the Memorial Day Program. The program is attended by about 350 people where the local high school band performs as well as elementary students singing patriotic songs and a guest speaker. Auxiliary members participate by carrying flags and leading the Pledge of Allegiance in the program. The Legion provided food, and the Auxiliary serves coffee, lemonade and sets out food, silverware, napkins, and plates for lunch. We also clean-up afterwards. Members of the Auxiliary also assist Legion members in putting out/picking up small flags and white crosses on veterans' graves at three cemeteries for Memorial weekend. We also sponsored the Poppy Poster Contest and gave out \$413 in cash prizes/candy bars to participants. When promoting the poppy poster contest, students received poppy bookmarks or coloring books. The posters were displayed at the Memorial Day meal as well as at local businesses and the McLean County Museum. We ordered 500 poppies for \$135 and took in donations of \$933 to use for special veterans' programs. The Auxiliary contacted the local elementary school and several classes made Valentines that the Auxiliary mailed to the Veterans' Home at Lisbon, ND, as well as a variety of candy for treats for the veterans and employees, and crossword puzzles and word find books for the veterans.

HUGH P. MINEHAN UNIT #49, Garrison

We helped set up the auditorium for the program. A member carried the Auxiliary flag in. Another member read the recent deceased veterans. We baked and served goodies for the social after the program. After the program we put away the table and chairs and cleaned the kitchen. A member went to the nursing home to celebrate with the veterans there. Veterans served: 100+ Hours: 38 Cost: \$60.00

We held the program at Garrison High School gym to include the kids on November 10th. The band played the National Anthem and the choir sang. A member carried the flag in. Another member was emcee. On Nov. 11th we went to the nursing home to celebrate with the vets there, we handed out coins and baked goods. Vets served: 50+ Hours 39 Cost: \$35.00

Barry Hoof Unit #72, Napoleon

We talked with the students at school about the poppies and veterans. Also reminded the students about April being the month of the military child and April 15th is "Purple UP Day".

For Memorial Day, we had a service by the cemetery. Then served a potluck lunch.

In August, our Unit participated in the Community Day parade by handing out lots of flags and other red, white and blue items.

We had a Veterans Day Program at school for all grades and also visitors. We had a service member to talk to the students about his experiences. For our Veterans Day Speaker, we made a monetary donation to the Fargo VA for Homeless Veterans.

Carl Oftedahl, Unit #127, Bowbells

In May, a program was held at the Memorial Hall with a potluck after the program and everyone enjoyed the social during the meal. Auxiliary members decorated the hall and set it up for chairs and tables. In June, an auxiliary member puts up the Flags on main street for Flag Day. An Article was written for the local paper about celebrating Flag Day. Cookies we handed out at the local senior center. In July, flags were put up on main street for the Fourth. They are put up for about five days to honor the Fourth. Two Legion/Auxiliary families held a picnic and fireworks for 4 Veterans. One Legion family flies all the Flags of the service in the yard for a week, in honor of the service. They are spotlighted to be able to fly them at night.

Lawrence Stephenson Unit #133, Turtle Lake

The Auxiliary members for the Taste of Turtle Lake. We served approximately 200 people. Program Worked: Community Services, Americanism Volunteer Hours: 8 Costs: \$10.00 May 2025 Memorial Day remembrances were planned and held.

The Auxiliary participated in the Memorial Day services held in Turtle Lake for the community. After the program, a luncheon was held where we served about 150. Program Worked: Community Services, Americanism, Education, and VA&R Volunteer Hours: 580 Veterans Served 50 Costs: \$.00

Unit #151 Scranton, ND

We are proud to announce that Natalia Martinez was a winner of the 2025 Americanism Essay Contest at the Northwest 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.

Minto, Unit #201

Legion Steak fry- 10 pans of bars were donated by Auxiliary members and members also helped with cleaning tables after the meal.

Poppy color books were distributed to twenty-one fourth grade students.

Memorial Day- Boys & Girls Scouts, along with an auxiliary member, helped place flags on the graves of veterans buried in the local cemeteries for a total of 4 hours. Memorial program was held at the Minto Community Center. The raising of the flag was done by the Post Commander with the assistance of the Boys & Girl Scouts. Memorial service began with an opening prayer led by Rev. Dill. Thirty-five veterans were in attendance. Unit 201 Auxiliary served brunch to fifty-five people. Everyone was encouraged to place a large poppy on veteran's headstones when they visited the cemeteries. Seven members took 2 hours to set up and 2 hours to clean up.

July 4th- 3 members took part in the Park River parade. One member rode with the dignitaries as the Dept Vice President. Two had a float and threw candy, frozen treats, and rubber ducks. \$100 for the treats, total of 1-2 hours for the parade.

Thursday Night Cookout- Legions night to cook. 5 Auxiliary members helped serve food and donated two salads. Over one hundred people were served.

Many members fly the American Flag on patriotic holidays.

Mini Museum- 8 members helped with the flag ceremony.

One member attended homecoming for the Department Commander and Department President. Donations were made to the Department Presidents projects \$120.

Veteran's Day- Program included an opening prayer and pledge. Two girls attended Girl State and gave a report. Both girls enjoyed their time at Girls State. Meal was served to sixty-five people, thirty-five being veterans. The patriotic music entertainment was provided by Misti Koop. 2 Girls Scouts and four auxiliary members helped with setting up and cleaning up for 2hrs.

Donations were made to the National Guard Foundation and Salvation Army. \$100 each.