



# American Legion Auxiliary

*A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans,  
Military, and their Families*

**TO: National Executive Committee Members, National Officers, National Chairmen,  
Past National Presidents**

**CC: Dept Presidents; Dept Secretaries, NHQ Staff; National Committee Members**

From: Kelly Circle, Executive Director

Re: **Weekly Briefing 11-06-2020**

Attached is the schedule of public events for the National Creative Arts Festival running November 30<sup>th</sup> through December 4<sup>th</sup>. Here is an opportunity for our members across the nation to see how our efforts positively impact veterans! Please help me spread the word to those who are interested.

As the number of positive COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Indiana and specifically in Marion county where the national headquarters is located, our employees who can and want to work from home will be doing so starting next week until the end of the year. The staff showed amazing resourcefulness and creativity during the state shutdown earlier this year and I am confident they will continue to provide seamless service to our members and implementation of our programs no matter where they are located.

Last week, I was interviewed for the University of Kansas School of Law Alumni Dean's Notes. This is an area where an alumna is highlighted to talk about their career and how their law degree has helped them. They learned about my career path through the press release our communications team, specifically, Jennifer Donovan, sent a year ago when I first took the position at the ALA. This is a great opportunity to showcase our accomplishments to the public-at-large and I appreciate Jennifer's efforts in making it happen for us!

Here's an excerpt of the interview for your reading pleasure:

"As executive director, Circle oversees 43 employees at the ALA's national headquarters; reviews legal documents; manages fiscal assets; works with the governing board and its chair; and builds external relationships.

"There are no two days that are the same," Circle said. "It's been great. I absolutely love it."

More than 600,000 people are involved with the organization nationwide. The ALA has units in all 50 U.S. states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

Circle strives to increase ALA membership and awareness of the work the ALA does to benefit veterans.

"My goal is to increase membership and awareness of the American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion Family," Circle said. "I want to encourage post 9/11 veterans and families to get involved in the American Legion Family to serve veterans for the next 100 years."



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The ALA works with veterans and their families at local, state and national levels. Most notably, the ALA joins the American Legion to meet with Congressional representatives each year in Washington, D.C. to advocate for veterans' rights and discuss legislation affecting veterans. The American Legion Family played a role in the G.I. Bill and lighting the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

"Veterans are willing to sacrifice their lives," Circle said. "The least we can do is give them the benefits that we promised them and make sure they're taken care of."

Circle also looks forward to the opportunity to be more involved with the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, which highlights performance art and artwork created by veterans. The festival is co-sponsored by the ALA and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

"To see the power of art and how it can help heal is amazing," Circle said. "I think that's pretty special and something we do with the V.A. that really makes an impact."

In the past year, the ALA worked to adapt their operations to address some of the challenges brought on by COVID-19. Meetings, conventions and festivals shifted to a virtual format. ALA volunteers launched letter writing campaigns, sewed masks and organized drop-off food drives for veterans.

"Units have shown how creative, resilient, and resourceful they can be," Circle said. "The ALA is set up for the next century of service in a way that I couldn't have expected."

Press releases announcing officers at the unit and department level are great ways to share with the local community about our efforts and encourage people to volunteer or join our organization. Our communications staff is happy to help any member develop a press release for your use!

And finally, there are no Red Book updates for this week. I'll be taking some time off at the end of next week so the next briefing will be on Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.