



The American Legion Auxiliary,
Department of Texas
Peter J. Courcy Unit 178
Frisco, Texas

Website: www.FriscoLegion.org/ALA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ALAAUnit178

New Member Handbook

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY!!

In the following pages, you will find much information a new member needs to know about The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA). However, this booklet will probably not answer all of your questions, so be sure to ASK YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS!! As well, further information and, perhaps, answers to questions you might have can be obtained online at www.ALAforVeterans.org. First and foremost, we're all here to help each other and are here for the same purpose...we are all colleagues on the same level!

Please read this pamphlet as it will help guide you through your service to the ALA. Serving in the ALA is a service to our country and its' people. At first, you may feel that there is a lot to take in and remember, but in time, the information will become second nature. As you flip through the pages, it may seem a little overwhelming, but as you attend more functions and get to know the organization, you will realize that we are all here for the same purpose, here to help and have fun doing it while united by a common bond-AMERICA!



SO NOW YOU'RE A MEMBER OF THE AUXILIARY

WHY DID I JOIN?
DO I RECEIVE A NEW MEMBER PACKET?
HOW DO I ACQUIRE AN AUXILIARY PIN AND/OR NAMETAG?
WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION?
DO I RECEIVE A COPY OF THE UNIT CONSTITUTION
AND BY-LAWS?
WHAT DO THE MEMBERS MEAN WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT
PROGRAMS?

These are only a few of the questions that you, as a new member, might ask. As a member of The American Legion Auxiliary, you deserve the answers to these questions and many more, But, remember, YOU as a member have a responsibility too.

Are you asking questions? Have you asked someone in the Unit to explain the programs to you? Nothing is secret. You have the same rights as any other member to know what is going on and how your organization operates. As a new member, you will learn faster if you become involved. Do not be afraid to volunteer to work on the various projects in your Unit, but DO ask to be put on committees where there are experienced members who can help you learn the ropes.

You can learn much about the American Legion Auxiliary by reading the Unit Handbook. If you do not have one, ask a Unit Officer for one. They are invaluable in answering questions about our organization and you will find yourself returning for the answer many times in the future.

Much can also be learned about the basic structure of the programs by reading the Post Guide. Borrow one from one of your Legionnaires and read it. You will be surprised at what you can learn.

Attendance at Unit, District and Department meetings is another good way of learning about the organization. You also pick up lots of good ideas as to how other Units run their programs and you will have lot of fun besides! If you miss a meeting, follow up and stay current with activities by reading the meeting minutes, agenda, and Treasurer's report, which you should receive by email. You can request these reports in hardcopy from a Unit Officer as well.

Do these things and you will begin to feel like you really belong. To help you a little further on your way, the following pages detail the A B C's for members and your rights as a member.

THE BASICS

The ALA Unit 178 begins its meetings by partaking in the opening ceremony conducted by Legion Post 178. Here are some of the things that you will want to know about the opening ceremony, and the conduct of meetings:

1. Three raps of the gavel means to stand up, one rap means to sit down.
2. Always wear your membership pin (or nametag w/pin) on the left side of your shirt/blouse over your heart.
3. Nothing may be placed above your membership pin except a flag pin or corsage.
4. The area in front of the President's podium between the American flag and The American Legion Auxiliary banner is hallowed ground. During a meeting you should not step between or reach across this area for any reason. This area symbolizes the unity between America and our organization.

5. When at a meeting, should you wish to speak, stand and address the President, “Madam President”, wait to be recognized, state your name and Unit number (if at a District or Department function-no need at a UNIT function), and wait to be recognized...then speak.
6. The presiding officer is referred to as “the chair”.
7. To speak to another member on a subject in a meeting, rise, address the presiding officer and state, “I wish to speak through the Chair to XXXXXX (i.e. Mrs. Jones).”
8. This organization is divided up into sections. The following is the exact order:
 - a) UNITS – the smallest division. UNIT usually refers to a city (there can be many UNITS within a city).
 - b) DISTRICTS – UNITS make up DISTRICTS. There are usually several UNITS in a DISTRICT.
 - c) DIVISIONS – DISTRICTS make up DIVISIONS. The American Legion designated DIVISIONS, which are several districts in specific areas.
 - d) DEPARTMENTS – DEPARTMENT is another word for the STATE. In the DEPARTMENT of Texas, there are 23 DISTRICTS and 4 DIVISIONS.
 - e) NATIONAL – This is the term used to describe the organization as a whole. There are UNITS in other countries, but they are still referred to as in NATIONAL, and have the same National President.





EXPLANATION OF THE PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

When the American Legion Auxiliary was formed to aid in the peacetime service of The American Legion to the United States, it was natural and right that the purposes of the Auxiliary be expressed in the same words, which set forth the purposes of the Legion. Therefore, the Preamble to the Constitution of the Auxiliary is nearly identical to that of the Legion's Preamble to the Constitution with the addition of the very significant phrase "to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of the American Legion."

"For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America..."

The first of the ten principles of The American Legion and Auxiliary is a sacred pledge of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. It is most appropriate that those very persons who have either served in war-time or had a close relative who served dedicate the first ideas presented in the Preamble to the continued defense of our nation. The pledge to uphold and defend the democracy of America is the first obligation of every Legionnaire and Auxiliary member.

"To maintain law and order..."

Law and order must be maintained if freedom is to be maintained. Liberty is not a license. Good government means

that all citizens are secure in their lives and property. To this, the Legion and Auxiliary are pledged by the second principle stated in the Preamble.

“To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism...”

The term “Americanism” covers all of the things that have made the American nation great and the American people free. It implies qualities of character as well as principles of government. Under this Constitution’s principles, the Legion and Auxiliary have worked, and continue to work, to defeat the attempts of subversive organizations to undermine our system, to build loyalty to and confidence in American ideals, and to develop an American citizenship capable of making America’s free form of government a constantly greater success.

“To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars...”

Every member of the Auxiliary has close personal associations with the sacrifice of war, be it World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada/Lebanon, Panama and the Persian Gulf War. The associations and incidents of these struggles are to be remembered not only for their heroes, their victories for freedom, but also to remind us of the awful implications and the inevitable tragedies accompanying any war.

“To inculcate a sense of obligation to the community, state and nation...”

The individual is the basis of the American nation. Unlike other ideals of government, the American ideal places the individual first. The nation belongs to the individual, not the individual to the nation. The government exists for the purpose of serving the individual, not the individual serving the nation. If this ideal is to survive, there must be a voluntary sense of obligation of the individual to the nation and its component parts, the community and the state. The American citizen serves

his community, state and nation, not as a driven slave, but as a free man guided by his own sense of duty. To inculcate this feeling along all Americans is one of the great purposes of the Legion and Auxiliary.

“To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses...”

If America is to remain “the land of the free”, the government must always be a government of all the people and for all the people. No classes are recognized in America. America must be kept the country of opportunity for all, where every citizen’s first allegiance is to the nation, not to some social or economic class of mass. Dominance must not be gained by any such grouping of Americans. This is another basic pledge of the Legion and Auxiliary.

“To make right the master of might...”

The American form of government guarantees equal rights to all citizens. The American Legion Auxiliary, born from a struggle against ruthless might, pledges all their strength to a continued struggle to prevent invasion of the rights of any citizens by any force, no matter of what character. .

“To promote peace and goodwill on earth...”

The men and women of the Legion and the women of the Auxiliary know well the ghastly futility of war. We know that war brings only misery to any nation which engages in it, to the victor as well as the vanquished. With the lessons of war constantly in mind, we pledge ourselves to promote peace and goodwill among nations. We have worked steadily in the cause in the face of forces which have sought to sow enmity and war throughout the world. .

“To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy...”

These were the principles which inspired America’s great war efforts over the decades, and the Legion and Auxiliary stand

determined that these principles should not be lost to America in time of peace. Following this pledge, the Legion and Auxiliary work to safeguard justice, freedom and democracy against the dangers of indifferent citizenship and undermining by their enemies. It strives to give understanding of and devotion to these principles to the younger generations of Americans so that they will endure for the future of our country.

“To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion...”

Thus, the Auxiliary pledges its full strength to the support of The American Legion, and affirms its character as an auxiliary to the Legion. It has always been faithful to this pledge, never developing programs or policies of its own, but directing all of its activities toward the “accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion.”

“To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness...”

In this final phrase of the Preamble is set forth the purpose which has guided the Legion and Auxiliary in all their vast rehabilitation and youth work; in everything they have done to lighten the burden for those suffering from the results of wars; and to bring full justice to those paying the human price for America’s victory. In this work of mercy and relief, the Auxiliary has made great contributions toward the achievement of the Legion’s purpose.





THE EMBLEM WE WEAR

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the member's badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and country and the highest rights of man. It consists of several parts and each part has a meaning.

- The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of The American Legion Auxiliary – loyalty, justice, freedom and democracy; dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil.
- The unbroken circle of blue represents unity and loyalty.
- The field of white exemplifies the hope of freedom.
- The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in time of peace.

The emblem of The American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Americanism. It is a badge of service to community, state and nation, obligating the wearer to ever guard the sanctity of home, country and free institutions.

Members are encouraged to wear a nametag and pin. Personalized nametags with pins attached may be ordered on the web at www.Emblem.Legion.org. Ask a Unit officer if you have questions about clothing, nametags or other.

**ARE YOU PROUD WHEN YOU WEAR YOUR AMERICAN
LEGION AUXILIARY PIN?
YOU SHOULD BE!!!!**

INFORMATION GOVERNING THE USE OF THE EMBLEM

The possession of this emblem in this format does not constitute permission to reproduce it. Permission to reproduce the emblems of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of the American Legion is confined to those activities listed below:

“The American Legion emblem is fully copyrighted & patented in the name of the National organization. The emblem is also protected by federal legislation, which makes it a criminal offense to use, without formal approval of the National organization, the patented insignia of any veteran’s group chartered by Congress, one of which is The American Legion.”

The above restrictions apply equally to the emblems of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of the American Legion.

The use of the emblem by an individual Auxiliary member is limited to the wearing of the official insignia and to the possession of authorized jewelry of merchandise bearing the insignia. Units are confined to using the emblem or reproduction of the emblem on stationery, Unit publications, notices, posters, place cards, or matters of similar character used in the ordinary routine and conduct of legitimate Unit business. Departments are similarly limited. Any other use of the name “The American Legion Auxiliary” or the emblem shall be subject to the approval of the National Secretary.



POST AND UNIT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The American Legion, Department of Texas
Peter J. Courcy Post 178, Frisco, Texas

The American Legion Auxiliary,
Peter J. Courcy Unit 178, Frisco, Texas

(See Post roster for current listing of Post and Unit Officers and their Contact Information.)

Monthly Post and Unit meetings are held at 6:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month at the Frisco Senior Center. A Meet-and-Greet precedes each Post meeting at 6:00 pm. The Unit participates in the opening of each Post meeting and then departs to a separate meeting room where the Unit meeting is then held. The Post and Unit strive to adhere to a standard of adjourning meetings by no later than 8:00 p.m.

Frisco Post 178 Namesake: Army Cpl. Peter J. Courcy

Born: July 25, 1986

Killed in Action: February 10, 2009

Operation Enduring Freedom

Assigned: 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade
Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), based at
Fort Campbell, Kentucky

Cpl. Peter J. Courcy, 22, of Frisco, Texas died as a result of injuries sustained when his vehicle was hit by a suicide car-bomb attack in Solerno, Afganistan. Courcy was manning a .50 caliber machine gun in the point vehicle of a convoy when his Humvee was rammed by a car packed with explosives, which exploded on contact. Peter had just reenlisted for another 5 years of service

hoping to join the Special Forces and was two weeks away from returning home to his wife Mara and five-month old son.

His awards and decorations include: the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Army Achievement Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; Air Assault Badge; Parachutist Badge; and Weapons Qualification, M4, expert.

Courcy attended Frisco High School where he played on the ice hockey team and was a member of the wrestling team. After graduating in 2004, he played amateur hockey for the Dallas Ice Hawks while taking classes at the community college until enlisting in 2008. His former principal remembers his upbeat presence and fervor for life. "He was a good student, but he was an even better person," Rick Burnett said. "That was reflective in the fact that he served his country."

His wife, Mara, son Anthony Luke of Georgia; parents Mary and Christopher Bush, brother Luke Bush of Frisco, Texas, survive Courcy. He was laid to rest at Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery in area 76 of the front row.

In May 2013, the Frisco City Council unanimously approved naming the entrance road to Frisco Commons Park as Cpl. Peter J. Courcy Circle. Frisco Commons Park is the site of the Frisco Veterans Memorial and "The Walk of Honor". Additionally, Frisco American Legion Post 178 unanimously voted during their 1st meeting on January 7, 2014 to name their post after this young hero.



The World's Largest Women's Patriotic Service Organization

For nearly a century, the American Legion Auxiliary has been serving, helping, and meeting the needs of our nation's veterans, military, and their families—both here and abroad.

SOME ABOUT WHAT WE DO.....

Youth Development – What is Girl's State?

The ALA's marquee Girls State program, first presented in 1937, is one of the most respected and coveted experiential learning programs presented in the United States. Girls State is a unique and exciting government-in-action learning program in which ALA members guide young women to become knowledgeable stewards of freedom, democracy and patriotic citizens.

Each summer, approximately 20,000 young women participate in weeklong ALA Girls State programs across the nation. Every ALA Girls State program operates with the same patriotic values through a nonpartisan curriculum where students assume the roles of government leaders, campaigning in mock parties to become mayors and county and state officials of their ALA Girls State.

The program is a weeklong immersive learning experience, often held on a college campus where girls live in "cities" within a dormitory-like setting. The learning, experience, memories, and friendships last a lifetime.

The costs of ALA Girls State programs are underwritten by each state-level American Legion Auxiliary. Girls State delegates' registration fees are paid for by the sponsoring local American Legion Auxiliary.

Poppy Days

The Poppy Program raises community awareness and respect for our veterans by educating the public about the symbol of the poppy, taken from a line in the poem “In Flanders Fields” written on the battlefield in World War I.

Poppy Days have become a familiar tradition in almost every American community. This distribution of the bright red memorial flower to the public is one of the oldest and most widely recognized programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. Poppies are made by Veterans and have become a symbol of the sacrifices our military have made, a symbol to open people’s hearts and inspire them to donate.



The financial benefit realized by our nation’s veterans as a result of poppy distribution is huge. Children are involved in spreading the poppy message, too. Poppy Poster Contests are held in local schools for students in grades 2 to 12.

Scholarship Programs

The American Legion Auxiliary believes that the more knowledge our young people gain, the better citizens they will become. That is why the organization is so committed to education. Investing in the education of our young people is investing in the future of our country.



Time and again we hear about the difference an American Legion Auxiliary scholarship has made in a person's life, providing unimagined experiences and opening up a world of opportunities. The Auxiliary supports a number of scholarship programs that benefit veterans, the children of our veterans, and the members of the organizations within The American Legion family.

Junior Activities

Engaging the next generation to become members in the American Legion Auxiliary is the important purpose of the Junior Activities Program. Junior Auxiliary membership is open to girls from infancy through age 17. The Junior Activities Committee prepares girls to become active adult members of the organization by providing positive volunteer experiences that instill the ideals of the Auxiliary. These girls develop leadership skills while having fun and will hopefully become the future leaders of our organization.



Children & Youth

To recognize and reward the positive actions of our children and youth, the American Legion Auxiliary has two special national awards bestowed to youth nominated by units. The Youth Hero Award recognizes someone less than 18 years of age who performs a heroic act of physical bravery. The Good Deed Award is for youths 18 years of age or younger who have contributed in a special way to society through community service.

