



Department of Texas
Program Engagement Plan
2024-2025

MEMBERSHIP

The purpose of the Membership Committee is to work with Units, Districts, and Divisions by providing leadership, training, and support; and to encourage their efforts to attract and retain an energetic, exciting, and committed membership that will sustain our organization for years to come.

How can we grow our membership? We get new members, but they don't stay? How can we recruit AND retain?

Recognizing that change is inevitable, one area of support is to encourage new ideas from our members. "But we tried that in 1974 and it didn't work" or "we've been doing it this way for 23 years" are not always applicable. We live in an ever-changing society – accountability, resources, guidelines, rules, and more are constantly subject to change. The American Legion Auxiliary must maintain accountability in a variety of ways, which often includes changes that we must adapt to. Sharing up to date information with our members is crucial. **COMMUNICATION!**

RECRUITING:

- **ASK.** We have heard this for a long time, but it is the number one way to get membership. Engage in conversations about how we serve our veterans, military families, and communities. Patriotism runs deep – explain why our mission serves the very heart of our freedoms. Most people have someone in their family they are eligible under, or may be a veteran or military family in need.
- **BRANDING.** Wear your Auxiliary emblems, shirts, hats, etc. – someone is bound to ask who we are and what we do. See, they've started the conversation for you!
- **FAMILY.** It's amazing how many of us have not signed up our family members! Share with them how you are honoring the service of an ancestor or relative.

RETENTION - This one takes work but the efforts are rewarding...

- **MAKE IT ENJOYABLE.** Yes, we are serving a mission but it's vital that we enjoy our time together in doing so. Make some fun time at your meetings by bringing a snack to share, offer a random door prize each month, or have your members share a story.
- **AGREE TO DISAGREE.** We don't always get along or agree with each other, but it's important that we maintain integrity and respect for each other. No one wants to come to a meeting where everyone is talking down to each other or being disrespectful.

- **TRAINING.** Hold leadership trainings, officer role seminars, or afternoon teas just to get together and learn. When we learn more about our organization, we learn more about each other and work better together. Encourage members to attend District, Division, and Dept conventions and workshops. Knowledge builds a strong foundation.
- **INCENTIVES.** Offer incentives for Early Bird renewals – a random drawing for a gift card or a nice gift.
- **SHARE.** Communication is the key to great leadership and productivity. Share your weekly membership reports, post your events on our Facebook page (ALA Membership in Texas), accept challenges, and try new ideas. Hold a Membership Recruitment Day at your Post to bring in your community and show them who we are, what we do, and why we matter. (You would be surprised to know how many members of your community do not know what the American Legion is). Join and visit your local Chamber of Commerce.
- **CARE.** Contact members who you haven't heard from or you know are struggling. A 'get well' or 'thinking of you' card means so much to those who need encouragement. Show your members that they are valuable, important, and needed.

There are many more ideas and resources available on the National website at www.alaforveterans.org. By honoring our veterans and military through meaningful service, the American Legion Auxiliary will grow our membership and ensure sustainability for years to come. The bottom line is - if we let our members know we care, they will be more actively involved and the sky is the limit for what we can do for our veterans, military, and communities!



GOALS AND AWARDS:

- **The 24-25 goal for Texas is 14,355.** Individual Unit goals will be distributed – don't worry, they are attainable! We will have a special certificate and surprise random drawing for all Units who meet the following timelines:
 - o **50% by Veterans Day, November 11, 2024**
 - o **75% by Valentine's Day, February 14, 2025**
 - o **100% by Memorial Day, May 26, 2025**
 - o 100% ribbons awarded at Dept Convention for Units meeting 100% by June 30, 2025

The Butterfly Effect Narrative – Your Story!

The Butterfly Effect is the concept that small actions can have big results, originating from the idea that a butterfly can cause a typhoon simply by flapping its wings! In human terms, we all have the power to make a lasting impact on those around us with small acts of kindness. By joining the American Legion Auxiliary, you are making a positive impact on the lives of those we serve.



What's your **Butterfly Effect Story**? In keeping with President Sharon's butterfly transformation theme, we would love to hear YOUR Transformation Story! **Send us a narrative telling how your membership in the American Legion Auxiliary has 'transformed' you.** From the caterpillar stage (first meeting jitters, 'what's a District?', 'how long can one meeting be?', 'which way do I exit the podium?'); to the cocoon (you've memorized the Preamble, helping around the Post, sharing ideas, making motions); to the

beautiful butterfly emerging confident, strong, and empowered (a typhoon!) ready to take on a leadership role, supervise a benefit, or teach a class! How and when did your transformations take place? Who helped you get there and how do you feel now? Your words may encourage others and you could win an awesome prize! **Narratives will be due to the Membership Committee by April 15, 2025.**

- **Challenge Accepted!** We've seen some great challenges over the years between Departments and Units. Consider making a challenge with another Unit – set a time for a specific goal (ex: 75% by Christmas) and a 'consequence' for the Unit that falls in behind. Make it fun – silly is even better! Let us know so we can share your fun on our Facebook page and in the bulletins.
- At the National level the **Recruit / Rejoin 10 Award** offers a special gift from the National Membership Chairman to those members who recruit or rejoin 10 members. Rejoined – has not paid dues since 2021. Submission form is required (attached) and must be sent to the Department Secretary no later than May 1, 2025 for timely submission to National. Award recipients will be recognized at Department Convention.



We are excited to have our own **Teresa Simmons- Copeland serving as the National Southern Division Membership Chair** this year. She will keep us informed on National goals/themes and will encourage and motivate us throughout the year. National President Trish Ward's theme is "Leading the Way" – Texas can do that! She has incorporated the elements into her theme with the Southern Division as the Earth Element. Teresa has created this logo that we hope you will work into our transformation theme when you can.

The Membership Committee looks forward to working with you to make this the best year ever – we are confident that with your continued efforts and dedication to the mission, the Department of Texas can reach the 100% goal and ensure that future generations will continue to proudly honor and serve our Nation's Heroes! We are here to help – please let us know what we can do for YOU!



Shay Kuehner	Division 1, Chair	817-300-2043	Shay1956@sbcglobal.net
Gillian Woodstrom	Division 2	281-615-5670	gwoodstrom@woodborne.com
Shelli Creech	Division 3	210-237-7399	Atomicglitter84@gmail.com
Shawna Dunlap	Division 4		shawnaleighdunlap@outlook.com