

The first National Convention of the American Legion, in 1919, established an Auxiliary to the American Legion. The national Auxiliary had formed 1342 local Units by the time of the 1920 National Convention. Their comprehensive organizational efforts were authorized.

In Kansas City, Missouri, the first National Convention of the Auxiliary was held in 1921. The name "American Legion Auxiliary" was adopted and the election of the first national officers took place at this time.

In June of 1920 in Allentown, PA at the Pennsylvania's first formal American Legion Convention, the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Pennsylvania was established. Their charter was granted from the temporary National Headquarters in New York.

It worked hand-in-hand with the Legion. In 1929 it purchased drums for the Legion's Drum and Bugle Corp. In 1938, along with the Legion, 1 million poppies were distributed. They could be seen in every town, borough, and city.

The first Keystone Girls' Camp (later to be known as Keystone Girls State), was held June 22 to July 2, 1949. It was held in Gettysburg with 150 girls in attendance.

1943-44 during the presidency of Mrs. Harry W. Piper, membership was at 53,800. The activities of the ALA were very significant and wide ranged. The efforts of the ALA included: Child Welfare work, lobbying Congress for the G.I. Bill and hundreds of blood drives. The American Legion Auxiliary was able to donate \$1600 towards the Junior Baseball program.

Since the beginning of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Pennsylvania, the women have worked side-by-side with their counterparts from the American Legion promoting the welfare of the veterans, the military, the youth and their communities. Countless hours of volunteer work in one fashion or another have been implemented, documented and recorded.

In 2019, The American Legion authorized some changes in Auxiliary membership. The word "wife" in the membership requirements was changed to spouse, thereby allowing the male spouses of female Veterans to become Auxiliary members. At the same time, the American Legion also eliminated the Veteran service eras so that any Veteran with service after World War 1 became eligible for American Legion membership, making their spouses eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Information from "The History of the American Legion" by Terry Radtke)

Purpose of the Auxiliary

The one great purpose of the American Legion Auxiliary is – "to contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of the American Legion." The American Legion Auxiliary parallels The American Legion. The American Legion Auxiliary does not introduce or institute any policy that conflicts with the policies of the American Legion. The activities of the Auxiliary are designed to enhance The American Legion's programs.

Mission Statement

The mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is:

- To support The American Legion and its programs for Veterans, Children and Community
- To provide for today's needs, while being advocates for a brighter future
- To advance the understanding of patriotism and responsibility of citizenship
- To promote individual integrity and family values
- To ensure that, as volunteers, we continue to be leaders in all that is good in this nation today, tomorrow and for generations to come through serving others, not self

Information is from Unit Handbook of the American Legion Auxiliary