

American Legion Auxiliary

Establishment of a women's auxiliary to the American Legion was granted by the first National Convention at Minneapolis in 1919, by the time the 1920 Convention opened in Cleveland, Ohio, 1,342 local units had been formed and 11,000 members enrolled under the tentative name of Women's Auxiliary of The American Legion. Intensive organization followed the Cleveland convention, with the number of units increasing to 3,653 and membership rising to 131,000 within a year.

The first national convention of the Women's Auxiliary was at Kansas City, Mo., in November, 1921, called by American Legion National Commander John G. Emery. The name was changed to the American Legion Auxiliary, and a national constitution modeled after The American Legion's was adopted. National offices were elected and a national headquarters was established side-by-side with American Legion headquarters in Indianapolis. The new organization grew rapidly and quickly became a valuable asset to The American Legion in carrying out priority programs.

The purpose of the American Legion Auxiliary as expressed in the Preamble to its Constitution is, "To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purpose of The American Legion." The Auxiliary participates extensively in the Legion's work for disabled war veterans, children of war veterans, community service, Americanism and national security. Whenever the Legion needs help, the Auxiliary is always ready to demonstrate its support.

Eight and Forty

Officially designated as La Boutique des Huit Chapeaux et Quarante Femmes (The Shop of Eight Hats and Forty Women), the Eight and Forty is an organization of women who have distinguished themselves in the American Legion Auxiliary. The Eight and Forty was organized in June 1922 at Indianapolis, and its first Marche Nationale was conducted that same year at The American Legion National Convention in New Orleans. Working in close cooperation with the Legion's National Commission on Children & Youth, the Eight and Forty considers the prevention part of this concern, in 1956 the Eight and Forty established its tuberculosis nursing scholarship fund to assist nurses in gaining supervision, administration and teaching positions.