

# **GIRLS STATE CHAIRMAN MEMO**

To: Unit Girls State Chairman

From: Dawn Kenneda, Director

Date: July 2023

Subject: 2024 American Legion Auxiliary Wyoming Girls State June 9-15, 2024 – Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne

First, let me express my gratitude in your willingness to serve as the local Girls State Unit Chairman. Your work changes the lives of young women and strengthens our republic. You make a huge impact and I am so grateful to be serving with you in this endeavor.

Here are just a few comments from last sessions experience:

- “Personally I really enjoyed this program, leaving tomorrow hurts so much cause I fell in love with the girls that I had, I will definitely remember all of the people and memories that this has given me. Thank you for a great week and I hope to return next year 2024 and become a part of the ALA!”
- “I had such an amazing experience at Girls State this year! All of the delegates, JC’s and the Senior Councilors were all amazing and I feel it was extremely organized and well planned! The food was amazing and everyone worked as a team!”
- “I think that Girls State was amazing. I came in the first night crying and wishing nothing more than to go home, but I had an amazing time. Thank you, for letting me come, making me grow so much, and making me never want to leave this group of girls. I know that what I learned at girls state isn’t over and my journey is only beginning, even though this might have been my last and only time singing in the best choir ever. Thank you”.

I have made some significant changes to how we register delegates for the upcoming session and I hope you find it more effective and easy. We are starting our 81th session of Girls State!!! Last session, we had 4% of all the high schools in the state. This year I am hoping for 45%. I need your help to do this. I feel our numbers are dropping because many schools have new administration and have never heard of Girls State. As you go out to find delegates, impress on the schools that the girls earn 3 college credits, scholarship opportunities, and gain leadership experience through mock Wyoming Government. If you need any help, do not hesitate to contact me. I will be offering training at our fall and winter state workshops for any and all who wish to help grow our program.

Please check the Chairman Tips and Tricks on our website. Here is a list of deadlines and information, I hope you find helpful:

**NOVEMBER:** Contact High schools, find out how many Junior girls are attending and fill out the quota sheet, mail to me at 941 Pinyon Pl, Sheridan, WY 82081

**MARCH:** Under school packets on the website: ([http://www.wylegionaux.org/girls\\_state.html](http://www.wylegionaux.org/girls_state.html)) you will find the application that you will have prospective girls fill out and turn in to your unit. You can also find the school letter, rating sheet and flyer for your use. \*Once you have interviewed your girls. Under the Chairman packet on the website-you have a sample press release for your use.

**MARCH 15th** - This is our first hard deadline. Please have your delegates fill out the Delegate registration, with all the proper signatures-including yours, the high school administrator and their parents. Make sure they include a head picture-even if it is printed, cut and pasted to the application. Make sure their email is clearly stated. It is hard to tell the difference between the letter L and l, and 0 vs o. Make sure they DO NOT use their school address as it has heavy blockers and I will not be able to contact them. Then turn them into me either by email or mail. ([wygdirector@gmail.com](mailto:wygdirector@gmail.com)) or 941 Pinyon Pl, Sheridan WY 82801. Then send the registration fee to Peg. Make the check out to American Legion Auxiliary and mail it to Peg Sullivan, Department of Wyoming, P. O. Box 186, Buffalo, WY 82834-0186

Once I have received your delegates' registration, I will send them an email with links for filling out scholarships, Samsung, their bills and all the other paperwork they will need. \*Remember: Education assignments are made on a first come/first serve basis, so please submit your Delegate's paperwork on time to ensure they get their first choices. Courts will be selected, one from each delegation that turns in the paperwork on time. So if you have 3 delegates all choosing courts, please let me know who you think would most benefit from the experience as there are only 12 openings for court.

**April 15th** - Send the Delegate fee to Peg Sullivan (if you lack funds, please contact me as no delegate should be turned away for lack of funds.) Make sure to review your delegate's bill before they submit it. They will receive a link in their email to input their bill. All Bills, Scholarships, and elected office they are running for should be submitted at this time. Your delegate should have received a link in their email to submit these forms. If they have not, please contact me. I will be CC'ing you on all communication with your delegate, so please make sure you have an email you can check. Delegate withdrawals after May 1st will be refunded based on the date of notification and how close to Girls State opening session. a sliding scale determined by the Girls State Committee once your unit requests a refund. If your Unit doesn't have enough Delegates to fill your Unit quota and you are willing to sponsor a Delegate/Alternate from

another area, please notify me. Should your Unit need assistance with the Delegate fees, please submit a request for assistance to me and I will ask the Girls State Committee to consider your request.

**Helpful tips:** It would be very helpful for delegates to know how to fold, raise and lower the flag before coming to Girls State. Let them know there will be a talent show, flag raising/lowering ceremonies that they can prepare for-bring a patriotic poem, musical instruments. Stress that they need to stay the entire week from Sunday at 2pm till the following Saturday at noon in order to receive scholarships, college credit, and other recognitions.

We highly discourage scheduling of ACT/SAT testing right after Girls State. The delegates are usually tired after the long week and are not at their peak performance for testing. Training – The importance of this is paramount to the success of the Delegate and the program. Please refer to the Fact Sheet provided. Include your Alternates in all training so they are prepared, should they be selected to attend at the last minute. Tap into community resources and schedule visits with local judges, city officials, and state legislators.

Please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Girls State Committee, if you need help with training or have questions. Publicity – Blow your horn! It is truly an honor to attend American Legion Auxiliary Wyoming Girls State and the community should be made aware of this event. Publicize the Delegates selected, starting with their selection, through the training process, and before attending the session. Provide pictures or ask the newspaper to attend a training session. Post it on your local social media sights. Recognize any contributing organizations, but remember Girls State is a program of the American Legion Auxiliary. Please share copies of the publicity with me. Transportation – We urge Units within the same area to pool resources to provide transportation.

We discourage Delegates from driving themselves to Cheyenne as the Auxiliary's exposure to liability greatly increases when they drive. Inform your Delegates they will be required to turn in their keys upon arrival and they will not be returned until just prior to departure. Any questions regarding travel may be directed to the Girls State Committee. For God and Country – Our organization is dedicated to God and Country; therefore, daily attendance at Flag Ceremonies and Retreat are mandatory for all Delegates. If you have any doubt as to their beliefs, we can only recommend they do not attend the Girls State session.

Flag Ceremonies are held twice daily and each city will take a turn conducting the ceremony. Retreat is a positive, short, non-denominational service with an emphasis on friendship and togetherness held each evening. Encourage Delegates to bring poems, readings, and other appropriate materials to share. Americanism – This is an integral part of Girls State making the Flag Etiquette booklet very important. If your Unit does not provide this booklet, one will be provided at Check In. If your Unit provides the booklet, please ask them to bring with them to

Girls State. Tailor some of your training to include questions and answers from the booklet. Practice proper care and folding of the American Flag. An Americanism Test will be given at Girls State.

Unit Tidbits – **Please provide each Delegate attending Girls State with a poppy corsage.** All Delegates and staff wear these corsages for picture day and when the Governor visits. Care packages from the Unit are encouraged. Recommend that your Delegates share the Girls State address with their family and friends, as mail call is a very important part of the day. Send mail early in the week to assure it will arrive prior to the end of the session. Homesickness – It is not uncommon for the Delegates to experience homesickness the first couple of days. Encourage the Delegates to address this issue with their city counselor. Safety and Welfare – Delegates must always remain on campus in their assigned groups. Any deviation may result in the Delegate being sent home.

**Chairman Packet** – In addition to all of the Delegate forms, the Chairman packet contains a copy of this letter, a Sample Press Release, the Fact Sheet, Chairman Tips and Tricks and a Unit Chairman Check List. Membership – Please remember, if a Delegate is eligible to apply for the Samsung scholarship, she is eligible for American Legion Auxiliary membership. Don't miss this opportunity to increase your Unit's membership.

The Girls State Committee is looking forward to working with you and your Delegates. Thank you for the gift of your time and dedication to the most influential program the American Legion Auxiliary has to offer to the young women of our state. Without your assistance and hard work, this program would not be possible.

Please feel free to contact any member of the committee, if you have any questions or concerns.

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