

To: 2017 Dept NEC; 2017 Dept Presidents; 2017 Membership; 2017 National Officers; 2017 National Chairmen; ALA Past National Presidents; Dept Secretaries

From: Martha Corriher, 2017 National Membership Chairman

RE: Message from the National Membership Chairman

Good afternoon all. With Thanksgiving over and the Christmas season beginning; I needed to send a short message out after last week's membership comparison report and just before this week's report.

I am not at a loss for words, but it just took me awhile to find the right words to share. It came to me in church Sunday during the pastor's message. His topic was "A Message of Celebration". The more he spoke, the more I realized what I wanted to write.

Membership, just like Christmas, is a time to celebrate. These two have more in common than for only celebrating. First, membership and Christmas are personal. You joined the Auxiliary because your loved ones cared enough to give themselves to serving our country. Some served for a short time and some gave the ultimate sacrifice, just as Christ gave His life for our salvation.

Second, membership and Christmas should be a positive way of thinking. We should want to grow our membership in the Auxiliary to show support for veterans, active duty military and their families. When good things happen that's a great feeling of accomplishment. At Christmas we try to stay positive about what will Santa bring, will the family be in harmony and will there be enough of everyone's favorite food to share. Your national membership committee is positive that if we all take to heart our mission we will move the numbers up in a positive direction.

Last but not least, membership is universal. We have units worldwide, and yes, we have our ups and downs with recruitment, retention and rejoins. Most communities know something about the American Legion Auxiliary, but it's up to us to show them who we are, what we do and why we matter. It only takes one spark to set that fire. Your actions speak much louder than words and are remembered longer. Christmas is celebrated worldwide even though not all believe or celebrate in the same way.

My Christmas wish for all members is to find a renewed feeling toward the organization. We have to share more, I mean "SHARE." I have had calls from units from several departments

and they are telling me their department membership chairman hasn't sent anything out regarding membership. All they know is their membership dues are to be sent in, but have no idea what else is going on in their department regarding membership. To make membership succeed, we have to "SHOW UP." Each member from the unit, department and national level, as well as past national leaders must "SHOW UP" and continue working or we will fail on many levels.

I have heard reasons concerning membership coming in slowing. We had hoped by giving each department the opportunity to set their goals or meet the goal that achieved last year would work with getting the numbers up. This has helped in some departments and is catching on in others, with still some work to go. I am confident we can and will get the numbers up if we all pull together working every angle of membership.

I would like to show President Mary we can grow our membership and make it meaningful for all. What a great Christmas present that would be for her and for all of us.

I live in a very small rural area as do many of you but there are potential members there. It just takes "Showing Up and Sharing Out" and letting your good works lead the way in your communities. You can find new members; it has happened in my area and it can happen in yours.

May you all have a blessed holiday season, a Merry Christmas and let us not forget our veterans, active military and their families that are depending on us during this season and every day of the year.

Martha Corriher, National Membership Chairman