

The members of the American Legion Auxiliary could be counted on like flowers that added quality to lives throughout the year. The air was filled with the fragrance of lilacs in early June which reminded members of new beginnings, and thus the new North Dakota Department Auxiliary year began with the installation of officers.

The Department of North Dakota inducted Marlene Boyer as President June 28, 2015 in Grand Forks. Myrna Ronholm, a past Department Secretary, officiated at the installation which was a special event for Marlene with her husband and family in attendance. Since 2014-2015 Department President Arla Roth was ill and unable to attend convention, Vice President Diane Kraemer pinned Marlene with the Department President's Pin.

President Marlene's theme was "Their Sacrifice, Our Freedom" with her pin of soldier's boots and dog tags. These symbols were chosen because the American military has boots on the ground in 157 of the 196 countries on earth. From the beginning of the United States illustrated by the "Bloody Footprints in the Snow" portrait of George Washington crossing the Delaware to the footprints of today's military, our freedom is still being bought by the military's sacrifices.

A kiln for the Lisbon Veterans Home workshop was selected as one of President Marlene's projects as was the training of service dogs at Jud, North Dakota for veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Since Fargo's YWCA emergency shelter is accessed by wives and children of veterans with mental health issues, money was earmarked to support those families. Veterans' emergent needs at Fargo's Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) also received funds. President Marlene asked for Java for Joes to be donated to the Gladys Ray Homeless Shelter in Fargo.

Petunias, petunias, petunias. In July, the state came alive with the newly planted

flower gardens of June. Just as petunias were the foundation of most flower gardens in North Dakota, members were the foundation of the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA). Were members working to support veterans, military, and their families? You can bet your petunias!

The Department organizational meeting was held at Bismarck Comfort Inn. The Finance Board began on July 9 and continued through July 10. On July 10, Department Officers and Chairmen and District Presidents and Vice Presidents joined the Finance Board to plan for the upcoming leadership year. District Officers updated leadership books while Chairmen and Department Chaplain and Historian discussed the strategic plan and how it relates to programs and plans of work. Yes, meetings continued into the evening to make sure all agenda items were covered! Since Past Department President Arla had been ill during Convention, the winners of her raffles were announced as were the total number of poppies she crocheted which totaled 940 with each U. S. Senator receiving one including North Dakota's Heidi Heitkamp who is a member of North Dakota's eUnit.

To accomplish the promotion of the Department of North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary goals for the 2015-2016 year, President Marlene, the Department Officers, and Department Chairmen developed Department Plans of Work that were sent in monthly mailings to units.

Americanism Chairman Eileen Vonda stressed that being a chairman was a brand new endeavor for her. She asked units to follow the National Americanism Plan of Action and was open to suggestions from members.

Georgette Dorval agreed to serve as Children and Youth Chairman as well as Junior Activities Chairman. Georgette emphasized supporting all children particularly those of veterans and military families. She asked units to conduct a Kids of Deployed are Heroes

2 program and to promote Star Spangled Kids. For junior members, adult members were challenged to ask daughters and granddaughters, no matter where they live, to work independently on an age appropriate service project for veterans and their families.

The Communications Committee had been around for several years as an idea in progress. Chairman Shauna Dubuque informed members that the committee, instituted as permanent in the Department Constitution and Bylaws at the 2015 Convention, was charged with enhancing and improving communications internally through existing print and digital methods which included *The Message*, unit mailings, Department website and listserv, and Facebook. Members were asked to print information from digital sources for those who may prefer a paper copy for distribution at meetings.

Community Service Chairman Joan Lasher also adopted the National Plan of Action. Joan emphasized that community service is a daily event for most members, and veterans and their families are touched wherever activities are offered.

DeVon Allmaras accepted two chairmanships also. As Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, DeVon asked units to incorporate Standing Rules to help create a culture of goodwill. She suggested reviewing a section of the Auxiliary Preamble at each meeting to strengthen belief in ALA's mission and vision. As Legislative Chairman, DeVon encouraged members to subscribe to The American Legion's legislative eBulletins.

Education Chairman Robbin Witkowski offered suggestions for individual members as well as at the unit level. The Veterans in the Classroom program was suggested to enhance respect for the sacrifices of the military. Units were asked to promote ALA scholarships and award local unit scholarships with an awareness of veterans furthering their education. Numerous choices were presented with the hope that members and units would find several that could be implemented whether in an area with no school

or in a large city.

Myrna Ronholm as Emergency Fund Chairman highlighted the National Plan of Action stressing personal donations and provided wrappers for beverage bottles for coin collection.

Girls State Chairman Dana Thorson announced the 2016 dates of Flickertail Girls State with new marketing tools available at the website ndgirlsstate.org. The 2015-2016 program of operations recommendations were approved by Department Executive Board. Members were asked to apply to be a City Mom.

Vice President Diane Kraemer served as Membership Chairman. Diane had a mountain to climb with an increase of 3,000 members needed to meet Department's membership objective. Diane asked members to continue to collect change at meetings which could be used to retain an elderly member or to recruit a new member. Units were reminded about ALA's Honor our Female Veterans program.

2013-2014 Department President Marlys Aubol took on the responsibility of Public Relations Chairman. Unit chairmen were given instructions and asked to access ALA's website to follow National Public Relations Chairman Elaine Mackenzie's Plan of Action. Marlys stressed promoting "who we are, what we do, why we matter," and wearing ALA's brand because someone we love served this country.

Catherine Olson was charged with beginning the implementation of the North Dakota Strategic Plan strategies. She cautioned members not to be overwhelmed with all the information and specific terms the plan contained, but to look at the actions that can be implemented by celebrating and continuing the unit's strength while discussing and choosing three to five needs and planning actions to achieve those needs.

Mavis Goodroad returned as Veterans Affairs Chairman. In addition to President

Marlene's projects, Mavis promoted member-made heart pillows, the purchase of hard plastic pencil cases to store diabetic testing supplies and insulin, donations to Wishes on Wings, and children's activity bags for the VAMC. Mavis is also on call so that no veteran dies alone.

Newly elected Department Secretary Shirley Montgomery reminded members how important the Legion family can be in the loss of a loved one - her husband. Besides the huge learning curve involved in the position, a space had to be found and the office moved to Fargo which included sixty-five boxes of records. Shirley called for help to put the records on hard drive. She also asked members to say yes when asked to help and be willing to try, learn, and ask other members for help.

Department Historian Lynn Tomlinson challenged more units to report. Revised combined scrapbook history guidelines were sent to units with the hope that more would be brought to Department Convention. Lynn also introduced National's new program to record ALA's history called Members Remember. Last year's Department History was posted on Department's website.

In July, members stood out like the hollyhocks at the back of the garden for the activities performed. By August, the gold of the marigold's glint in the sun attracted everyone's attention. ALA members continued to shine like marigolds. The North Dakota National Guard Medical Unit had a family day August 22 as a part of annual training in Bismarck. Guard and ALA member Annie Gerhardt asked 2012-2013 Department President Linda Juntunen if the ALA would host the noon meal so all Guard members could spend meal time with family. Organized by District VII President Holly Eslinger with donated food and beverages from the Bismarck business community, Department Executive Committee members arrived with desserts, served the meal, and explained the

benefits of The American Legion and ALA membership. This activity was reported to National Historian Debra Noble.

President Marlene and a delegation of ten attended the 95th National Convention, Celebrating Faith, Family, and Freedom, in Baltimore, Maryland August 28 through September 3. Judy Twete from Ole Semling Unit 135 in McVille was 2015-2016 Northwestern Division National Vice President and 2014-2015 Department President Aral Roth served as Parliamentarian for the Northwestern Caucus. Sharon Conatser of Illinois was inducted as 2015-2016 National President of the American Legion Auxiliary. President Conatser's theme "Keeping the Promise" highlights ALA's Mission Statement to take care of veterans, military, and their families. President Sharon emphasized that the Centennial Strategic Plan was critical to the future of the American Legion Auxiliary and each Plan of Work for this leadership year included information on how the Centennial Strategic Plan related to the Plan of Work. She likewise stressed using the tagline "it's the little things" to help make changes and growth possible in the ALA. As the season changed and September nights cooled, the asters became brighter. So it was with ALA members. Like true blue asters, ALA members planned to incorporate President Conatser's "Keeping the Promise" into unit activities.

Many activities are repeated year after year like the perennial chrysanthemums that highlight October's days. Members withstood the frost and kept volunteering. Fall District Meetings started October 5 in Fargo followed by Minto, Jamestown, Linton, and Hankinson. After a week's recuperation, meetings began again October 19 in Minot, Watford City, Richardson, Hebron, and ended in Rugby. President Marlene emphasized the need to bring in more members, especially younger ones, by changing member's outlook on procedures and formality. The North Dakota American Legion supported an

initiated measure to increase taxes on tobacco which would go in part to support veteran health needs. ALA members were asked to support thru measure by obtaining petition signatures.

Just as poppies are a memory of Memorial Day, poppies also reminded of events associated with November. Poppies graced wreaths, centerpieces, prayer cards, and programs for Veterans Day. ALA members, like the poppy, graced North Dakota with dedication and outstanding service. Recognition night was A Spectacular Gala Event members do not remember since Commander Bud Goldsmith and President Marlene asked those that would normally attend the event to donate the costs needed instead to the Commander's and President's joint projects - a kiln at the Lisbon Veterans Home, a marimba for the International Music Camp, and funds toward the replacement of the bell tower at the International Peace Garden.

December just would not be December without poinsettias. December found ALA members ("poinsettias") in the giving spirit. Department started the season with gift shops at the VAMC in Fargo on December 2 and the Lisbon Veterans Home on December 3. Past and present Department Officers took veterans individually down long aisles of gifts to pick a present for a family member and one for himself or herself. Selections were wrapped by the "poinsettias" and labeled for shipping. What a wonderful scene, and what a great feeling to help these veterans get ready for the holiday season at no cost to them! Joy, tears, thankfulness and many heart-warming stories filled the atmosphere.

Now, this was North Dakota! What flower could possibly be associated with January? If you were as far seeing as North Dakota's ALA members, the potted geraniums that sat on the front steps all summer were brought in and placed in a south window knowing that blooms would brighten dark winter days. ALA members were bright spots

at Winter Conference hosted by Bismarck's Loyd Spitz Post and Unit 1 at the Ramkota Hotel. Auxiliary guest speaker Northwestern Division National Vice President Judy Tweet focused on how ALA members can create a culture of good will and deliver the ALA mission. Judy stressed being kind and asked members to remember "If not now, when? If not you, who?" As a part of President Marlene's project of funds for service dogs for veterans with PTSD, Annie Strickland from Jud, North Dakota gave a presentation to a joint session. After National Commander Candidate Charles Schmidt from Oregon spoke at the Commander's Banquet, attendees were entertained by the North Dakota American Legion Dance Band.

By February, each ALA member had earned a dozen roses for the love and commitment shown to veterans, military, their families, and communities, but members are about service, not self. President Marlene and NEC Marlys Aubol were off to the annual ALA Washington D. C. Conference February 22-25 to support The American Legion national legislative and public policy agendas. The conference provided the opportunity to hear from experts about how to better serve veterans, military, and their families and to meet with Congressional representatives to discuss Legion Family legislative priorities. President Marlene presented a check for \$2,264.85 to National President Sharon Conatser for the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.

Were members hoping for too much to see pasque flowers (crocus) start popping up on hilltops through the snow? It was only March. Spring District Meetings were a whirlwind of activity starting March 28 in Minot followed by Tioga, Belfield, Bismarck, and Cannon Ball on April Fool' Day. The second round began April 11 at Larimore, Devil's Lake, Jamestown, Rutland, and ended in Fargo on Income Tax Day.

Johnny jump-ups, that's what ALA members were in April and all through the year.

These Johnny jump-ups jumped into action at their individual units completing many Auxiliary programs and activities.

William C. Blake Unit 144 of Belfield reported the presentation of a flag code program to grade K through 12 students at the local school along with serving a potluck meal to twenty-two veterans after a flag retirement ceremony. This Unit collected food items for a veteran's food pantry through the Veterans Service Office. For American Education Week bus drivers and auxiliary staff were given gift cards and teachers were treated to meat and cheese trays.

Buffalo's Easton-Yanish Unit 10 made five buddy baskets for the local homeless shelter. Unit 10 actively participated in the yearly community blood drive. In December Unit members assisted with Wreaths across America at the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery.

Hal Parker Unit 79 from Cando paid the first year of adult dues for each eligible graduating high school senior. The Unit was fortunate to have a Legion baseball team to support.

Department President Marlene hails from Carrington's John R. O'Hara Unit 25 which supported 2015's Class B American Legion baseball champs. President Marlene's granddaughter, a Unit 25 junior member, collected 200 pounds of donated items for the YWCA and Gladys Ray Shelter. Unit activities are reported in *The Foster County Independent*.

Dickinson's Matthew Brew Unit 3 sent a dedication booklet and pictures of Stark County's Veterans Memorial held on October 4, 2015 for President Marlene's scrapbook.

Gilbert C. Grafton Unit 2 filled 550 Easter bags for day care children, a yearly project. Because Unit 2 is in Fargo, the site of North Dakota's VAMC, members were

active in several projects which included No Veteran Dies Alone and Wishes on Wings. Member Mavis Goodroad, 2017-2018 Department President-elect, was a speaker at the Center's Memorial Day Program. Unit member Marcy Schmidt, former Department Historian, was pictured in *The Fargo Forum* in line to place flowers on a flag-draped coffin representing an unknown service member during Fargo's combined Memorial Day Service. Unit members also had the opportunity to welcome home twelve veterans returning from deployment.

When the local café closed in Gackle and the community still wanted morning coffee and a light breakfast, Mayer-Morlock Unit 250 members took one day of the week to fill the need. Gackle's Unit 250 organized two blood drives this year. ALA members also support local Legion activities and facilities. Unit 250 paid for Post 250's bathroom renovations which included members painting the area.

When Grafton Unit 41's membership goal was raised by thirty-five, members said "Oh, no!", but thirty-six new members were found in one year! Unit 41 collected 500 items for 10 for Education. In honor of departed members, Unit 41 gave donations to the local ambulance service.

Grand Fork's Truman-Webb-Phelps Unit 6 takes turns with the DAV and the VFW preparing a Veterans Day meal. The ALA was responsible for meal preparation this year. Members worked the gate at Legion baseball games and worked registration at North Dakota Flickertail Girls State. Unit 6 provided the plaques for the All American Student for both local high schools. Each veteran at Lisbon Veterans Home, 212, received a Valentine from Unit 6.

Joseph E. Alpert Unit 126 at Hazelton held their annual salad luncheon with games which was reported in *The Emmons County Record*. Unit 126's Veterans Day program

was held at the local school with patriotic music provided by students. The Veterans Day supper included the POW/MIA Empty Table Ceremony published in *The Hazelton Newsletter*.

Members of Langdon's Unit 98 collected change at each monthly meeting in the "Save to Serve" box and were able to pay a membership for one new member this year. Unit 98 is fortunate to have meeting minutes published in the local newspaper, *The Cavalier County Republican*. Unit 98 utilizes the social studies teacher to explain the benefits of attending North Dakota Flickertail Girls State.

Ted Valerius Unit 97 at Larimore decorated a float for Larimore Days Parade held yearly in July. Memorial Day and Veteran Day activities were also big events for Unit 97. Members helped maintain a museum which includes a military room with memorabilia and honors local veterans.

Lidgerwood's Bullis Unit 84 sponsored a chili feed for Veterans Day. Members of the junior class at the local school served apple pie and ice cream. Entertainment was provided by Mr. Les Jepson, school music teacher and a veteran.

For The American Legion's birthday in March, James Roberts Unit 124 at McClusky honored local veterans with an evening meal and program about the history of The American Legion. Each attending veteran shared basic information regarding his or her service, memories, and thoughts about personal sacrifice. Bingo was played after the meal with each veteran receiving a prize.

Carl Bostrum Unit 160 in McHenry sponsored a Poppy Poster Contest for the local elementary students using the posters to decorate business windows. As with many units, Unit 160 had a Memorial Day program and served a meal to veterans and their families. In June members planted red, white, and blue flowers at McHenry's Veterans Memorial.

McVile's Ole Semling Unit 135 reported monthly as activities were completed. This very active unit participated in Wal-Mart's Green Light a Veteran which was reported to the National Historian Debra Noble in Department's mid-year report. Over the years this Unit has been quick to respond to local crises, this year helping a community member whose home burned and coming up with unique projects, child car seat checks and supporting swimming lessons. Member Judy Twete served as Northwest Division Vice President for 2015-2016. As a unit member Judy dresses as Betsy Ross and provides patriotic educational programs at local schools.

Minto Unit 201 sent letters to the local school and paper about the importance of standing at attention and removal of hats during the National Anthem. Unit 201 sent books and magazines to Lisbon Veterans Home and honored the Four Chaplains in February.

Mooreton's Robert Bergman Unit 283 reported that they are a unit with only seven active members. This small town consists of a service station and a bar but no school making it hard to do activities. Still, the unit helped the handicapped daughter of a deceased veteran and three shut-ins in the community, volunteered forty hours at a homeless shelter, and prepared a Memorial Day luncheon for the public.

Many of the activities of Barry Hoof Unit 72 were reported in *The Napoleon Homestead*. Unit 72's secretary managed Post 72's Facebook page and included Unit 72 photos and information. Unit 72 provided a community meal for Bike across America-Wheels for Warriors participants which raised over \$600 for The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors. This was reported to National Historian Debra Noble in the mid-year report.

New Rockford's Raymond B. Thorn Unit 30 supported President Marlene's projects of clothing and coffee for the Gladys Ray Homeless Shelter. Unit 30 also collected

items monthly for the local food pantry. In support of children, members held Halloween, Santa Day, and New Year activities and donated more than \$1700 to youth.

New Town's Beck-Sherven-Foreman Unit 290 presented Poppy corsages to a Gold Star Mother and a widow of a Vietnam veteran one of whom has kept every corsage Unit 290 has given her. Unit 290 included the local community college with a box of apples for American Education week. During Poppy distribution, members, set up near the local post office, collected \$1062.42 for veteran's programs.

Paul Farup Unit 147 from Park River had 137 students make Poppy Posters. The members donated a planter with flowers that was placed by the flag pole at the Legion. Department Officers rode on Unit 147's Fourth of July float. In February, Legion members treated Auxiliary members to a meal as thanks for the help provided to veterans.

Portland's Anderson-Hefta Unit 93 had a Mrs. Poppy at their Memorial Day Program. This Unit gave each junior member graduating from high school ten dollars per year of membership payable to the college they would be attending. Unit 93's yearly blood drive was held in September. In December, Unit 93 members participated in shoe box and angel tree projects for children. Members also accompanied five veterans on VA appointments.

Richardton's Theodore R. Zach Unit 180 reported remembrance of a Gold Star Mother. While Post 180 placed flags on veteran's graves, Unit 180's Miss Poppy placed poppies at the same time. Members also supported a blood drive in May.

Fred C. Wagner Unit 235 from Rolla held their second annual Poppy Walk to honor veterans. Unit 235 received recognition at Department Convention for their public relations efforts thanks to *The Turtle Mountain Star* which also published an article this year on the presentation of Blue Star Banners to mothers of three new service members.

Rutland's Bergman-Evenson Unit 215 sent pictures of the dedication of Rutland's Veteran Memorial which was dedicated June 14.

Bothum-Peterson Unit 213 helped Post 213 from Sherwood present a Respect the Flag program at MLS School on May 13 followed by a flag retirement ceremony on May 14 on the Legion grounds reported in *The Sherwood Tribune and Journal*.

May was a busy month for Streeter's Melvin E. Bender Unit 265. Members played bingo and served snacks at the Veterans Home in Lisbon as well as donated \$100 for personal items. Poppy baskets were placed in area churches and a poppy window was set up at the Senior Center. Local teachers and school staff received gifts with tags reading "Poppying' in to say have a great day". Unit 265 participated in the local Memorial Day Program and prepared a meal afterward. After the last frost, flowers in patriotic colors were planted.

In addition to Poppy Posters, Turtle Lake's Lawrence Stephenson Unit 133 placed Poppy Bouquets in local churches for Memorial Day. Unit 133 also had planters with flowers at the Legion for the summer. Some members knitted caps for service members while others made quilts which were donated to the Gladys Ray Homeless Shelter and the local food pantry.

Valley City's Edgar A. Fisher Unit 60 reported attending thirty-eight funerals. Unit 60 contributed to a mitten tree and hosted a silent auction at District I Spring Meeting.

Joseph D. Weller Unit 39's scholarship had a twist. The scholarship was given to a second year college student. This Unit from Velva hosted a flag retirement ceremony in conjunction with the Legion and the Boy Scouts. In the spirit of community, the ALA had another unit hosting a yearly blood drive.

Hefner-Miller-Ross Unit 20 from Wahpeton had local fourth grade students make

posters for Veterans Day which were used for decoration. Unit 20 prepared and distributed Christmas gifts to local nursing home veterans. One member participated in Quilts of Valor.

Many units made hand crafts which went to veterans. Washburn's Victor B. Walling Unit 12 made 206 pillowcases for homeless shelters and hospitals in Bismarck and sixty-eight heart-shaped pillows for the VAMC for surgery patients. Members also made Wil-Mats from plastic bags to be given to the homeless and took on the task of teaching others to make the mats in six surrounding communities. Unit 12 made fleece blankets for individuals with medical situations.

Watford City's Carl E. Rogen Unit 29 provided full scholarships for five students to attend the International Music Camp. ALA supports clipping coupons for active duty military and Unit 29 stepped up to clip spending \$100 in postage. That was a lot of clipping!

Members from Willow City's Lyle B. Rich Unit 112 were still quilting. The quilts went to veterans and homeless shelters. Quilts were also used for fundraising to support other unit programs. Willow City had a population of 163 in the last census and no local school, but Unit 112 has found a larger town with a school and no Auxiliary unit to hand out Americanism Essay information for student participation.

Louis Ousley Unit 163 at Wilton raised funds for veteran services at a salad luncheon and celebrated The American Legion's 97th birthday with Post 163 on March 16 reported in *The Leader News*.

Department was pleased to see coverage of McVille's Ole Semling Unit 135's community service projects in the May issue of *Auxiliary* and coverage of Unit 135 member Judy Twete for Outstanding Rural Health Volunteer by the University of North

Dakota in June's eNews/eBulletin.

Flickertail Girls State was held on the campus of the University of North Dakota June 5-10, 2016. Approximately 200 young women attended assisted by ALA members including President Marlene. Junior member Samantha Nordmark from Rolla was elected governor. The Commencement address was given by North Dakota Superintendent of Public Instruction Kirsten Beasler, a 1986 Girls State alumna, with the theme that all women have the potential to make positive change in their communities while holding office and the young women graduating are up to the task.

At the time of writing, Department of North Dakota had reached 75.44% membership. This leadership year, 198 members passed including 1983 Department President Marilyn Hanson, 1996-1999 Department Chaplain Judith Williams, and this year's District 10 President Sherri Ormond. Three units, Edward A. Bromberg Unit 16 of Anita, Charles L. Hartman Unit 134 at Stanley, and Hay-Overdo Unit 260 from Hampden, disbanded.

The year had come full circle, it was June again. Can you smell the fragrance of lilacs in the air? Officers and members blossomed like the lilacs in communities with volunteering. How many hours of service were cultivated in the state? Thirty-eight units sent in history reports and news items. Children and Youth Chairman Georgette Dorval reported \$100 given by Department to a school in the "oil patch" for afternoon milk snack for children whose parents could no longer pay due to the reduction of oil production and the loss of work. Impact reports listed:

Service to Veterans	11,470 veterans assisted
	12,024 volunteer hours

	\$64,270 in donations
Service to Active Military	505 active military assisted
	1,300 volunteer hours
	\$950 in donations
Service to Military Families	20 families assisted
	100 volunteer hours
	\$1,150 in donations
Poppies	57,624 purchased
	\$28,812 in donations
Service to Children	5,660 volunteer hours
	\$16,800 in donations
Service to Communities	11,530 volunteer hours
	\$21,400 in donations

Preceded by the Finance Board and Department Executive Committee meeting, the 96th Department Convention, hosted by Gilbert C. Grafton Post and Unit 2, convened June 24 at the Fargo Holiday Inn. American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett and American Legion Auxiliary National President Sharon Conatser were in attendance. Many ALA members attended a Walk for Veterans sponsored by National Commander Barnett to raise funds for and awareness of veterans and The American Legion's positive impact on communities nationwide.

Due to summer storms in the central United States causing flight delays, National President Sharon arrived just in time for the Joint Opening Session Friday evening. On Saturday, she addressed the Opening Session of the ALA and the Past Presidents Parley

Luncheon. Her theme of “Keeping the Promise,” from Abraham Lincoln’s promise to always take care of the military, should filter down to the unit level. Unit members honor veterans and military through eligibility to the ALA and owe it their eligibility to make ALA a success. She stressed respect for self and the organization through acceptance of members for what each member can give without expectations. One person can make a difference and that person is each individual member who should be a vital part of the community because that is where ALA is going to succeed.

Recognized at the Past Presidents Parley Luncheon were the Service Woman of the Year US Air Force Major Melissa Buzbee Stiles, ND ALA Unit Member of the Year Jan Gladue from Archie Jardine Unit 185 in Dunseith, and the Past Presidents Parley Nursing Scholarship Winner Malory Twete from Ole Semling Unit 135 at McVile.

Department Historian Lynn Tomlinson presented President Marlene with the 2015-2016 Scrapbook and Department History completed with a flower theme because President Marlene mentioned at her induction that she really liked flowers.

The 2015-2016 administrative year came to a close on Sunday, June 26. President Marlene thanked those who encouraged her to run for office and for the support received leading the Department of North Dakota. President Marlene also thanked members in attendance for the support and effort on behalf of veterans, military, their families, communities, and Auxiliary programs. Upon installation of the 2016-2017 Department Officers, Marlene graciously handed the gavel to new Department President Diane Kraemer.

Now that the lilacs have bloomed again, the American Legion Auxiliary has completed another year. Members will carry on with traditions and continue to add quality to the lives of veterans and others just as the flowers’ blooms add quality to each member’s

life. As you smell the sweet lilac scent in the air, know that North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary members are still blooming as are American Legion Auxiliary members everywhere.

