

Regional Meeting of the American Legion Auxiliary—Dept. of ND

Williston, ND

Joint Meeting of District 6 and District 9

October 15,, 2022

The American Legion Auxiliary joined the Legionnaires for the opening of their meeting with a prayer, pledge, the Preamble to the Constitution, and welcoming address. Both groups joined in lunch, catered by Williston. "Thanks". After lunch, we divided into our own organizational meetings.

The meeting of the American Legion Auxiliary, Districts 6 and 9, was called to order by District 9 President Brenda Ekness who commented about the really good turn-out. 27 registered from 11 towns. Betty Dhuyvetter motioned and Debbie Slais seconded that the previous minutes be accepted as printed. Motions passed. Williston Unit President Debbie Slais welcomed the group.

American Legion Commander Dan Brown addressed the group thanking us for all we do. He said, "The Auxiliary is the life blood for the Legion. Support Girls' State so the Auxiliary keeps growing. The Legion is also pushing the law enforcement academy. Presently, there are 9 and has room for more. The American Legion baseball program is alive and hoping to bring in more members. Work hard to bring in more members.

Department President Sandra Petermann spoke to the Auxiliary group about "Suicide Awareness". Although, in Sept. Department Vice President, Gloria Covert emphasized suicide prevention month, it warrants repeating. Be the person for anyone—suicide affects us as a family. National Commander of the American Legion, Jim Troiola, is asking everyone to "Be the One". "BE THE ONE to save ONE veteran. 22 veterans die every day. We can end the stigma surrounding mental health with your help." Be proactive and recognize when a veteran is struggling; get the veteran the help they need. "Don't assume someone else will act. Take the initiative." Give an ear, shoulder, whatever is needed.

Marlys Aubol, unit president of New Town thanked Williston for hosting the meeting and meal. She read a poem, "It takes a Village", stating -- I may be one, but with many, we can serve our community and veterans.

Remember to keep track of your volunteer hours. They are very important for the Legislature and their decisions. Tammy Ryberg reminded us to write the hours down on the "Year Impact Forms". Turn them in to your unit president. The hours will reach Congress, and it's very important that each member does this. Report, report, do it!

Department membership chair Gloria Covert gave her report:

- The American Legion had 9 new legislative achievements this year. One of them was the PACT Act. "The PACT Act expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post 9/11 eras".

- Carol Wolf, auxiliary office assistant, has a fund raising idea for our department—poppy laminated placemats. Inquire, cost will be announced later.
- ALA Emergency Fund is for members helping members. You need to be a 3-year member of the ALA to apply for this grant. The applications go through the Department Secretary.
- Our 2022-2023 National President, Vickie Koutz's theme is "Honor our Veterans Everyday". That includes the "Prisoners of War" and the "Missing in Action".
- Unit information of members will be kept up-to-date using e-mail addresses.
- Before disbanding an auxiliary unit, look at reorganizing.
- The department budget functions with dues. 90% is the goal by Dec. 20th. Dues must be paid by Dec. 31st, or you are not a member and can't vote. 2023 dues, collect now before the end of the year. Pay ahead or you will not be a member by Jan. 1, 2023. Stress this to members at every meeting. Life membership is more expensive the younger you are. "Paid Up For Life" uses Form ND ALA. If interested, consider this option before the end of 2023. In 2024, dues will increase by \$6.00, with no biennium increases.

Watford City has poppy coloring contest in first grade. As students are older, they enter and develop poppy poster contests.

Junior members are a real asset to Auxiliary units, and are needed for future growth. They are "tech savvy", can set up FB pages to promote Auxiliary recruits, fund raising events, and do community service.

Other community services were mentioned. Fargo sends print-outs with suggested donations: "Give 10 for Education", Non-perishable food for the back pack program in schools, Kleenex—every teacher will love you, and etc.

Brenda Ekness, Unit 9 President, read District 6 President Linda Siewert's letter, "Words of Wisdom", serve our veterans; surprise veteran/s in our community.

Betty Dhuyvetter reported that Noonan's Auxiliary had reorganized. Tioga, Watford City, Parshall, New Town, and Grenora have new facilities.

Mary Glasoe, unit president of Wildrose, spoke about their unit in the process of reorganizing as well.

"The Message" for the auxiliary is expensive. Please share With Marcy Schmidt anyway to cut cost.

Many door prizes provided by the Williston unit and by Brenda Ekness were drawn.

Betty Dhuyvetter, Noonan's President, had the closing prayer. Meeting adjourned by Brenda Ekness.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Waldock, Vice President of District 9