

Greetings.

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere thanks to District 6 President Linda Siewert, Past Department President Jeannie Román, and members of William G. Carroll Post and Unit 26 of Minot for hosting the Winter Conference and arranging the Presidents Reception on Saturday afternoon. Everyone involved did an amazing and wonderful job. All who attended enjoyed their time spent in Minot.

We were honored to have four North Dakota Gold Star Mothers attend the Commander's banquet on Saturday, January 28, 2023. Gold Star Mothers are mothers, stepmothers, and adoptive mothers of a United States Armed Forces member who lost their life in action against an enemy recognized by the Secretary of Defense. The award, a military award no one wants, commemorates the tragic death of a military member who perished while in the line of duty. The hope is to provide a level of comfort to the parents and families left behind. Gold Star Mothers in attendance included: Arlene Berdahl, mother of Army 1st Class David Berdahl; Adi Reiss, mother of Staff Sgt. Kenneth W. Hendrickson; Joyce Mehrer, mother of Army Spec. Curtis R. Mehrer; Harriet Goodiron, mother of soldier Nathan Goodiron of the 1st Battalion 188th Air Defense; and Sheila Richter, mother of Sgt. Travis A. Vanzoest. A huge 'thank you' to Linda and Gary Siewert for making this a special evening for everyone attending the banquet.

Winter Conference also found five National officers in our midst. They were National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz, Northwestern Division National Vice President Marlene Boyer, National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus, National Legion Chaplain Mark Antal, and National Leading Candidate Daniel J. Seehafer.

We have a lot of work to do prior to the Department Convention in June. Endorsements for Department Officers were inadvertently missed at our Conference. Typically, at Winter Conference, candidates announce their intention to run for an elected Department Office and are endorsed by their unit. If you are interested in serving in any of the Department Offices listed below, please submit your endorsement through your unit to the Department Office no later than March 31, 2023.

- Department President-Elect
- Department Vice President
- Department Secretary
- Department Treasurer
- Department Chaplain
- Department Historian

The Department Office will gather the announcements for publication in the next issue of 'The Message' which will include other Department Convention details.

2023 Spring District meetings will be held in March. This is the time for Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 to elect new District Presidents. If your District does not yet have a vice president, someone should be elected for that office as well. Immediately following your Spring District meeting, please contact the Department Office to submit the name of your new District President and Vice President.

The following was originally posted on the ALA National Membership Group and it holds a lot of value. *"We are an organization of volunteers. We believe in the Mission. If we focus on the 'Mission and 'Be Nice' we can accomplish great things. Great things that will benefit our Veterans, their families, and our communities."*

Sandra Petermann