

Greetings North Dakota Auxiliary Members.

As I write this article, we are experiencing our first ice of the season and I am hoping we do not get this stuff on a regular basis. I really don't mind snow, but I am not an ice skater.

First, I want to thank everyone who reached out with sympathy and condolences for the recent loss of my mother. Your thoughts and prayers are very much appreciated by me and my family. Mom's only brother, Buddy, was a veteran of the Korean War. Although I never managed to sign her up as an Auxiliary member, she assembled hundreds of colorful potholders for friends and family members and donated dozens for homeless veterans moving into apartments.

I recently returned from the "2022 Mission Training" event held in Minneapolis. It was well worth the time spent, and we learned a lot not only from the instructors but from each other. The camaraderie that Auxiliary members share is wonderful. "Mission Training" is an annual event held in various venues across the country. I encourage anyone who wants to learn more about American Legion Auxiliary programs to make a point to attend next year. The material we reviewed and discussed at "Mission" is available on the National ALA website - [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org). I urge all unit and Department chairmen and Auxiliary members at-large to take some time to review the national website for ideas, classes, and more.

Congratulations to units that have achieved 100% plus membership already! North Dakota is doing remarkably well in membership. Membership is everyone's job so offer to assist your unit chairmen. Contact members who have not yet renewed for 2023 and encourage former members who have dropped away from the unit to come back. Remind them why they became members. Was it because someone who loved them gave them that opportunity? Find out their 'why' then ask them to rejoin. Let us make this organization even greater!

Finally, make reservations as soon as you can to attend the 2023 Winter Conference in Minot. More information and an early registration form can be found elsewhere in this publication. National President Vickie Koutz has announced that she will be traveling to attend this conference. Come meet Vickie. She is an inspirational leader and is looking forward to meeting you. NW Division National Vice President Marlene Boyer will also be attending. She is a Past Department President from North Dakota. Way to go, Marlene!

Happy Holidays to you and yours. Stay safe, stay frosty, and see you in Minot!

Marcy Schmidt