



THE MESSAGE

North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary
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It Is Personal

We just returned from the American Legion Family 2023 Winter Conference in Minot held January 27- 29. I hope you have time to read what my thoughts were from the weekend.

Along with a plethora of events and great reunions with friends, we had a wonderful speaker at the Commander's Banquet on Saturday evening. His words really sparked my interest when he spoke about the importance of your 'membership' in our organization. I truly believe we all need to think more like this gentleman and take his words to heart.

National Leading (Commander) Candidate Daniel Seehafer is from Merrill, Wisconsin, and has a long list of accomplishments in his favor. These include: music, visiting the Holy Land, earning a Master of Divinity degree, becoming a pastor, and serving in the Navy Chaplaincy program while in the military. Now, he is in line to become the next National Commander of The American Legion. What an impressive background, along with the message he shared with banquet attendees.

His theme for this year as he campaigns and introduces himself to The American Legion Family is; "It Is Personal." Those words made a real impact on me and I thought about his address as we drove home from Minot on Sunday.

This is something that we as American Legion Auxiliary members can easily relate to. It is the reason we chose to become an Auxiliary member and why we continue to pay our dues each year.

You can join your local choir at church and mainly have to be able to sing and read music to do so. You may join the local Community Club, the PTA, or the ambulance squad, with some qualifications, but not anything like what you have to share to become an Auxiliary member.

Not just anyone can become a member of the Auxiliary unless, 'it's a personal' thing. You are required to have a loved one that served in the US military or have served yourself to be able to fill in that application form and pay your dues to become a member. It is a special privilege to have that designation as a member of the American Legion Auxiliary or as a junior member.

If I asked a fellow member what inspired them to join the ALA, many would have different responses, but most will refer to the one that raised their right hand and agreed to support and defend this country and its constitution against all enemies. They did so willingly and perhaps even gave their life or were injured during their service to America. Just think of the devotion and generosity they offered.

Commander Seehafer reiterated the fact that giving of himself to his country and to our God was a very personal thing. These are things that he held onto tightly then and even more so today. That is why he has offered to give of himself once again as he hopes to serve as the American Legion's National Commander for 2023-2024.

As a member of the Auxiliary, you need to make belonging your personal commitment! You want to join and are able to join because of that special loved one who served our country, and no other way is available.

Make it personal. Pay your dues on time each year. Wear the American Legion Auxiliary brand when you are out volunteering for a community program. Volunteer because someone else volunteered to serve our country and mostly, because you are one of a select group of people who has the proud privilege of being a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Sign up your daughters and granddaughters for the privilege of being an American Legion Auxiliary member. Tell them the reason they are eligible to be a junior member of the Auxiliary. Be proud of that membership and the small amount you pay annually to be an Auxiliary member; willing to help our veterans, our active military service members, their families, and your communities.

It is certainly 'personal' to me! Our Navy veteran son and my dear Navy veteran husband have given me the privilege to be personally involved in this wonderful, caring organization. I also have four brother-in-laws who served in the United States military.

Make it 'personal' to you and yours. Pay your dues and be proud of your membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Twete,

Past Northwestern Division National Vice President
(2015-2016)

Original Dickinson Charter Dedicated

On November 14, 2022, Matthew Brew Unit 3 Auxiliary members gathered for a grateful and patriotic duty to dedicate the original charter as a perpetual memorial to the Auxiliary's efforts and commitment to our veterans. The unit has had a copy of the original charter but recently discovered the original among vintage records in storage. The original charter proved that the unit initially organized in May 1920, received formal permission to organize in 1925, and on May 20, 1926, became the official American Legion Auxiliary to Matthew Brew Post 3.

Endorsements by the Department and National offices occurred May 19, May 26, June 11, and May 20 of the year 1926. There were 12 original members. A current Unit 3 member generously and anonymously donated the matting and framing of the document by JP Frameshop Western Edge Gallery of Dickinson.



Front (l-r): Unit President Shirley Herbel, Cathy Logosz, Unit Vice President Amanda Wilson. Back (l-r): Wendy Sticka, Unit Treasurer Sonnie Otto, Diane Munyon, Unit Secretary Jennifer Gonser, and Unit Chaplain Charlotte Wanner.

Napoleon Holds Annual Veterans Day Program

SSG Chris Hickel, ND National Guard Recruiting NCO; Ronald Dykema, District 5 Legion Commander; and Brad Huber, Central Region Vice Commander joined the Barry-Hoof Post 72 Color Guard, Dennis Hottman, Post Commander; and Ron Kerman to participate in the annual Veterans Day program held on November 9, 2022, at the Napoleon Public Schools.

Another surprise guest was Chelsey Gross, representing the Air Force Reserves. Program guests presented a flag folding demonstration and relayed the meaning of each fold. Brad Huber shared his experiences as a 25-year Navy veteran.

Napoleon elementary and home schooled students, preschool through grade six, were challenged to color a designated page from the American Legion Auxiliary booklet (America the Beautiful), create a poster of creative art or write an essay, 'What America the Beautiful Means to You?' Unit President Helen Braun presented awards to the winners of each contest.

The "Thank a Veteran" and "America the Beautiful" event culminated the day's activities sponsored by Barry-Hoof Post and Unit 72 of Napoleon.

Article submitted by Ann Knecht



Honored Guests: back (l-r) Mike Welder, Legion Veteran; Chelsey Gross, Air Force; Ron Kerzman, Legion Veteran; Dennis Hottman, Legion Commander; front (l-r) SSG Chris Hickel, ND National Guard; Ron Dykema, 5th District Legion Commander.

Gackle and Streeter Support Veterans

Mayer-Morlock Post and Auxiliary Unit 250 of Gackle and Streeter (Unit 265) co-hosted a Veterans Day program and meal at the Gackle Legion Post on Veterans Day. The event was well attended. After the program, a traditional Thanksgiving meal was served followed by desserts of pumpkin and apple bars baked by Auxiliary members of both units.

Post 250 Commander Jon Metz served as master of ceremonies and welcomed all to the Veterans Day Program. Derek Heck, recently retired Command Sergeant Major of the North Dakota Army National Guard served as guest speaker. Rory Metz, pianist, provided accompaniment to the students who rounded out the program by singing our national anthem and 'God Bless America'.

Legionnaires and Auxiliary members of both Gackle and Streeter thank their communities and local schools for coming out and supporting our veterans as they celebrated Veterans Day 2022.



3rd Grader Audrey Braun sings the National Anthem

2023 Spring District Meetings

Meetings subject to change without prior notice.

District 1 - Saturday, April 1 - Hope
1:00 PM Social, 2:00 PM Meeting, meal following meeting

District 2 - Saturday, April 15 - Park River
2:00 PM Social, 3:00 PM Meeting

District 3 - Sunday, March 26 - York
3:00-4:00 PM Social
4:00 PM Meeting, Dinner following the meeting.

District 4 - Thursday, March 23 - Jamestown
Jamestown Vets Club, 116 1st St E
5:00 PM Social
6:00 PM Dinner
7:00 PM Meeting

District 5 - Saturday, March 25 - Bismarck
Bismarck Amvets, 2402 Railroad Ave
12:30 PM Registration
1:00 PM Meeting

District 6 - Saturday, March 11 - Velva
Velva Post 39 - 201 Main Street North
11:00 AM Meeting with a meal served following the meeting

District 7 - Saturday, March 18 - Mandan
Mandan Eagles Club, 1400 Collins Ave.
11:30 AM (CST) Lunch
1:30 PM (CST) Meeting

District 8 - Saturday, March 25 - Belfield
4:00 PM (MST)

District 9 - Saturday, April 22 - Tioga

District 10 - TBA

Department President

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



Sandra Petermann

Department President-Elect

Auxiliary Members, A huge thank you to the Minot Post and Auxiliary for their fine hospitality during Winter Conference held at the Grand in Minot.

National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz attended our conference. She shared her pin with all the members that were in attendance. Vickie was just a lovely lady to visit with. Her attendance and socializing were very much appreciated.

The second membership renewal notices have been emailed and mailed out from National. Please follow up with dues collection and get them sent in to the Department in a timely manner. DO NOT HOLD DUES!! Our membership year runs from January 1 thru December 31. If your dues are not paid by Dec 31 for the following year you are not a member in good standing. When you attend a meeting or an Auxiliary function you will be a guest with no benefits or privileges. That is why your dues need to be paid on time.

If your unit is struggling, please look at reorganization to keep your unit viable. We cannot keep losing units to disbandment each year or we will not have a Department in the future. Please consider using ALAMIS (American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System), which is a great resource for your unit to use for information on your members. You can keep information up-to-date as well as run numerous reports that can make your job a lot easier. One or two members from each unit can have access to ALAMIS. You may contact the Department Office if you are interested in obtaining this access.

We have 16 units that have obtained 100% or better for their unit membership. An awesome job for sure for these units. Job well done!!

Members birth dates are listed in ALAMIS info. This would be a good communication tool to use for reaching out to your members on their special day with a card, phone call, social media, and just to make them feel appreciated.

The North Dakota Auxiliary website (www.ndala.org) has "The Message" as well as the unit mailings archived so this information can be accessed at any time by our members. Scholarship applications are also on the website.

North Dakota is lagging behind in 7th place among 7 states in the Northwestern Division. We have been at this spot most of the year. Let's get those dues in so we can boost our ratings!!

Thank you to all our members that give so much of their time to help our veterans, youth, and your communities. You all are just the best!!

Always be Kind,
Gloria Covert



Gloria Covert

Department Secretary

Greetings North Dakota Auxiliary Members.

I want to express my thanks to members of William G. Carroll Post and Unit 26 of Minot for hosting the 2023 Winter Conference. I want to especially thank District 6 President Linda Siewert and her husband Gary for arranging the Presidents Reception on Saturday afternoon and arranging and presenting the Gold Star Mothers program held at the Commander's Banquet later that evening. Thank you Department Commander Dan Brown for your moving speech as you opened the Gold Star program. I don't believe there was a dry eye in the hall. I am proud to be a part of this great organization and was honored to meet these precious Gold Star mothers.

Now that Winter Conference is over, the calendar heats up with 2023 Spring District Meetings. As I draft this article, not all Districts have completed plans. A list of meetings can be found elsewhere in this publication and online at www.ndala.org/district-meetings/

The American Legion Auxiliary Flickertail Girls State program is slated for June 11-16, 2023, at UND. If your unit has junior members who are eligible or you know local high school juniors who would love to attend Girls State, encourage them to apply. Information and applications have been sent to unit presidents as well as North Dakota high schools and can be found online at

Gather your unit members and complete your 2022-2023 Year-End Impact Reports. Impact Reports are important because the hours and funds are compiled and submitted to the American Legion for their annual report to Congress. Reports like yours tell a story about what we do to support veterans and their families.

National Poppy Day is set for Friday, May 26, 2023. What is your unit doing to promote the Poppy Program? Do you celebrate with a 'Little Miss Poppy' contest? Perhaps you promote poppies through the 'Poppy Poster Contest.' Whatever it is you do, document it with photos and news articles. Share it on your unit's Facebook page and send the pictures and articles to the Department Office as well for inclusion in a future 'Message.'

Remember why you became an American Legion Auxiliary member. Is your 'why' personal? Support your 'why' by paying your dues and supporting the activities of your unit. Remember to wear your ALA Brand proudly.

Take care of yourself and others.

Marcy Schmidt



Marcy Schmidt

Department Treasurer

YOU MATTER....

It was so great to see your smiling faces at the 2023 Winter Conference held in Minot! The conference was a lot of fun, and the food was fantastic. It was also great to hear from Legion National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus, National Chaplain Mark Antal, National Leading Candidate Daniel Seehafer, Auxiliary NW Division National Vice President Marlene Boyer, and our special guest National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz.

It is always fun to gather with members of the North Dakota American Legion Family. I always learn something new and meet someone new. I encourage everyone to attend the next Winter Conference and the 2023 Department Convention (coming up in June - in Bismarck!). I was blessed to have a "sit-down" with National Chaplain Mark Antal prior to the banquet. We talked about many different programs and about society in general and how each one of us makes a difference - WE MATTER. YOU MATTER.

It matters that you are involved in your units. It matters that you call and care for one another. It matters that you care for our veterans. It matters that you send cards - of gratitude, sympathy, or just a friendly "hello, I'm thinking of you today." It matters that you come to conferences and conventions. It matters that you are involved with legislation that benefits our service members and veterans. We heard a lot about that from both Senator John Hoeven

and Senator Kevin Cramer at the joint meeting on Friday evening. You matter to many people in a thousand different ways!

It matters that you send in contributions each fall for the programs that are important to your units. In January, over \$10,000 was distributed to veterans' programs thanks to your contributions! Your District Presidents have details on where these donations were sent. Visit with them.

It matters when you complete your 2022-2023 Year-End Impact Reports this spring! All of your volunteer time and money spent for veterans really do add up! YOU MATTER. YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

God bless you all for the work you do! Don't lose sight of who you are and how much YOU MATTER - to your family...your friends...our veterans...and the stranger you meet and greet.

I hope to see you all at the Department Convention set for June 23-25, 2023, in Bismarck. It matters that YOU are there.

Sonnie Otto



Sonnie Otto

Department Chaplain

"A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a Friend who sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18:24

Is it a coincidence or just a great irony that loneliness has spiked in our country just as our media became 'social', our technology became 'personal', and machines have learned to recognize our faces?

Every morning, millions of people check their phones and social media and then go into their day with very little human interaction. They retire for the evening after checking their phones again and then fall asleep still longing for love and significance.

We see loneliness everywhere and many people feel cut off and alienated from others. Being in a crowd just makes people more aware of their isolation. Lonely people do not need to hear 'Have a nice day.' They need friends who will stick close, listen, care, and offer help when it is needed in both good times and in bad. It is better to have that type of friend rather than dozens of superficial acquaintances on Facebook. If you look around, you will find people who need your friendship.

We all need to improve the art of beginning new friendships. To whom can I be friendly today? We need to remember that there is also a Friend who sticks closer than a brother! When you feel no one cares about you, remember that God loved you before you were born! Instead of wishing you could find a true friend, maybe we should seek to become one. We should put all the technology aside for a moment and ask God to lead us to someone who can become a true friend - and then follow His leading.

Heavenly Father, thank you for being a Friend closer than a brother. You are attentive, loving and just, and always there for us. Help us to be there for others. May our motives and desires follow your will as you lead us into new friendships. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Rose Laning



Rose Laning

District 4



Greetings District 4 Auxiliary Members.

The Winter Conference in Minot was very educational and included a lot of networking between District Presidents. I had a wonderful time getting to know Unit 14 President Charlotte Lassonde of Jamestown.

I would like to visit and get to know all the Unit Presidents in District 4. I invite each of you to attend our District 4 Spring meeting March 23 in Jamestown. I am working on an overview of the Winter Conference for our units. So much information to share such as our new ALA branding, 3 levels of ALAMIS, ALA being visible in schools, getting our junior members involved, teddy bears to local hospitals, and more. Other issues raised at the conference were concerns about members getting their dues paid and units completing updates on their Constitutions and Bylaws.

Meeting National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz was the highlight of my weekend. What a delightful lady. Department President Sandra Petermann's project of Feeding a Veteran is so dear to her heart and she is passionate about her project. I enjoyed visiting with NW Division Vice President Marlene Boyer, who asked that each and every one of us ask a young person "if they might consider joining one of the military branches." Marlene also stated "God, Family & Country" seemingly are being attacked on a daily basis, but reminded us, the American Legion Family, of who we are and that every day should be Veterans Day.

Please make plans to attend our District 4 Spring meeting to be held in Jamestown and Department Convention in Bismarck on June 23-25.

God bless our veterans and see you at the District 4 Spring meeting.

Jane Schoonover
District 4 President

District 5



I am writing this soon after we finished with Winter Conference in Minot. In spite of the cold, it was a very enjoyable conference! National President Vickie Koutz spoke about providing funds for veterans' companions expenses anonymously at the Creative Arts Festival and POW/MIA awareness. Other Department leaders gave updates on programs as well. With all the current natural disasters, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund has provided more help for members in the first quarter of 2023 than all of last year. It was stressed that dues be sent in as soon as possible and not to hold them. There are 13 units in the Department that have reached 100% or more already.

We learned 155 members have passed in the last year. Department President Sandra Petermann displayed information regarding the Four Chaplains and reminded us of its history. There are multiple scholarships available from both the American Legion and Auxiliary. Attendees of American Legion Auxiliary Flickertail Girls State apply for the Samsung scholarship on the first day of the event, so applicants need to have researched and put together required documents before arriving. The ALA National \$2,000 Non-Traditional Student Scholarship does not get a lot of applicants. I encourage all students who are eligible to apply.

I am reminding all District 5 units to review and revise your unit Constitution and Bylaws as well as Standing Rules. If you have questions about your unit documents, please feel free to contact Diane Kraemer or the Department Office.

A new topic discussed at the Conference was a future increase in dues from National. It was suggested that the Department dues be looked at and they will likely have to be increased as well. Now is the time to also review your unit's dues.

Spring District meetings will be coming up before long. Put March 25th on your calendar as the tentative date for District 5 in Bismarck. Stay tuned for more details. Other activities that units may choose to participate in include the Americanism Essay Contest, Poppy Poster Contest, Memorial Day activities, and the 2023 Department Convention in Bismarck from June 23-25.

Reporting your volunteer hours and expenses is also important so that information can be compiled all the way to National to help show the need for continuing veterans programs.

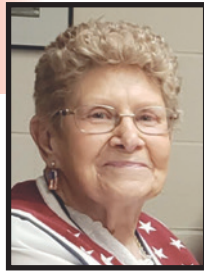
Spring is coming! Stay warm and enjoy socializing with your family, friends, and veterans in your communities.

Peggy Moran
District 5 President

Upcoming Dates

- Americanism Essay Contest – Due March 15**
- Education and Parley Scholarships – Due April 1**
- Poppy Poster Contest – Due May 1**
- Unit/ Service Member of the Year – Due May 15**
- ALA Flickertail Girls State Applications – Due May 15**
- ALA Flickertail Girls State Program – June 11-16**
- Department Convention in Bismarck – June 23-25**

District 7



Greetings from your District 7 President.

Winter Conference is over, and although the weather was not the best, it was a successful event.

We were fortunate to have National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz visit the Department of North Dakota. She seems to be a very laid-back person and I enjoyed her talk about her project to raise funds to assist those who accompany veterans to the Creative Arts Festival. Our very own Marlene Boyer, Northwestern Division National Vice President, also had an inspiring report and made me very proud to say she is from North Dakota. Department President Sandra Petermann did an excellent job running the meetings and keeping everything on track.

We learned about the future of our Department publication, "The Message." A committee of five was organized to study alternative ways to communicate with our members. After much work and research, the committee recommended we maintain our current publication and continue to collaborate with the American Legion on this important source of information.

There were reminders to District Presidents and units from various Department Officers and Chairmen. Some of those reminders are included in the following paragraphs.

Units – start the process of reviewing and revising your Unit Constitution and Bylaws. If you don't know how to start or have lost your operating document, please contact Diane Kraemer, Constitution and Bylaws Chairman.

Twenty-six units have not yet submitted 2023 Poppy Orders or Required Contributions. Contact the Department Office to see if your unit is on the list. If your unit has not completed and submitted these forms to the Department Office, please do so as soon as possible.

Paying dues online is the wave of the future. Many members already pay dues online and this is reported quarterly to their units. Units can also sign up for ALAMIS (American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System) and pay their member's dues online. This will save a step for unit membership chairmen and unit treasurers as well as the Department Office. Check it out by contacting the Department Office for more details.

Branding, as you know, is important when you are volunteering in your community. The American Legion Auxiliary has new branding, and it is available on jackets, sweaters, and other items through Legion Emblem Sales. Check out the new logo online or in the Emblem Sales catalog. Mission Training, an important tool in learning about the ALA, is typically held in the fall. I encourage each of you to attend an event when it becomes available again.

Next up on the schedule are 2023 Spring District Meetings. Mark your calendar for the Spring District 7 Meeting on Saturday, March 18, at the Mandan Eagles Club, 1400 Collins Avenue. Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM and the meeting will be held at 1:30 PM.

That's all for now. See you in Mandan!

Lualice Stockert
District 7 President

District 8



Hello District 8 Auxiliary Members.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and I wish all of you a Happy New Year. I trust that you all were able to spend quality time with precious family and friends.

Thank you for your hard work bringing in membership for District 8. Congratulations to the following units for getting to the 100% or more goal: Beach at 104.67%, New England at 100%, and oh so close Mott at 98.28%, Belfield at 98%, Halliday at 92.86%, and Richardton at 90.57%. I am very proud of your success.

Have you ordered poppies and sent in your 2023 required contributions? If you haven't done so, it is not too late. Contact the Department Office if you need replacement forms.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the 2023 Spring District Meeting. It will be held on March 25 in Belfield. I will let you know more details as soon as I know them.

Take care of yourselves and may God bless each of you.

Barb Fulton
District 8 President

Girls State Program

American Legion Auxiliary Flickertail Girls State will be held June 11-16, 2023, on the University of North Dakota campus in Grand Forks. Information has been sent to all North Dakota units and schools. Registration is \$300 and is due by May 15th. Visit NDGirlsState.org or call Director Amanda Dinger at 701-314-2460 for more information and applications.

District 9



Greetings to our District 9 Members.

Spring will be a welcome sight this year and we are eager to enjoy the longer days and warmer temperatures that are sure to be here before long. With spring comes a busy time for our American Legion Family:

Year-End Reports are due to your Unit President by April 1st. Please reach out to your Unit President, me, or our Department website www.ndala.org/reporting/ if you have questions concerning reporting.

ND American Legion Auxiliary Flickertail Girls State is scheduled for June 11-16 at UND. If you haven't started talking with the Junior girls in your high school, please take action now. This week is an invaluable experience that should be enjoyed by all interested. Many girls who attend Girls State say upon returning home that Girls State was one of the best weeks of their lives!

Poppy Day is May 26th. Let us get out and distribute poppies and bring awareness to our communities about the meaning of Poppy Day and what the poppy flower stands for. The ALA Poppy Poster program is an ideal way for our students to share their artistic abilities and put extra thought into why we observe Memorial Day. It truly is a learning experience.

Holding a Memorial Day program or ceremony is a reverent way to honor our Fallen who are truly the heroes. We will always be indebted to them for their ultimate price paid for us: our freedom.

Our District 9 Spring District Meeting will be Saturday, April 22nd in Tioga. More details will be sent to units at a later date. Thank you to the Tioga Post and Unit for agreeing to host – we look forward to attending our meeting in your fine city!

As always, it has been and is, both an honor and a privilege to serve you as District 9 President and I would like to say thank you to all who have helped and encouraged me along the way. Our own Past Department President Marlys Aubol from New Town has been an invaluable source of information, offering support and guidance all along the way! My term as District President is coming to an end, and we will be in need of a replacement. I know many women in our District's units that would be ideal for this position. "Will it be you?" Say yes! I cannot believe how rewarding and fun these past two years have been. I have met countless men and women in our American Legion Family that are top-notch great people and have been a pleasure to get to know. Go for it! Shoot for the stars!

We will be seeing each other in Tioga on April 22nd, and I look forward to seeing each one of you! Bring with you any ideas, concerns, pictures, or information that you would like to share with all in our District. "We learn from each other!"

For God and Country,
Brenda Ekness
District 9 President

Unit 250 Gackle



The North Dakota Community Grant Foundation awarded a \$5,000 grant to Mayer-Morlock Unit 250 of Gackle to replace the furnace in the Gackle Post. Pictured is Unit Treasurer Dolores Klundt presenting the grant check to Post Commander Jon Metz.

2023 Year-End Impact Reports Deadlines for Reporting

Unit Members – Deadline April 1
Report volunteer hours and resources to your Unit President

Unit President – Deadline April 15
Compile and report unit members volunteer hours and resources to your District President

District Presidents – Deadline May 1
Compile your unit presidents' reports and send copies to the Department Office and each Department Chairman

Department Chairmen – Deadline May 15
Submit your Year-End narrative 'REPORT' to your respective Northwestern Division Chairman and send a copy to the Department Office

Forms and information available online at www.ndala.org/reporting/

Department Honors Gold Star Mothers

The 2023 Winter Conference Commander's Banquet held on Saturday, January 28, was the setting for a special event arranged by District 6 President Linda Siewert. Minot's annual Gold Star Mothers event, canceled because of inclement weather in November, was held in conjunction with the annual Winter Conference Banquet for the first time.

Department Commander Dan Brown, serving as master of ceremonies for the Gold Star Mothers program, gave a heartfelt address and then called upon Siewert to introduce the honorees: Arlene Berdahl, mother of Army 1st Class David Berdahl; Adi Reiss, mother of Staff Sgt. Kenneth Hendrickson; Joyce Mehrer, mother of ND Army National Guard Spc. Curtis Mehrer; Harriet Goodiron, mother of Cpl. Nathan Goodiron (member of the North Dakota National Guard 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defenses Artillery); and Sheila Richter, mother of Sgt. Travis Vanzoest, (member of the North Dakota National Guard 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defenses Artillery).

National President Vickie Koutz and National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus were on hand to present Sheila Richter with a Gold Star Mother's pin and a commemorative plaque in honor of her selection as 2022 Gold Star Mother of the Year. Department President Sandra Petermann presented Richter with a bouquet of yellow roses.

Article submitted by: District 6 President Linda Siewert



Pictured left to right: Joyce Mehrer, Harriet Goodiron, National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz, Sheila Richter, Adi Reiss.



Auxiliary Receives Additional Branding

Set against a gold background with symbolic rays of the sun, the ALA's traditional emblem has remained a fixture during our 103 years of service. In our next era, complete with new brand marks courtesy of The American Legion, our organization will still be represented as the go-to support for military, veterans, and their families — but with a different look. Because the blue star emblem is as much of a legacy as the Auxiliary itself, it will not be going away ... it will simply be used in specific applications. A refreshed look and feel will help ALA members in recruiting efforts and publicizing our mission outreach to an audience we haven't touched yet.

More information will be distributed in future months from the National and Department Offices. We encourage all members to discuss these new changes in a positive and meaningful way.

For article and more information please see the website courtesy of National Auxiliary magazine and www.legion.org/brand/aux

New Brand Mark Options



Winter Conference Highlights



American Legion Oratorical Contest Winners (l-r): National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz, National Legion Vice Commander Glenn Wahus, Contest Chairman Mike Weyrauch, 1st place winner Casey Kruger of Valley City, 2nd place winner Eva Rykowski of Mandan, 3rd place winner Malachi Dilse of Scranton, 4th place winner McKenna Wilke of Cando, and National Leading Candidate Daniel Seehafer.



Past Department President Sharon White Bear (2021-2022) (left), and sister Danile Henry present National President Vickie Koutz with a star quilt hand made by members of Joseph White Hawk-Elmer Bear Unit 253 of White Shield.



Northwestern Division National Vice President Marlene Boyer (left) and National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz receive warm North Dakota head gear from the American Legion Department of North Dakota.



District Presidents with Department and National President: (l-r) Gigi Moore, District 10; Brenda Ekness, District 9; Lualice Stockert, District 7; Linda Siewert, District 6; Vickie Koutz, National President; Sandra Petermann, Department President; Peggy Moran, District 5; Jane Schoonover, District 4; Sandra Smith, District 3; Shelley Schuster, District 2; and Berniece Frolland, District 1.

In Memoriam

District 1

Sue H Buhr, Buffalo,
Virginia M. Foss, Harwood

District 2

Marilyn Gunderson, Grand Forks
Shirley M Vakoc, Grand Forks
Darlene Henschel, Cavalier
Hazel Bartron, Cavalier
Benita J Bjerke, PUFL, Lakota
T Joyce Severson, Lakota
Joann Spravzoff, Lakota
Margaret Johnson, McVillie
Lorene Larson, SLM, Park River
Maureen Setness, SLM, Park River
Leona Antonson, Park River
Diane M Pitcher, Edinburg
Marion Capouch, Lankin
Irene Espelien, Lankin

District 3

Evelyn Law, Rolette
Kathy L Benson, St. Thomas

District 4

Ruth Engelstad, Carrington
Mary Neff, McClusky
Phyllis Otto, Gackle

District 5

Doris E Wolfe, Bismarck
Joan F. Klucker, Bismarck
Ruth Sandwick, Linton
Marjean C Boe, SLM (Past Department President 1993-1994), Turtle Lake
Sandra M Murrey, Wilton
Delores Holman, Fredonia

District 6

Rosella Weber, SLM (Past Department President 1981-1982), Minot
Audrey M Nissen, SLM, Minot
Shelley Cunningham, Lignite
Eva Deibert, Velva
Sharon J Hunstead, PUFL, Columbus
Mary Karna, Makoti
Betty J Davidson-Lassle, Makoti

District 7

Evelyn Henderson, SLM, Mandan
Violet Schock, Elgin

District 8

Pauline Appledoorn, Killdeer
Grace Bach, New England
Lou Ann M Schatz, New England

District 9

Viola Homiston, Watford City
Barbara Poeckes, Crosby
Marilyn Bloom, Powers Lake
Lois I Sneva, SLM, Grenora
Ruby Jacobson, Grenora
Laverne Fettig, SLM, Little Shell
Madeline C Baker, Little Shell

District 10

Mary Jane J Sittarich, Wahpeton
Bonnie Ziegler, Oakes
Kay Vosburg, Oakes

We apologize for any omissions or incorrect information.

Key: HLM - Honorary Unit Member; SLM - State Life Member; VIM - Life Member/PUFL

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