

What a pleasant Winter Conference this year with exceptionally warm temperatures! We learned that our National Auxiliary President, Lisa Williamson, will be traveling to North Dakota July 15-18, so watch for more details to come regarding her visit.

Department leaders gave updates on many of the programs. Sonnie Otto, Department Treasurer, reminded us of the importance of reports that need to be filed with the state and IRS (990-N) to maintain our unit non-profit status. She also announced that she is moving out of state and will be resigning in June 2024. There will be an election at the June Convention as two candidates were endorsed already at the Winter Conference.

In the education report, it was stated that there are multiple scholarships available from both the American Legion and Auxiliary. There are three (3) national scholarships that are only available with applications submitted online and a fourth national scholarship is available through the local Auxiliary units, all of which are due **March 1, 2024**. The Department of North Dakota Education scholarship and nursing scholarship applications are due **April 1, 2024**. Attendees of Girls State may apply for the Samsung scholarship on the first day of Girls State, so applicants need to have researched and put together required documents before going to Girls State.

The Children and Youth Program promotes the Youth Hero and Good Deed awards. Gloria Covert, Department President, informed us that National is promoting working with the American Legion on programs such as the Oratorical Contest.

The Leadership Chair brought up the Unit Member of the Year Award, due **May 1, 2024**, for which the nominee cannot have held a position higher than Unit President. She would like one nominee from each District. She also mentioned the ALA Academy courses and suggested involving junior members who may be able to help with technology and fundraisers.

The Constitution & Legislative Chair mentioned that she is following pending bills in the Senate and active bills in the North Dakota Legislature; and is collaborating with a committee to review the ALA Department Constitution for improvements. The VA & R Chair talked about Wreaths Across America, Fargo VA Medical Center and Lisbon gift shops, as well as the re-activation of the Creative Arts Festival in Fargo (September 10, 2024). Americanism reported the Essay Contest is due March 15 and must have the cover sheet attached. We were encouraged to support the Legion baseball program and the Oratorical Contest in the future.

The Membership Chairman reported nine (9) units have achieved 100 percent of their membership goal. Girls State is tentatively set for June 9-14, 2024, as the committee is working with UND at Grand Forks.

Department President Gloria Covert reported that any unit can apply for Unit Foundation grants up to \$2,500, collect email addresses for the Constant Contact email

system, and utilize ALAMIS (American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System) which provides many reports and access for membership updates.

Spring District meetings are coming up. District 5 will be Saturday, March 23, 2024, at the Amvets in Bismarck at noon. Please continue keeping track of volunteer hours/expenses for reporting to the District President by April 15.

SPRING IS COMING!

Peggy Moran

District 5 President