

As Department Convention commenced, I was unable to attend as I was hospitalized with pneumonia. I may not have been there in person, but I was there in spirit. I had many caring texts and phone calls from members. I was kept up-to-date on all the weekend events.

Life has gone on and things seem to be going somewhat better. I want to congratulate our new Department President, Candace Berg, for her plans for a better and brighter future for the Department of North Dakota.

I think as members of this great, although not so large, Department of North Dakota, we have so much to offer our veterans, our service personnel, their families, and our communities. We need leadership training to start prior to the first steps on the path to higher leadership positions in our organization. Members need to be willing to find the methods to become more informed about our programs, our governing documents, our history, and all the training the National Organization has to offer.

There are many leadership opportunities to make our job be one we are proud of holding and one that makes our Department better for all involved. The National Organization is full of helpful suggestions. The Department has mentors who are willing to share their experiences and knowledge.

As North Dakota's NEC and a Past Department President, I hope you are considering making your membership something where you are more involved. Check out what you can do to make your leadership desire be filled with knowledge of what really needs to be learned before you take the very first steps on that path. Seek helpful suggestions from past leaders that have had successful progression to executive leadership.

There are many paths to traverse that have been well traveled by other successful leaders. Seek out a great path and become the best you can in each position you seek, whether it is a beginning step as a Unit Chairman or a higher-level District leadership position. You need leadership skills beginning before any of those steps happen. Experience counts!

I did not get to this position by making my own path. I got involved and informed before I took my first important step on the path I sought to follow. I thank all those important mentors and the leadership training programs I took advantage of to get me here. I am available for anyone interested in my help.

Judy Twete