

Hello Auxiliary Members,

A quote from John C. Maxwell, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This famous quote has been a favorite of mine since I first saw it about 20 years ago. As Auxiliary members and spokespeople and advocates for this organization, it is a reminder of our "why." It reflects our legacy of supporting this organization and its mission with a caring and supportive attitude.

Recently, I realized I am one-third through my year as your Department President. I have been reflecting on my year so far, and as I do so, I cannot help but smile at the great honor it has been. I had the pleasure of attending the 2025 Fall District Meetings across the state. The food, the fellowship, the meetings, and special moments before, during, and after the gatherings were very valued. The American Legion Family atmosphere at the District meetings was inspirational, and I am thankful to have a Department Commander whose theme and goal is ALA Family focused as "We are one."

During District meetings, I asked each of the Districts to consider bringing a basket or items for the "Chinese raffle" that will take place at Winter Conference with proceeds going to my president projects. I would gladly also accept any personal/individual items that people would like to donate to the raffle. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like to donate.

During District meetings, I also distributed a check-in sheet with options for committees and information to fill in. Thank you to all who provided me with information. I am reviewing the details and will be formulating a plan for next steps toward goals for the year.

Winter conference is soon upon us. We are planning a great event that we hope many are planning to attend. Please fill up your vehicles and bring as many members with you as possible. National Auxiliary President Pam Ray is planning to attend our conference and will provide inspiration to all in attendance.

My team of program chairmen have been working diligently on their programs and positions. Updated information on our programs and the 2025-2026 Department year can be found on the Department website at www.ndala.org. For even more information, visit the National website at www.alaforveterans.org. A lot of work goes into these websites, so please check them frequently for updates.

One of my goals this year is to increase the number of people involved in leadership through opportunities for growth, education, and refreshment. I want to empower more members to become confident leaders for the future of the Auxiliary. Online ALA Academy training courses are free, self-paced, and take about an hour to complete per module. Online training can be found at: www.legion-aux.org/ala-academy

Thank you to all who have donated toward my president projects: the Honor Flight Network for Eastern/Western North Dakota and the NDSU Bison Strides Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies Program for Veterans and their Families. I am getting to the end of my supply of pins, so if you are interested in one, please reach out to me as soon as possible to reserve one.

The new North Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Facebook page is now active. I encourage individual members to share Auxiliary activities going on in your communities. The page is

there for everyone to be uplifted and inspired by what others are doing across the state. Please share pictures and a few short sentences or an article on this site:

www.facebook.com/ndamericanlegionauxiliary/

With the 2026 membership year in progress, statistics show that North Dakota is sitting at 45% of goal as I write this article. We are nearly halfway to our goal of 100%. Every member is on the membership team and every moment is a potential membership moment. Kudos to everyone helping with membership! There are three easy options for paying membership: (1) through your unit, (2) through the Department, (3) paying online or by calling National HQ at (317) 569-4570. If you have questions, I encourage you to contact the Department Office at (701) 253-5992.

I am immensely proud to be a part of the American Legion Family and working to make this Auxiliary year the best possible. Let us continue to humbly pay it forward, as the ND American Legion Auxiliary team, supporting each other and continuing to be inspired by our mission to serve our military, veterans, and their families.

Candace Berg