



## **SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

**American Legion Auxiliary  
Ninety-second National Convention**

**August 24 - 30, 2012  
Indianapolis, Indiana**



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**American Legion Auxiliary  
Ninety-second National Convention**

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Indianapolis, Indiana**



**American Legion Auxiliary  
National Officers  
2011-2012**

**National President**

Kris Nelson, Department of Minnesota

**National Vice President**

Peggy Thomas, Department of Virginia

**Division National Vice Presidents**

Central: Florence Briggs, Department of Indiana

Eastern: Lorraine “Rani” Gray, Department of Vermont

Northwestern: Linda Feezer, Department of Wyoming

Southern: Winnie Broussard, Department of Louisiana

Western: Carmen Metzger, Department of Idaho

**National Chaplain**

C. Nini Lynch, Department of Georgia

**National Historian**

Diane Harley, Department of South Carolina

**National Secretary**

Mary “Dubbie” Buckler, Department of Indiana

**National Treasurer**

Marta Hedding, Department of Indiana

# PRESENT

## Pre-Convention National Executive Committee Meeting Saturday, August 25, 2012

### National Officers

National President .....	Kris Nelson
National Vice President .....	Peggy Thomas
Central Division National Vice President .....	Florence Briggs
Eastern Division National Vice President .....	Lorraine “Rani” Gray
Northwestern Division National Vice President .....	Linda Feezer
Southern Division National Vice President .....	Winnie Broussard
Western Division National Vice President .....	Carmen Metzger
National Chaplain .....	C. Nini Lynch
National Historian .....	Diane Harley
National Secretary .....	Mary “Dubbie” Buckler
National Treasurer .....	Marta Hedding

### Past National Presidents

Anna Gear  
Pearl M. Behrend  
Linda Boone  
Linda Newsome  
Syble Deshotel  
Phyllis Sickmond  
Barbara Kranig  
Virginia Hobbs  
Elizabeth Stewart  
Kristine West  
Katherine Morris  
Sandi Dutton  
Carol Van Kirk  
JoAnn Cronin  
Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan  
Desireé Stoy  
Miriam Junge (Honorary)

### National Executive Committeewomen

Alabama .....	Donna Fluhr
Alaska .....	Susan Diaz
Arizona.....	Sharon Doran
Arkansas.....	Dale Lester
California .....	Pilar Reyes
Colorado.....	Karen Wessling

Connecticut .....	Ruth Morgan
Delaware .....	Jeanette Havel
District of Columbia .....	-
Florida .....	Irma Wehrli
Georgia.....	Lola Harper
Hawaii .....	Laura Hashimoto
Idaho .....	Jean Stephan
Illinois .....	Pam Ray
Indiana .....	Carolyn Cunningham
Iowa .....	Marilyn Block
Kansas .....	Trish Ward
Kentucky .....	Barbara Austin
Louisiana .....	Barbara White
Maine .....	Nancy True
Maryland .....	Patricia Lach
Massachusetts .....	Bonnie Sladeski
Michigan .....	Carrie Bowerman
Minnesota.....	Darlene Wondra
Mississippi .....	Angela Kilcrease
Missouri .....	Patty Garrett
Montana .....	Sandy Runkel
Nebraska .....	Charleen Walters
Nevada .....	Anita Paquette
New Hampshire .....	Elizabeth Ward
New Jersey .....	Linda Carroll
New Mexico.....	Jan Semrau
New York.....	Nancy Kurk
North Carolina .....	Wanda Moore
North Dakota.....	Gigi Moore
Ohio .....	Linda Close
Oklahoma .....	Ann Willits
Oregon .....	Jody Marsh
Pennsylvania .....	Barbara Miller
Puerto Rico .....	Beverly Olivieri-Pagan
Rhode Island .....	Margaret Walsh
South Carolina .....	Brenda W. Collins
South Dakota.....	Sue Christensen
Tennessee .....	Sue Cantrell
Texas .....	Diana King
Utah.....	Cary Fisher
Vermont .....	Elaine Mackenzie
Virginia .....	Donna Ellis
Washington .....	Jane Montaney
West Virginia.....	Dortha Parsons

Wisconsin.....Florence Wasley  
 Wyoming .....

**Post-Convention National Executive Committee Meeting  
 Thursday, August 30, 2012**

**National Officers**

National President .....Peggy Thomas  
 National Vice President .....Nancy Brown-Park  
 Central Division National Vice President..... Mary Jo Berning  
 Eastern Division National Vice President .....Joan Reinoehl  
 Northwestern Division National Vice President.....Doris Ann Werlinger  
 Southern Division National Vice President .....Shirley Fraser  
 Western Division National Vice President ..... Barbara Rutherford  
 National Chaplain ..... Rosemarie Hauck  
 National Historian.....Angela Kilcrease  
 National Secretary.....Mary “Dubbie” Buckler  
 National Treasurer ..... Marta Hedding

**Past National Presidents**

Pearl Behrend  
 Linda Newsome  
 Syble Deshotel  
 Phyllis Sickmond  
 Barbara Kranig  
 Virginia Hobbs  
 Elizabeth Stewart  
 Kristine West  
 Katherine Morris  
 Sandi Dutton  
 Carol Van Kirk  
 JoAnn Cronin  
 Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan  
 Desireé Stoy  
 Miriam Junge (Honorary)  
 Kris Nelson

**National Executive Committeewomen**

Alabama ..... Brenda Smith  
 Alaska ..... Susan Diaz  
 Arizona..... Sharon Doran  
 Arkansas.....Wanda Honeycutt  
 California ..... Linda Fercho  
 Colorado..... Karen Boehler

Connecticut .....	Alcyne Welton
Delaware .....	-
District of Columbia .....	-
Florida .....	Diane Rousseau
Georgia.....	Hilde Martin
Hawaii .....	-
Idaho .....	Barbara Gehring
Illinois .....	Diana Umdenstock
Indiana .....	Billie Bubala
Iowa .....	Martha Travis
Kansas .....	Ida Meyeres
Kentucky .....	Lois Hall
Louisiana .....	Monique Batiste
Maine .....	Margaret Johnson
Maryland .....	Yvonne Rhone
Massachusetts .....	Josephine Yakimowski
Michigan .....	Carrie Bowerman
Minnesota.....	Linda Thompson
Mississippi .....	Mary Smith-Ried
Missouri .....	Claudia Goodin
Montana .....	Karen Susag
Nebraska .....	Donna Hatfield
Nevada .....	Anita Paquette
New Hampshire .....	Irene A. Lewis
New Jersey .....	Patricia McElhaney
New Mexico.....	Nancy Palladino
New York.....	Ann Geer
North Carolina .....	Sue Gooch
North Dakota.....	Betty Malkowski
Ohio .....	Vi Grzybowksi
Oklahoma .....	Linda K. Erwin
Oregon .....	Jody Marsh
Pennsylvania .....	Barbara Miller
Puerto Rico .....	Beverly Olivieri-Pagan
Rhode Island .....	Lorraine Boucher
South Carolina .....	Louise Winesett
South Dakota.....	Barb Vetter
Tennessee .....	-
Texas .....	Mary Waddell
Utah.....	Judy Daybell
Vermont .....	Pamela Norton
Virginia .....	Dianne Cabot
Washington .....	Rose Ring
West Virginia.....	Dortha Parsons

Wisconsin.....	Joan Chwala
Wyoming .....	Linda Lenker-Orr

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**PRE-CONVENTION  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2012**

Call to Order .....	11
Housekeeping Resolutions Explained .....	14
Introduction of Governance Committee .....	16
National Finance Report .....	16
Motion to Adopt Travel Policy .....	17
Motion to Adopt ALA Girls State Program Guide .....	18
Motion to Adopt Undraping Ceremony in Manual of Ceremonies .....	20
Motion to Amend Use of Poppy Funds .....	21
Motion for Legion Assistance for Federal Charter .....	22
Motion on 10 Housekeeping Resolutions .....	26
Announcements .....	27

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS  
MONDAY, AUGUST 27, 2012**

President Nelson’s Opening Speech .....	30
Convention Called to Order .....	36
Gallagher Benefits Presentation .....	40
Credentials Report .....	42
Greetings from Jim Roberts .....	47
Greetings from Amanda Washburn .....	52
Greetings from Alauna Sessoms-Hall .....	53
Veteran/Military Support & Advocacy Pod Report .....	60
Legislative Report .....	61
National Security Report .....	63
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Report .....	65
Poppy Report .....	67
Greetings from Jim Koutz .....	69
Greetings from Fang Wong .....	70
Introduction of National Headquarters Staff .....	75
Greetings from Elizabeth Mackey .....	78
Announcements .....	81
Greetings from Kenneth Governor .....	82

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2012**

Call to Order .....	83
Remarks from National Officer Candidates .....	88
Presentation by USAA .....	97
Youth Development Pod Report .....	99
ALA Girls State Report .....	102
Children & Youth Report .....	103
Child Welfare Foundation Report.....	105
Junior Activities Report .....	109
Organizational Support Pod Report.....	113
Past Presidents Parley Report .....	115
Active-Duty Servicewomen of the Year Awards .....	116
National Finance Report .....	122
Cavalcade of Memories Report .....	124
National Historian Report.....	125
Remarks from Mr. Han Song.....	127
Constitution & Bylaws Report.....	131
Amendment #1 .....	133
Amendment #2.....	134
Amendment #6.....	136
Announcements .....	138

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2012**

Call to Order .....	140
Election of Officers.....	142
Amendment #3 .....	146
Amendment #4.....	151
Amendment #5.....	152
Amendment #7.....	154
Family Support Pod Report .....	162
National Chaplain Report .....	164
Americanism Report .....	170
Education Report .....	172
Community Service Report .....	173
Membership Development Pod Report.....	175
Long Range Strategic Planning Report .....	177
Leadership Report.....	178
Public Relations Report .....	179
National Public Awareness Campaign .....	181
Auxiliary Emergency Fund Report.....	195

American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Report.....	196
Membership Committee Report.....	198
National Secretary Report.....	204
Introduction of Resolutions Committee.....	209
Housekeeping Resolutions.....	209
National President’s Awards For Excellence .....	217
Announcements .....	223
President Nelson’s Video Report.....	225

**INSTALLATION CEREMONY  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2012**

National President’s Welcome.....	234
Welcome to Peggy Thomas .....	235
Greetings from Commander-Elect Jim Koutz .....	235
Introductions of Newly Elected Officers .....	236
Colors Retired and Convention Concluded .....	258

**POST-CONVENTION  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2012**

Call to Order .....	259
Nominations of National Secretary and National Treasurer.....	261
Motion of Committee and Foundation Appointments .....	262
National Finance Report .....	263
Motion to Adopt Budget .....	268
Foundation Budget Presented .....	268
Disciplinary Authority Resolution Presented .....	269
Federal Charter Resolution Presented.....	270
Announcements .....	273

<b>APPENDIX A: Amendments</b> .....	275
<b>APPENDIX B: Awards</b> .....	290

**PRE-CONVENTION  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2012**

PRESIDENT NELSON: If everyone can be seated, please. It's 7:59 and we're going to start in one minute.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The National Executive Committee will come to order.

Good morning, everyone. My first order of business is to ask you to please disable your electronic devices or put them on silent.

And if you don't want to do that, please take out your checkbook 'cause if we hear anything, we'd like a donation to the Foundation.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Please rise and remain standing for the opening ceremonies. Our National Chaplain, Nini Lynch, will lead us in the invocation, a moment of silence for our fallen heroes and those serving our nation today for the protection of our freedom.

Following the prayer, Americanism Chairman Melanie Taylor will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem followed by the Constitution & Bylaws Chairman, Sharon Conatser, leading us in the Preamble to the Constitution.

Nini.

Where is Nini? Okay. Nini is not here. Would someone like to offer an opening prayer?

MS. HARPER: I'm from Georgia.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Come on up to the microphone.

MS. HARPER: Father, thank you for this wonderful day you've given us. Bless all the people here. Let them learn with their heart and with their ears. Bless us all, Lord, as we go about our business this week, learning your work. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

VOICES: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hail'd as the twilight's last gleaming? Whose bright stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight, o'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming? And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Please join me.

VOICES: For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars; to

inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: You may be seated. And the National Executive Committee meeting is convened.

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Indianapolis. I can't believe we're already in Indianapolis ready to start our 92<sup>nd</sup> annual convention.

This is an exciting time and I'm happy to share it with all of you. And I'd like to thank everyone in this room for your dedicated service this year to our military, our veterans, and their families.

Before we begin our business, I'd like to remind you that anyone who wishes to speak to please come to the center aisle microphone so that your remarks can be heard and transcribed.

Each of you is charged with the responsibility to document your attendance at this meeting and I believe the attendance sheets are being distributed.

It's my privilege this morning to introduce some people that are in the audience. I'm going to begin with the head table.

Peggy Thomas, our National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Florence Briggs, Central Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Lorraine "Rani" Gray, Eastern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Linda Feezer, Northwestern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Winnie Broussard, Southern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Carmen Metzger, Western Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nini Lynch, National Chaplain.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Diane Harley, National Historian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Mary "Dubbie" Buckler, National Secretary.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Marta Hedding, National Treasurer.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Chris Dickey, Convention Parliamentarian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Dee Dee Buckley, Chairman of Pages.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Sarah Swenson, my daughter, who's my personal page, and she's in the back.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And then I have three of my close friends. Shirley Schoonover is a personal page.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Jan Fredstrom.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And Lois Johnson.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: We also have a group of leaders who've been mentors for me throughout the years. Would our Past National Presidents please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And another group of ladies who have worked this year with all of you. Will our National Chairmen please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And anyone who has not stood, we all know that all of our work begins at the grassroots level, so let's give all of you a hand, please.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

We'll be utilizing a consent agenda to handle the basic business items. These items are listed on your agenda and they include the approval of the proceedings from the February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> NEC meeting, the charter cancellations, and four housekeeping resolutions that concern removal of completed policies and procedures from the policy and procedure document.

You have all received this information on each of these items prior to the meeting and any updates have been placed on your chair.

This is how the consent agenda works. The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt all items as presented and with no discussion necessary.

If a member wishes to discuss any of the items or make corrections on an item, the Chair will entertain a motion to remove that item from the consent agenda prior to voting.

Voting on the consent agenda will then proceed and the item that was removed will be handled separately.

I'd like to begin by reminding all of you that anyone wishing to speak needs to use the microphone and address the Chair before speaking.

Are there any questions on the consent agenda?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Someone has to make a motion first. Sorry. You have to use the microphone.

MS. RAY: Madam President. It's not on.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's on.

MS. RAY: It's on? Okay. Pam Ray, NEC from Illinois.

I move that we adopt the consent agenda as printed.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The motion has been made to adopt the consent agenda. There is no debate on a consent agenda.

All those in favor of accepting the consent agenda, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The motion has been carried.

The Chair now calls on Parliamentarian Chris Dickey to explain the housekeeping resolution.

PARLIAMENTARIAN DICKEY: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PARLIAMENTARIAN DICKEY: At this convention, you have a number of resolutions before you. I'm sure you've all seen the packet. There were, I think, 41. A little overwhelming at first when you first see that. But I think once you understand it, and I'm going to explain to you how we're going to handle it to try to be as efficient as possible.

You have this document, this book that was last printed in 1999 and so it's a number of years out of date. And even as you read through here, there's a lot of things -- lots of things are out of date.

And so this is an attempt to clean up things that are in here that have been adopted. Some of the things probably should never have been in here because they weren't policies and procedures. They were action items that got completed.

And so right now this is just not a useable document and we're trying to move towards a document that can be used, that you can go to and reference, you know, what all your polices and procedures very easily to be done.

And so I know you have a special committee that's been working very hard on this. They organized all this and now it comes before you for action.

You just adopted a consent agenda that had a few of those things on them. We are going to be discussing later in this meeting some additional ones.

All the ones that clean up this book, we are referring to those as housekeeping resolutions. Okay? And those are going to be different than other resolutions that you will be considering here in this meeting and also in the Convention meeting.

Does that -- I just want to make sure everybody understands that. Okay. Super.

The 41 housekeeping resolutions that the Convention is going to consider, and there's the difference between the ones that this body is considering and the Convention

body is considering, they got divided out because of who originally adopted them.

So the ones you're considering in this meeting were originally adopted by an NEC. The ones that are being considered by the Convention body were originally adopted by the Convention body. So that's the difference between the two, so if you're wondering what that is.

Of the 41 housekeeping resolutions that the Convention will be considering, because your resolution rules say that resolutions that are considered by the Convention body, they go through the Pre-Convention Committee meetings that are being held after this meeting this morning.

So all those have to run through there even though they are housekeeping and hopefully if you read through them, it makes really good sense that they need to be adopted and all that. Okay? But we still have to run those through and get recommendations on those.

The only thing that the Pre-Convention Committee meetings can do is make a recommendation. They can't -- they don't adopt them. They can't stop them from going to Convention. They only give the Convention body a recommendation. Okay?

Now, all these housekeeping resolutions fall into three different categories and those are actions that have already been completed. Like there was one I read, I think, to allot \$80,000 for some office equipment or something like that.

That was not even a policy to begin with. It was an action item and hopefully it was completed. And it was probably a number of years ago. Probably some of that stuff is not even around anymore or it was not even an ongoing policy to begin with.

There are some that the action has or the -- whatever the subject matter was of it has already been adopted into your Constitution & Bylaws or standing rules. And I think you probably would see some of those things.

One was -- talked about the role of the Past National Presidents in the NEC. That is actually part of either the Bylaws or the standing rules. So it might be coming out as something that was in here, but it's not like it's going away. It's already in another document. Okay?

And then there's another one that -- the third category are provisions that are -- that had never been rescinded, but they're not current practice, something that's been very old. There's some of these things were adopted originally in the 1930s, 1920s and no one ever got around to rescinding those. Okay?

And so those are the categories that those things fit into.

Now, when we get to the Convention, to expedite processing 41 different resolutions, the plan is that they will come up under the report of the Resolutions Committee. Okay? And Terry Porter is Chair of that Resolutions Committee. That report is normally one of the last reports, committee reports that's done at the Convention.

And so all of the ones that get a recommendation to be adopted from one of the committee meetings this morning, it will be -- the plan right now is to bundle all those together, kind of like you just did a consent agenda, and so to be processed in one vote.

Anything that doesn't get a recommendation to be adopted will be considered separately. Okay? So hopefully it will make things go pretty fast and speed it along. It's -- most of these, it should just be a formality, that a formal vote is taken on them.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Does anyone have any questions for Chris?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Thank you.

PARLIAMENTARIAN DICKEY: Okay. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: You might remember, NEC, that the Governance Committee, the ad hoc committee for governance was adopted by you at the post NEC meeting and they've done a lot of work, so I'd like to just take a moment of personal privilege and introduce that committee.

So if they'll stand. Peggy Thomas, she's our National Vice President. Terry Porter is Parliamentarian, Sharon Conatser as Constitution & Bylaws, and Dubbie Buckler.

So thank you all for all your hard work.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: We will now move ahead to the Finance Committee Report. The Chair calls on Nicole Clapp, Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Before you come, Nicole, Phil Onderdonk was supposed to join us this morning. He's our counsel general. And he evidently is tied up, so I'm going to ask if --

VOICE: He's in a meeting.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes, he's in a meeting. He also is counsel general for the Legion. So I'm going to ask that all of the members of the NEC please be sure to attend the Constitution & Bylaws Committee because he'll be at that meeting to give -- he has a couple of announcements. He has a couple of business things that he has to share with us.

I'm sorry. Nicole, go ahead with your report.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: On behalf of your National Finance Committee, your Vice Chairman of the committee is National Past President Desi Stoy, committee members, Past National Presidents Linda Newsome, Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, and our newest member, Paula Parker-Sawyers.

I am pleased to share with you a brief summary of our financial activity through the fiscal year to date of the end of July.

If you recall back at the beginning of the year, you, the NEC, adopted a budget with an anticipated \$877,923 in deficits which meant we would have to rely once again on our savings to balance our budget.

Well, so far this year, we're on a much different track. The total year-to-date operating revenue is 5.9 million, in addition to \$471,000 in investment income, \$2.55 million of unbudgeted investment, unrealized gains.

So those of you that are in finance know unrealized gains is just what's on paper. That doesn't mean what will happen when we sell if we ever would sell. But that sure is a nice figure, two point -- two and a half million.

Once again this year, our fundraising efforts continue to exceed our expectations and when I give my platform remarks, you'll see several of those milestones were exceeded once again this year.

And to date, our total expenses are 5.4 million, so 5.9 versus 5.4 looks pretty rosy right now. But I also need you to realize that a great deal of our expenses for the year occur during this fourth quarter.

For example, all of us being here at National Convention. So our year-end financial picture obviously will look a bit different.

But overall, the Finance Committee would like to recognize every one of you, volunteers and staff for your continuous efforts to work within our financial constraints.

Your combined decision making has improved and sustained our anticipated financial picture. We cannot forget that it's our savings account, i.e. our investments that have given us a considerable boost thus far.

But the entire Finance Committee thanks you all for a job well done.

I'll have to say that the 2012-2013 budget which we will present at the post NEC meeting will have a much brighter focus as a result of the dues increase. So I have to say stay tuned.

Are there any questions regarding the financial report?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Nicole.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Okay. And if not, we'd like to proceed with the proposal for the policy for consideration, the travel policy. The document has been reviewed and adopted by the Finance Committee as a role of the policies and procedures on an ongoing basis.

Each of you received the travel policy prior to the meeting. The travel policy as you see defines the appropriate use of travel within the organization. I'll go over the highlighted changes for you.

The first change is we changed policy purpose to a policy statement and expanded on the definition of the policy. As with the housekeeping resolutions, there were several tweaks for grammatic and -- and grammatical errors.

And then number three item was under the transportation section. We ask that transportation shall be reserved 30 days in advance if at all possible and that when selecting a flight to receive frequent flyer miles when a comparable flight exists that is a lower fare or lower rate is prohibited.

It was the consensus that we would reduce the days of reimbursement to turn in your reimbursement request from 90 to 60 days.

And then under the reimbursement section, tips. Tips have always been something we struggled with because it's a lot of out-of-pocket change, here for a bag, here for a bellman, here for, you know, recommendation.

And so we've added that on to the reimbursement and it is a line item where you write in the amount of the tips with an explanation.

So on behalf of the Finance Committee, I move the adoption of the proposed travel policy if there are no other questions.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of the travel policy.

Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, are you ready for the question?

All those in favor of adopting the travel policy, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The affirmative has it and the resolution is adopted.

Thank you, Nicole.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: In conclusion, I wish to thank the NEC for your financial deliberations this year and your support you've offered our committee.

Please know that it's always our committed goal to make decisions in the best interest of our entire organization, its mission, and we appreciate your efforts to maintain our organization's financial viability.

So, Madam President, this concludes the financial report this morning.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The next item on the agenda under new business are the resolution to include the undraping ceremony in the manual of ceremonies, the resolution to recognize the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program and operations guide, the resolution to request The American Legion amend the allowable use of Poppy funds, the resolution to request The American Legion's assistance to obtain an American Legion Auxiliary federal charter, as well as ten housekeeping resolutions to remove obsolete policies from the policies and procedures document.

Information regarding all of these resolutions was previously circulated to all of you and to all of your departments.

Do you all have a copy? Okay.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Madam President, I move the adoption -- Madam President, I move the adoption of the resolution to recognize the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program and operations guide.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. It's been seconded.

It has been moved and seconded to adopt the resolution to recognize the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program and operations guide.

Is there any discussion?

MS. DORAN: Madam National President, Sharon Doran, Arizona.

I would ask that this be delayed until the Washington conference. That would give the Girls State Chairman time to meet during Girls State to discuss this. I believe that there's not enough people who are fully aware of what this entails and I do not believe that this is the time to do this.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Now, all you did is ask.

MS. DORAN: I am sorry. That's a question. Would you like me to restate? I just want to make a motion.

VOICE: Make a motion.

MS. DORAN: Okay. All right. I'm a little nervous this morning. Okay. So help me out.

PRESIDENT ENT NELSON: Okay. It cannot be postponed that far off because of parliamentary law. It can be referred to a committee. So you can move that it be referred to a committee.

MS. DORAN: Thank you.

Therefore, I move that this resolution be conferred to a committee.

VOICE: Girls State Committee.

MS. DORAN: Girls State Committee. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been -- it has been moved to refer the operations -- Auxiliary Girls State Program operations guide to a committee.

Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

VOICE: I'm sorry. I have a question. What is the proposed reason we're waiting?

PRESIDENT NELSON: We have to have a second before we can discuss it.

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. We have a second. Okay.

VOICE: I'd like to know why the need to wait a year to do it.

Thank you. I'm loud enough.

I want to know why we need to wait because Girls State -- there's Girls State and there's Girls Nation. I mean, if we've got the two of them, why do we have to do -- change the rules?

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Any other discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Hearing none, we need to vote on the motion to refer this to a committee.

Do you have discussion?

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz from Alaska.

My question is, what is the purpose of postponing? Why do we need to postpone and where is the comments behind that to even have a logical thought about voting?

PRESIDENT NELSON: And I don't know that, so the -- maybe the motion needs to --

MS. DORAN: In just having recently -- again, Sharon Doran, Department of Arizona.

Having read what's going on and having talked with my own Girls State, I am somewhat confused. To me, Girls Nation doesn't exist unless there is Girls State. That -- now, is this the wrong one?

PRESIDENT NELSON: This is -- this -- this is to adopt the guide that was sent out, the operations guide. It has nothing to do with --

MS. DORAN: Okay. Then I do have a thing. Is it still a guide or is it going to be a policy?

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's a Girls -- it's an American Legion Auxiliary state program and operations guide.

MS. DORAN: Okay. Then my question would remain. Is it going to remain a

guide?

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's a guide. There's nothing making this a policy. It's a guide.

MS. DORAN: Okay. And that's where then probably I did speak at the wrong time. I shall speak at the right time somewhere along the line.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are you going to withdraw your motion?

MS. DORAN: I am.

VOICE: You go, girl.

MS. DORAN: I am willing to withdraw my motion and I'm going to slap those people who advised me.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any objection to withdrawing the motion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: None? Hearing none, the question is on the adoption of the resolution to recognize the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program and operations guide.

All those in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, nay.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The motion has been adopted.

Peggy you missed one.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Madam President, I move the adoption of the resolution to include the undraping ceremony in the manual of ceremonies.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: I second it.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and seconded to adopt the resolution to include the undraping ceremony in the manual of ceremonies.

Is there discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, the question is on the adoption of the resolution to include the undraping ceremony in the manual of ceremonies.

All those in favor of the resolution to include the undraping ceremony in the manual of ceremonies, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The affirmative has it and the resolution is adopted.

Do you have a question? You have to --

VOICE: I can't get up, but I think I can speak loud enough. When you're doing the resolutions, could you please tell us where to find them in the guide, I mean, because we're all here trying to go through this to find what you're talking about and they're not in order?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The NEC -- these are just the ones that were sent to you for the NEC. There were four of them. They were in your NEC packet. We have an extra packet if you need it. Otherwise, you can share with someone next to you.

VOICE: I'm not NEC, so I do need a packet.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Did you find it? Did you find it?

We have one other extra packet if anyone needs it.

Okay. Thank you.

Okay. We're going to now do the Poppy funds, so if you want to go in order.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Madam President, I move the adoption of the resolution to request The American Legion amend allowable use of Poppy funds.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and seconded to adopt the resolution requesting The American Legion amend allowable use of Poppy funds.

Is there any discussion?

MS. GARRETT: Patty Garrett, NEC, Department of Missouri.

This is our resolution and we find that with the greater number of active military that we would ask that The American Legion look into letting us use some of the Poppy funds in their behalf because as it states now we cannot.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

MS. MONTANEY: Madam President, ladies of the NEC, Jane Montaney, NEC, Department of Washington.

And I just lost my spot, so if this doesn't sound professional, I apologize. We refer to our veterans as veterans and military. We need to remember that our military, those that are actively serving are veterans if they serve so much as one day.

We're out there trying to get them to take advantage of this -- the benefits that are there for them and a lot of them don't consider themselves veterans. So if we change our vernacular, it will help with them.

I also have the question. You're saying active duty military. I've been told never to assume, but active duty military or actively serving military should include National Guard and Reserve.

And so that we will not assume anything, I move to amend the motion to read actively serving to include National Guard and Reserve.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. It has been amended to add the words active duty to include National Guard and Reserve.

Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: We'll vote on the amendment to include the wording National Guard -- active duty including National Guard and Reserve.

All those in favor of the amendment, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The affirmative has it and the amendment has been adopted.

Now we'll go back to the original motion. Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. We will vote. All those in favor of the resolution to request The American Legion amend allowable use of Poppy funds, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The affirmative has it and the resolution is adopted.

Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: I move the adoption of the resolution to request The American Legion's assistance to obtain an American Legion Auxiliary federal charter.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Did someone second? I didn't hear you.

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. It has been moved and seconded to adopt the resolution to request The American Legion's assistance to obtain the American Legion Auxiliary federal charter.

Is there discussion?

VOICE: Madam President, I wish to inform this body that this issue has come up before. It was in my administration. We were approached by Mr. Onderdonk to amend or to apply for a federal charter.

There are a couple of issues I think you need to be aware of. One is that Congress doesn't usually issue charters anymore. That was an era long past and you can't get Congress to do anything these days, so I don't know where we are with that.

The other thing is that it would depend on the type of charter you want. When we were approached several years ago by The American Legion, it was to be a charter to continue the Auxiliary exclusively as a women's organization.

The problem with that is that Congress, even if they were going to consider a charter, they would not likely be willing to endorse an organization that discriminates against men.

So I think you have to be realistic and consider what the terms of that charter would be. Are we going to re -- rewrite our total eligibility for the organization, but you have to think about the consequences when you go into the deliberations of asking for a charter?

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Is there any other discussion?

And this is one of the things why Phil was supposed to be here, so it's

unfortunate that he can't make it.

MS. VAN KIRK: Madam President, I am Carol Van Kirk, Department of Nebraska.

I am extremely proud of my eligibility for the American Legion Auxiliary through my husband's honorable service. And I'm proud of the fact that he was a member of The American Legion which also made me eligible.

I personally have no desire to create any animosity or any problem between the Legion and the Auxiliary and I would be remiss if I did not express my opinion that we should not put The American Legion in a position to possibly turn this down.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

I want to just give you a clarification. I'm not giving you an opinion. But the Legion came to us with this. We did not go to them. So I just wanted to let the members know that the Legion approached us to do this. We did not approach them. So --

MS. LACH: Patti Lach, NEC from Maryland.

I didn't quite understand exactly what this is going to do for us other than maybe, because we mentioned women's only, keep us so that we have a reason to deny men access to our organization.

But I didn't quite understand exactly what -- what is the benefit exactly?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay.

MS. LACH: I didn't --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

MS. LACH: If you could answer that.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm going to ask that the National Secretary go to the Podium and explain because the Legion approached her, so she can give you some clarifying information.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The -- the counsel general in a meeting with the counsel general, the commander, the National Adjutant of The American Legion in discussing issues in general, common interests to both organizations including the resolutions that have come up at least in my three and a half years and I believe before -- well before my time regarding membership eligibility.

At least since I've been here, every year, there's been a -- been either an inquiry about or proposal about membership eligibility regarding the spouses of the Sons and the spouses of female Legionnaires. And that has been proffered, given to the Legion.

In discussing that again, it came up that it would be -- if they're going to have to go in and change the federal charter for the Legion in any way to account for, to make adjustments or recommendations to Congress to change what would ultimately be membership eligibility for the family of organizations, the recommendation was that in doing so that they create a charter for the American Legion Auxiliary.

There's not a -- I will take the -- I believe I can say with a clear understanding among the National officers we're not advocating one way or another.

The request was made that it would be better for us to be on record requesting a charter at the time that they go in to make any other adjustments because it will take an act of Congress to make a change to what ultimately will be the membership criteria for belonging to The American Legion Family, however that would sift out, whether it would

be a change in the Legion's charter or a change -- or the creation of an Auxiliary charter that could take into account some of these considerations.

So it's my understanding as much as anything a formality of being on record that we agree that there are membership issues that need to be addressed in requesting that there be a federal charter. It's my understanding that that's all that we would be doing.

And even in requesting it to -- to Barb's point, there's no assurance there would ever be one because it would take an act of Congress. There's no assurance as to how long this would take. We could make the request today and it would be 12 or 15 years before something would happen.

The Legion just felt they would -- it would be cleaner if there were at least a request that we participate in that process with them. So that's -- to my understanding, that's all that this does.

MS. KURK: Nancy Kurk, NEC from New York.

Is that -- can everybody hear me?

PRESIDENT NELSON: We can hear.

MS. KURK: Okay. I am strongly opposed to this resolution and the fact that for years now we've been trying to promote The American Legion Family. We have a three-part application. We try to have our posts work with us and the Sons all together as a family.

And in the Department of New York, our Department Commander, our Department President, and the Sons of The American Legion all travel to 62 counties together.

Every post will tell you if they have a strong Auxiliary, they're great. And we all know you do more things working together than you do apart.

I understand what Dubbie is saying, but that's like let's take a -- let's just get a separation and we'll think later about a divorce. Okay? That's just the way I feel about that. If we're The American Legion Family, let's stay as a family.

I don't want a separation and I definitely don't want a divorce for the same reasons as Carol Van Kirk spoke. It's a privilege to belong to this organization and part of that privilege is your eligibility. Let the Legion worry about eligibility and we'll go from there.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I have another --

MS. KURK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: -- question for Dubbie. Are they -- is -- does this have anything to do with our eligibility? Would it change --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: No, no. It's not about divorce.

PRESIDENT NELSON: -- the eligibility?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It's not about eligibility. I just need to be real clear. One of -- there are many reasons that counsel general explained that this would be beneficial.

And one is that you operate as one of your premier programs of this organization the American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation and Girls State Program. And currently you don't allow boys to participate in those programs.

One of the benefits for having a federal charter as an American Legion Auxiliary which right now is a women's patriotic service organization is that you would have far greater federal protection for keeping those programs all girl programs if you had a federal charter.

So that is one of the reasons that he explained would be desirable to have a federal charter. The desirability for putting -- making the request as it was explained to all of -- to us when we were meeting with him is then at the same time that they're going in to get a charter for the Auxiliary, which would be understand a federal charter for an American Legion Auxiliary, which would have to be done in tandem with The American Legion's charter.

So it wouldn't be a divorce or a separation. It would give strength to the Legion Family because we are a unique organization as the Legion Family goes. The Sons of The American Legion is a program of The American Legion.

Right now we are a separate entity -- okay. I didn't -- couldn't tell if that was -- that was -- I'm sorry.

VOICE: Just my oxygen beeping.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. But you're good, right? This is a good beep? Okay?

VOICE: It's not a good beep, but that's okay. I'm listening.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It's not a good beep? Okay. I'll speak faster.

So really it was that they wanted the -- the Legion recommended that at the time that -- if they're going to go to Congress to deal with the 75/25 rule because they're at saturation point with 25 percent member -- social members, which is what the Sons of The American Legion is, that it would be helpful if we just -- if they went to Congress, that they dealt with it all in one fell swoop.

That was the request and they just thought it would have more credence if there was a request from the Legion -- the American Legion Auxiliary for a federal charter.

So, again, this did not come from your National leadership. It came to us from the Legion to ask we make this request.

MS. KURK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

MS. DUTTON: Sandi Dutton, Past National President from Maryland.

I'm opposed to this as well and my feeling is this. The American Legion wants to go to Congress and wants to make some changes, then they need to draft it out and let us see what we're talking about.

I don't think that we want to pass something as ambiguous as this without any information from anybody except one person who talked to somebody.

I think The American Legion needs to talk to us as a whole group and let us know what the heck is going on and make sure that whatever we do do is what they want.

So I'm very opposed to this and I think we need much, much, much more information.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Any other discussion?

(Applause.)

MS. SICKMOND: Phyllis Sickmond, Past National President from New York. I'm in agreement with the last three speakers. Even though it sounds like a formality coming from the dais, it is a very emotional issue as you can see.

And I don't feel that the NEC meeting is the place to pass this. I think every member needs to hear it, every delegate wants to hear it, and this is something that should be passed by a Convention, not an NEC meeting.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Phyllis.

Any other discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. The question is on the adoption of the resolution to request The American Legion's assistance to obtain an American Legion Auxiliary federal charter.

All those in favor of the resolution request to The American Legion's assistance to obtain an American Legion Auxiliary federal charter, please say aye.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

VOICES: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The negative has it and the resolution has failed.

Thank you.

Peggy.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Madam President, I move that the ten housekeeping resolutions be considered together and move their adoption. The ten housekeeping resolutions concern the following:

Washington Headquarters office and corporate mission statement;

Blanket coverage of position bonds for all of the units;

The Study of the American Indian as part of the Americanism Program;

Olympic teams and Children's --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Heart Fund.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: -- Heart Fund;

President's Student Service Award;

Committee on Education of Orphans;

Fiscal year rehabilitation aid requirements filing list of expenditures with Finance Committee by Treasurer;

Disaster Relief funds and office equipment;

Girls State chorus and withdrawal of Girls State guide from publication;

National membership citation;

Form -- a Forum Program Committee in opposition to admission of China into the United States.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any objection to all ten housekeeping resolutions being considered together?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and seconded to adopt the ten housekeeping resolutions.

Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of the ten housekeeping resolutions.

All those in favor, please stand.

(Whereupon, the audience complied.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. You may be seated.

Those opposed, please stand.

(Whereupon, the audience complied.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The affirmative has it and the resolution is adopted.

Thank you, ladies. We got through a tremendous amount of work this morning.

Dubbie, do you have any announcements?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President.

At this convention, we're pretty sure somebody is going to lose something and we're pretty sure somebody is going to find something. Lost and found items are all going to be handled by Convention officials and you want to dial 3350 on any Convention house phone.

So while you're here in the Convention Center, if you have lost something or you have found something that you think is reportable -- you may have found something that you want to keep, but if you want to report it, 3350, 3350. And I'll announce this again from time to time, but that's the number for lost and found.

I want to -- another reminder that tickets for Tuesday's Woman of the Year luncheon and Wednesday's States Dinner are still available and that will be handled at the Headquarters office here in the Convention Center.

Are you all familiar now with where the Headquarters office is for -- for the American Legion Auxiliary? Okay. It's in Hall B. So it's here in the Convention Center and it's on down -- as you came into this room, if you -- when you go out of this room, if you would turn to your right and go -- you'll see a big sign that says Hall B. And once you turn into Hall B, as they say, you can't miss it. It's right there.

So that's where you would be dealing with tickets for either the Woman of the Year luncheon or the Wednesday States Dinner.

A reminder that the Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention meeting will be today at 1 p.m. in the Wabash Ballroom. I'm looking for -- in general, when they -- when they go out these doors, Wabash Ballroom is going to be -- it's going to be opened up. Okay. I just want to make sure that -- if it's all going to be opened up.

All right. A friendly reminder that this is -- this is new this year. As a result of the changes to the standing rules that were adopted last year, the purpose -- I'm going to remind you again -- the purpose of the combined Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee meeting is so that everyone who is a delegate to the convention can hear the discussion about all the proposed amendments.

And as you've heard from our National Parliamentarian, the committee can only

recommend. They cannot take action on any of them.

Sharon Conatser will be chairing that as your Constitution & Bylaws Chair. So everyone give her a pat on the back because this is the first year we're doing it this way and Sharon, bless her heart, gets to do it.

It is a 90-minute meeting. Candidates for the National office have been invited to speak. So at any point during the -- during the conduct of the meeting, if a National candidate appears, then -- then it will be the Chair's prerogative to include that candidate for remarks at an appropriate time. So that will be Sharon's call as to when those candidates make remarks.

The meeting will -- because things are a little different this year, the meeting will again begin with the National President doing welcoming remarks and with the Convention Parliamentarian explaining -- giving an overview again about how business will be conducted.

We understand it's new and different and we want to be -- make sure we're doing as thorough a job as possible, making sure everyone understands how -- how the process works.

One of the speakers that we were to have this morning at our meeting was counsel general. He contacted me and said he was not able to be here. He will be on the agenda. He does have an important announcement.

It is important that you as leadership of the organization hear the announcement, so you are encouraged, those of you who are members of the NEC and Department Presidents, you are encouraged to attend the meeting at least for the beginning part of it for those -- those general announcements that are made and for the information from counsel general.

So with that, Madam President, that concludes all my announcements at this time.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

So -- so, Sharon, we will dial 3350 when you and I lose our mind in that meeting.

I have one announcement I'd like to share with the NEC and the National Chairmen and the Past National Presidents have already heard it.

This year, we are going to have voting FOBs they're called. They're a voting machine that each one of the delegates will have so that they can vote electronically and you will immediately see the results.

So are there any questions? Any questions at all for us?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you all for being here, and I hope you have a wonderful, wonderful Convention.

And will you please stand with me as our National Chaplain, Nini, offers the Benediction.

(Ring of the bell.)

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Madam President, may I take just a moment of privilege? I sincerely apologize to this body for being tardy this morning.

And I want to thank Lola Harper, NEC from the Department of Georgia, for

covering me.

May we pray. We thank you, Lord, for our many blessings including the warmth of your spirit in and around us as we work together for the benefit of our veterans, active military, and their families.

Please enfold them in your strength and love, Lord, and to their families grant patience and to them endurance. In your time, Lord, please bring them safely home to us.

In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'd like to thank the NEC for your dedication and your hard work this year. I have truly enjoyed working with you. I'd like to thank you for your hospitality when I visited you at your departments. And I'd like to wish you a wonderful Convention.

Thank you, everyone, for being here. This meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 8:56 a.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 27, 2012**

THE NARRATOR: Welcome back to Faces of Freedom, the 92<sup>nd</sup> American Legion Auxiliary National Convention.

From the Department of Minnesota, please welcome your National President, Kris Nelson.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Good morning. Good morning. I'm glad you're all here. Over the next few days, we're going to learn a little, laugh a little, cry a little, accomplish a little business all in the name of something big: helping and honoring America's veterans, active duty military, and their children.

First, I want to thank you for your support of my theme, Honoring their Service. So far, we've created thousands of custom buttons, each one with a different face and a different story.

It's a real visual reminder that the people we serve are real and not a statistic. There's an inseparable bond, a personal connection with each veteran, each active duty military, and each family, each child that we serve.

What's more, these little buttons are a perfect tie-in to our Convention theme, Faces of Freedom.

As you recall last year, our theme was the Power of One and we featured stories about Auxiliary members who made a powerful difference. This year, we flipped it.

Over the next three days, we'll begin our session with a glimpse into the lives of people who are or should be impacted by Auxiliary programs. Let's take a look.

THE NARRATOR: Welcome to Chillicothe, a charming small town in southern Ohio filled with quaint shops and historic pride. Chillicothe was the first Ohio State Capitol and is now home of Denise Smith, Vietnam era U.S. Air Force veteran and National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Gold Medal winner.

MS. SMITH: My first adventure was the Creative Arts Festival. It was also the first time I realized how involved the American Legion Auxiliary was because at the time, I hadn't received any disability payments or anything, so I really couldn't afford to go to the festival. And that's when my Auxiliary came through for me and actually got my plane ticket.

THE NARRATOR: Once Denise arrived at the National Festival, she learned it was much more than a contest.

MS. SMITH: One of the things we like to do as artists once we arrive at the Creative Arts Festival is to encourage each other to try different mediums than what we've already tried.

So from my experience of meeting other artists, I've done everything from mosaic work to sketch art, painting, bead work. Gosh, there's so many different mediums I tried just from being exposed to other artists and the mediums that they attempt.

THE NARRATOR: Justin Peterson, recreation therapist at the Chillicothe VA Hospital explains the impact on veterans.

MR. PETERSON: I've been a part of the Arts Festival now for five years and I've been able to see the impact that it has on the veterans. Whether it's a physical or a mental disability or ailment that they have, they focus all of their attention and energies on the artwork and they just kind of get away from their issue. It's opening up a whole new world for them.

THE NARRATOR: Sometimes their old world was filled with complicated memories and issues that were hard to escape.

MS. SMITH: A lot of the experiences of Vietnam veterans in particular when they came home were pretty negative. When I tried to go to college when I first came home, I had my car egged and such things as "baby killer" written on my car.

So when you go to the festival and you feel the comradeship again that you felt, there's no feeling like that. There's no friendship like another soldier's friendship.

THE NARRATOR: And often those friendships are inspirational.

MS. SMITH: One of the friends that I made at the festival was Native American and he showed me some of the beadwork that he had done and that got me interested in beadwork as well.

My style is totally different from the work that he was doing, but this is the first piece that I did that went to Nationals.

MR. PETERSON: The therapeutic value that the Arts Festival has on veterans even at the local level is tremendous, but the ones who reach the National level, they realize how special of an event it is and they realize they have to produce something really special next year. It's an incentive for them.

The volunteers, especially the American Legion Auxiliary volunteers, treat them like rock stars.

MS. SMITH: I guess in the end, I have to say that one of the things that I did before I started with the festival was I really isolated. And the festival was really significant in kind of bringing me out of my shell.

And I guess it's unusual to say that one thing had such a significant impact on you, but it really did because it made it safe to be so sure again and to trust again. And I really appreciate that.

THE NARRATOR: And the American Legion Auxiliary really appreciates Denise Smith, another shining example of our Faces of Freedom.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Denise is just one of many who have benefitted from the support of the American Legion Auxiliary. Later today, you'll hear more about our sponsorship and volunteer efforts from -- with the Creative Arts Festival.

During our National Convention, as we honor our Faces of Freedom, let us not forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

On the stage this week, along with a POW-MIA chair is a battlefield cross, or a fallen soldier battle cross. It is a memorial to a fallen or missing soldier consisting of a soldier's boot, bayonet, helmet, rifle, and sometimes dog tags.

As the name implies, a battlefield cross is generally erected at or near the field of battle allowing the soldier's comrades to pay their respects and to begin processing the loss.

The Indiana National Guard has only a handful of these memorials. In fact, this battlefield cross is borrowed from the dining hall at Camp Atterbury.

When staff spoke with an Indiana Guardsman about the difficulty potentially involved in getting the battlefield cross here for our Convention, the Guardsman emphatically said, "This is something we need to do for you."

Would you help me thank the Indiana National Guard today with your applause?  
(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

As you can see, our stage is decorated with giant photos that represent just a few of our Faces of Freedom. What's more, all the photos, over 1,500 of them, that you've seen on the screens as you walked in this morning, on our signage, in the Convention guide, and even in our Convention logo, are from you. They are your personal Faces of Freedom and I thank you for sharing them.

They remind me of a song I heard last year. Listen to a sample of the lyrics while you study their faces. When you see the Face of Freedom, look into those eyes. You will see the truth of what it means to sacrifice. When you look in the mirror, you will recognize the Face of Freedom living in you and I.

(Whereupon, a song follows:)

"When you see the face of freedom, look into those eyes. You will see the truth of what it means to sacrifice. When you look into that mirror, you will recognize the face of freedom living in you and I.

In some distant valley or on some foreign shores, there walks a man who could be a stranger or someone from right next door. It could be your brother, your father, or your son. There walks a man who wears the face of freedom.

When you see the face of freedom, look into those eyes. You will see the truth of what it means to sacrifice. When you look into that mirror, you will recognize the face of freedom living in you and I.

It's not for the glory. It's not for the fight. He does it so his family can sleep at night, or you and your neighbors, ones he'll never even meet. He does it for the face of freedom living on your street.

When you see the face of freedom, you will recognize the face of freedom living in you and I, oh, the face of freedom living in you and I."

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Wasn't that awesome? Wonderful lyrics that embody who we are and what we do and hopefully will lead us to go on and do great things.

And speaking of doing great things, please welcome our Past National Presidents of the American Legion Auxiliary.

From the Department of Virginia, Anna Gear, National President 1983-1984.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: From the Department of Wisconsin, Pearl Behrend, National President 1987-1988.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Linda Newsome from the Department of Maryland,

National President 1994-95.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: From the Department of Louisiana, Syble Deshotel,

National President 1995-96.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Phyllis Sickmond from the Department of New York,  
your Past National President 1996-97.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: From the Department of Wisconsin, Barb Kranig,  
National President 1997-98.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Virginia Hobbs from the Department of Kentucky,  
your National President 1998-99.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Your 1999-2000 National President Elizabeth Stewart  
from the Department of North Carolina.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: From the Department of New Hampshire, Kristine  
West, National President 2000-2001.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: From the Department of Texas, your 2002-2003  
National President Katherine Morris.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Sandi Dutton from the Department of Maryland,  
National President 2004-2005.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Carol Van Kirk from the Department of Nebraska,  
National President 2005-2006.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: From the Department of Missouri, your 2006-2007  
National President JoAnn Cronin.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, National President 2007-  
2008.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Desiree Stoy, your 2008-2009 National President from  
the Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And from the Department of Ohio, Honorary Past  
National President Miriam Junge.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Past National Presidents. Your past and  
continued service is absolutely invaluable.

Let's give them another round of applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The story in our opening video was about one of the thousands touched by their participation in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

As you know, the American Legion Auxiliary is a presenting sponsor of the festival. This morning, we have a special treat. Joe Ramage served in the United States Air Force and is a Gold Medal winner of the 2011 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

He stated being part of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival last year was “one of the best experiences of my life. To meet and work with so many talented veterans who have had similar experiences and have common goals in music and in life was truly incredible.”

Ladies and gentlemen, from Massachusetts, please welcome another shining example of our Faces of Freedom, Joe Ramage.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, a song follows:)

MR. RAMAGE: My old man is that old man, spent his life living off the land, dirty hands and a clean soul. It breaks his heart seeing foreign cars filled with fuel that isn't ours and wearing cotton he didn't grow.

He's got the red, white, and blue flying high on the farm, Semper Fi tattooed on his left arm, spent a little more in the store for a tag in the back that says USA. He won't buy nothing that he can't fix with WD40 or a Craftsman wrench. He ain't prejudice. He's just made in America.

He loves his wife. She's that wife that decorates on the Fourth of July but says every day's Independence Day. She's golden rule, teaches school. Some folks say it isn't cool, but she says the Pledge of Allegiance anyway.

He's got the red, white, and blue flying high on the farm, Semper Fi tattooed on his left arm, spent a little more in the store for a tag in the back that says USA. He won't buy nothing that he can't fix with WD40 or a Craftsman wrench. He ain't prejudice. He's just made in America.

Born in the heartland, raised up a family of King James and Uncle Sam.

He's got the red, white, and blue flying high on the farm, Semper Fit tattooed on his left arm, spent a little more in the store for a tag in the back that says USA. He won't buy nothing that he can't fix with WD40 or a Craftsman wrench. He ain't prejudice. He's just made in America, made in America, made in America.

(Applause.)

MR. RAMAGE: Thank you.

(Whereupon, a song was played.)

(Applause.)

MR. RAMAGE: Thank you very much.

I'd just like to take a second to thank the American Legion Auxiliary for having me here and especially Kris Nelson and Elizabeth Mackey. It's an honor to be here. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, a song follows:)

MR. RAMAGE: If you're reading this, my mama is sitting there. Looks like I only got a one-way ticket over here. I sure wish I could give you one more kiss and war was just a game we played when we were kids.

I'm laying down my gun, hanging up my boots. I'm up here with God and we're both watching over you. So lay me down in that open field out on the edge of town, know my soul is where my mama always prayed that it would go. If you're reading this, I'm already home. If you're reading this halfway around the world, I won't be there to share the birth of our little girl. I hope she looks like you. I hope she fights like me, stands up for the innocent and the weak. I'm laying down my gun, hanging up my boots, tell dad I don't regret that I followed in his shoes.

So lay me down in that open field out on the edge of town and know my soul is where my mama always prayed that it would go. If you're reading this, I'm already home.

If you're reading this, there's going to come a day when you'll move on and find someone else and that's okay. Just remember this. I'm in a better place where soldiers live in peace and angels sing Amazing Grace.

So lay me down in that open field out on the edge of town, know my soul is where my mama always prayed that it would go. If you're reading this, if you're reading this, I'm already home.

(Applause.)

MR. RAMAGE: Thank you very much.

THE NARRATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, the 92<sup>nd</sup> American Legion Auxiliary National Convention will resume in approximately 10 minutes as we reset the stage and prepare for our business meeting.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

THE NARRATOR: Welcome back to Faces of Freedom, the 92<sup>nd</sup> American Legion Auxiliary National Convention.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hello, everyone. We have a wonderful production and technical team that does a wonderful job. Don't you agree?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Once in a while, something happens that they regret. And this morning, that was Past National President Linda Boone who was unintentionally left out. So at this time, please join me in welcoming Past National President Linda Boone 1993 -- 1992-93 from the Department of Oregon.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BOONE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Good morning, delegates, alternates, and guests. Welcome to Indianapolis for the very special 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary.

It is my honor this morning to present to you the 2011-2012 National officers of the American Legion Auxiliary.

National Treasurer Marta Hedding from Indiana.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: National Secretary Mary “Dubbie” Buckler from Indiana.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: National Historian Diane Harley of South Carolina.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: National Chaplain Nini Lynch of Georgia.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Central Division National Vice President Florence Briggs  
of Indiana.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Eastern Division National Vice President Rani Gray of  
Vermont.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Northwestern Division National Vice President Linda  
Feezer of Wyoming.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Southern Division National Vice President Winnie  
Broussard of Louisiana.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Western Division National Vice President Carmen  
Metzer of Idaho.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: And National Vice President Peggy Thomas of Virginia.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Please rise as the National Colors are presented by the  
President’s pages. Afterward, please remain standing for the introduction of our National  
President.

President pages, please proceed to post the colors.  
(Whereupon, National Colors presented.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: This morning, it is my distinct privilege to present to you  
a wonderful lady from the great state of Minnesota, a great person who reminded us all of  
never to forget the faces of those who fought and continue to fight for our freedom.

It is my great pleasure to present to you our National President, Kris Nelson.  
(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Madam President, I present to you this gavel to officially  
open the 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will now come  
to order.

I would like everyone to please take a moment to ensure your electronic devices  
have been placed in silent mode or to take out your checkbook and write a check for the  
Foundation if they’re not.

Thank you.

Please join me in an uninterrupted opening beginning with Nini Lynch, National  
Chaplain, who will lead us in prayer; Melanie Taylor, Chairman of National

Americanism, who will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Then remain standing for a very special performance of our National Anthem sung by National Veterans Creative Arts performer, Joe Ramage, and Sharon Conatser, Chairman of the National Constitution & Bylaws Committee, who will lead us in the Preamble.

Nini, please come and lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Please pray with me.

Our Heavenly Father, we humbly invoke your presence and divine guidance in our deliberations on behalf of our American Legion Auxiliary. Let us be open minded and earnest in our dealings with one another. Let us be tolerant of differing opinions and respectful toward all of our sisters in service.

Grant, Father, the ability to find resolutions through understanding and compromise. Keep us focused, Lord, on what is best for our organization as a whole, keeping sight of our purpose and mission.

As ever, Father, we seek your blessings for our beloved veterans, those serving in all branches of the military, and their families.

In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

VOICES: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MR. RAMAGE: Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hail'd as the twilight's last gleaming? Whose bright stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight, o'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming? And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

(Applause.)

VOICES: For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purpose: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, everyone, and welcome to the 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention.

We have so much to celebrate and many important things to accomplish, so let's get started.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Every department I visited this year has asked about the baby. So my first official order of business is the introduction of the new man in my life, my grandson, Kruze. Say hi.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: He's known to all of you as the stealer of my installation last year and I can't wait to be able to start babysitting him two days a week next week.

Bye-bye, say bye-bye.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: This has been an awesome year. I've been privileged to be able to see what the grassroots members are doing all across our country. All of you are so dedicated to our mission.

We -- I was able to work side by side with you supporting our veterans, our military, and their children. And today we're going to celebrate all of what you did.

My first order of business is to introduce those who are working. Please hold your applause until the end.

Dee Dee Buckley, Chairman of Pages. She's not here. Okay.

Sarah Swenson, National President's Page; Shirley Schoonover, National President's page; Jan Fredstrom, National President's Page; Lois Johnson, National President's Page; Kristine West, Chairman of the Distinguished Guest Committee; Syble Deshotel, Vice Chairman of the Distinguished Guest Committee; Rosie Blakesley, member of the Distinguished Guest Committee; Chris Dickey, Convention Parliamentarian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: It is my pleasure to invite a few special guests to the stage to bring greetings. Please welcome Billie Bubala, Indiana Department President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BUBALA: Madam President Kris, National Officers, Delegates, alternates, and guests, welcome to Indiana: Crossroads of America and home to the Indianapolis 500.

We hope you've had a chance to see the sights in our city. Within just three blocks of this Convention Center, you will see a wonderful museum such as the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art.

You can watch a 3D movie on the six-story high screen in the Indiana State Museum or tour the Indianapolis Museum of Art which is one of the nation's oldest and largest.

You can walk our canal walk or relax in a gondola on the White River Park when we have some rain which we did today. You can walk or take the elevator to the top of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument or catch a ballgame at Victory Field where the Indianapolis Indians will be playing tonight.

For you shoppers, the Circle City Mall is right next door and we hope you have

a chance to do all of these things.

Madam President, I wish for you an interesting and productive Convention and we look forward to the next few days.

Again, welcome to Indiana and thank you for allowing me to address your Convention.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Karen Lowe, National Convention Chairman, will introduce the National Convention Committee.

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Good morning. National President, delegates, alternates, and guests, welcome to Indiana, home to the Indianapolis Colts, our National American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters, and home to our next National Commander of The American Legion, Jimmy Koutz.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: On behalf of the nearly 53,000 Auxiliary members in Indiana, we are happy to be hosting this 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention. It's been 17 years since we last welcomed you to our Hoosier state.

Everyone has been working diligently and planning for this week. Our downtown has grown since you were here last. This Convention Center is twice the size it was in '95.

We have several new hotels including the JW Marriott, the largest in the world. So all of our Legion family is housed right downtown.

It is indeed my pleasure to present to you the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the local committee who have carried the responsibility and have done the work to make this Convention possible. And please hold your applause until all have been introduced.

Our National Vice Chairman Debbie Beeler who has been my right hand. Our Secretary is our Department Secretary, Judy Otey, who is sitting with our Delegation; Chairman of Pages, Roxy Stoner; and the Vice Chairman is Jennie Maune; Chairman of the Mail Room, Roseann Franny Waters; and her Vice Chairman is Peggy McKeeman; Chairman of Flowers and Corsages, Marge Rook; and the Vice Chairman is Phyllis Clark.

Drivers of the National President, Ilene Bailey, who could not make it this morning, she's on other errands, and Gretchen Hasler. Driver of the National Secretary is Jane Thurston.

Co-Chairmen of the Bear Booth, Thelma Butler and Susie Heath.

And a little advertisement here. Indiana's Bear Booth is located in the exhibit hall where you can purchase one of these commemorative bears for just \$10.00 or you can get a whole case, 15 for 120, and then you can present it to one of your veterans in the nursing home or in the veteran's home, veterans hospital, or wherever they may be.

And, Madam President, we have one of our bears for you.

If you have any questions, ask any of us. We are wearing the black and white checkered ties and smiles. And if they are not smiling, you let me know. If we can be of any service, we are located in Hall B.

And, Madam President, Madam President Kris and I -- we served our first National Chairmanship together under the leadership of Carol Van Kirk. I knew from the

beginning that Kris was going to go far. She had the dedication. She had the enthusiasm and hasn't she come far?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN LOWE: Madam President, I would like to present to you the Indianapolis cherub to watch over you and your --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LOWE: -- Convention. I thank you for this wonderful chairmanship, that you have a great Convention. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Beautiful. Thank you so much. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Now we're going to hear from Rita Navarreté, Past National President from the Department of New Mexico.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NAVARRETÉ: Madam National President, it is an honor to bring greetings to you on behalf of the Past National Presidents who are present and those who like me are unable to be with you today.

Your years of service to both the National Organization and to your Department in Minnesota earned you the honor of leading the American Legion Auxiliary as its National president this past year.

You served above and beyond the call of duty and your diligent connection via social media with members across the country kept us informed daily as you traveled as the representative of the organization to promote our mission to serve veterans, their families, and communities.

Your membership theme of honoring their service continues to excite the members and promote the sharing for a special veteran. We remain connected to the organization due to that service of that loved one.

Our volunteers care for the well-being of all veterans and our troops. You have recognized that service every time you visited with members who believe they are making a difference to help our veterans today and tomorrow.

As Past National Presidents, we truly acknowledge your accomplishments and wish for you a most successful Convention. Every moment of this Convention will become for you and your family the recorded memory of a job well done.

Kris, may love, peace, and joy be yours as you complete your year knowing you gave it all for Service Not Self.

Thank you for allowing me this memorable moment.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Members of the American Legion Auxiliary do so much for others. Now see what your Auxiliary membership can do for you.

Talking to us today on behalf of Gallagher Benefit Services are Timothy Easterwood, area President for Gallagher Benefit and proud Sons of The American Legion -- The Sons of The American Legion member, as well as Shannon Lockhart, dedicated American Legion Auxiliary member and ALA account manager.

Please join me as we welcome these folks from Gallagher.

(Applause.)

MS. LOCKHART: Good morning, everyone. I'm Shannon Lockhart and with me is Tim Easterwood from Gallagher Benefits and Kevin Wiskus from Gallagher Benefits. And we're very excited to be here today on this wonderful day.

First of all, I'd like to say thank you to the Auxiliary Headquarter team; Kris Nelson, our National President; Dubbie Buckler; Michael Butt; Tammy Wiggins; and especially Aaron Meyer for all of their hard work and dedication in helping getting this program, this member benefits program set up for all of the Auxiliary members.

I can tell you that it's taken a tremendous amount of time in putting this together for you, but they realize as we do how important all of your valuable time and work that you put into making a difference in people's lives, to those who give so much to our country and by giving to the community.

And this is our way of saying thank-you to all of the Auxiliary members.

My Gallagher teammates are all involved in support of the Auxiliary, American Legion Auxiliary and The Legion on a personal level as well.

Tim Easterwood has been a participant in the Sons of American Legion most of his life and several of our other members are Legion members as well and many of us who have also had family members and loved ones who've served our country.

And I'm truly honored today to now be an active member in the Auxiliary and to honor all these men and women who have dedicated their lives to serving our country and like most of the other members, each of us have joined the Auxiliary to honor a loved one or family member.

My father who served during Vietnam was also a proud Auxiliary or Legion member. My grandfather was in World War II and he served in the D-Day attack on the Utah Beach in Normandy and he was a very active Legion member. I remember many pancake breakfasts at the Legion, fond memories of that. And my father-in-law served in the Korean War.

So obviously I come from a long line of family -- military men and women who have served and are still serving to protect us. And now I, too, can do my part, my team, Gallagher Benefits, to provide and help support a terrific member benefits program to honor those who serve our heroes, all of you, my fellow Auxiliary members.

And because of that dedication and service, I'm very excited to offer our Auxiliary members exclusive access to affordable insurance product options, professional and financial consulting services.

You will note that you have a flyer on your chair with this information on there, along with the little fancy flashlight so you can read it in the dark here because it looks like it's kind of dark.

Coming this fall, your -- you'll earn you -- your membership will earn you access to the nation's most respected insurance products at the most competitive rates which will be available on the Auxiliary website within the next couple of weeks, which will focus on you, your valuable time, and offer you many benefit options.

You'll be able to go to the National Auxiliary website under the Member Resources tab to access the member benefits information and choose from literally dozens of options.

On the secure Auxiliary website, you'll be able to receive several quotes and ex- with -- for the exclusive rates through the Auxiliary as a one-stop shopping source. It will save you a lot of time and be very convenient. It will offer you great low rates and you'll have your results almost immediately.

Also available for the Auxiliary members will be a toll-free call center where you can speak to a live person to help answer all your questions about these great benefits as well.

Just as an example, to name just a few of these products, you'll have several options for life insurance, long-term care, Medicare supplements, group dental, group vision, prescription discounts, and so much more.

Also included in your member benefits program will be a wide variety of discount services available to you such as travel discounts including hotel chain discounts, car rental, roadside assistance, health clubs, wellness programs, Weight Watchers to help keep us all healthy, a variety of hearing aid products, legal aid assistance program, pet insurance, shopping and dining discounts, and the list just goes on and on.

Also as a service to all of you members, you'll be contacted by an Auxiliary representative via telephone in the very near future to schedule an appointment to help you review these many benefits that I've already mentioned including free educational and consulting services to help explain not only all the products that we've discussed already but also financial products and services as well.

This includes home and auto insurance at great low rates, estate planning services, tax, financial, and mortgage services as well, all exclusively for Auxiliary members and their families.

Now, remember this member benefits program is an exclusive program only available to the Auxiliary members and their families. So be on the lookout for email notifications, your personal consultation meeting regarding these great benefits, and also be sure to check out the new Website which will be available in the next couple of weeks and take a look at all the benefit options that are available to you.

Thank you again for everything that you do. We appreciate it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Our first item of business is the adoption of the reports organizing the Convention. The Credentials report will be presented by Credentials Chairman Noemi Burgos, Department of Puerto Rico.

CHAIRMAN BURGOS DE PANETO: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN BURGOS DE PANETO: Madam National President -- excuse me -- Madam National President, the Credentials Committee met on Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The following is our report:

Alabama -- Alabama, 10; Alaska, eight; Arizona, 16; Arkansas, nine; California, 22; Colorado, 10; Connecticut, nine; Delaware, nine; District of Columbia, six; Florida, 32; Georgia, 14; Hawaii, six; Idaho, nine; Illinois, 10; Indiana, 43; Iowa, 26; Kansas, 17; Kentucky, 12; Louisiana, 13; Maine, 12; Maryland, 23; Massachusetts, 11; Michigan, 26;

Minnesota, 37; Mississippi, nine; Missouri, 18; Montana, nine; Nebraska, 23; Nevada, seven; New Hampshire, 13; New Jersey, 14; New Mexico, 10; New York, 37; North Carolina, 12; North Dakota, 15; Ohio, 39; Oklahoma, 10; Oregon, 11; Pennsylvania, 51; Puerto Rico, seven; Rhode Island, seven; South Carolina, 10, South Dakota, 15; Tennessee, 10; Texas, 23; Utah, nine; Vermont, 12; Virginia, 13; Washington, 11; West Virginia, 11; Wisconsin, 26; Wyoming, 10, for a total of 852 Delegates, half of majority, 427 Delegates, and two-thirds majority, 558 Delegates.

Madam President, on behalf of the Credentials Committee, I move the roll of Delegates hereby submitted to the official voting agenda to the Convention.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of the Credentials Committee report as presented.

Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the motion to adopt the Credentials Committee report as presented.

All those favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The affirmative has it and the Credentials report is presented as adopted.

The Rules Chairman, Norma Tramm from Minnesota, will read the proposed rules of this Convention. If you would like to follow along, the rules are printed on page 114 and 115 of your Convention program.

CHAIRMAN TRAMM: Thank you, Madam President Kris.

The Pre-Convention meeting of the Rules Committee was held Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, 10 a.m. at the Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis.

The roll of the departments was taken and a quorum was present.

The proposed 2012 National Convention rules printed on page 114 of the National Convention program were read, discussed, and adopted.

The proposed Convention rules are as follows:

Number one, all meetings of this Convention shall be called to order at the designated time or as soon thereafter as a quorum is present.

Number two, the Chair may deviate from the printed program when necessary or expedient.

Number three, the Credentials Committee shall report at such time as directed by the Chair.

Number four, the audience shall remain seated during the business of the Convention. Doors will remain open unless noise interferes with the conducting of business. Delegates will be allowed to leave or enter the auditorium except when balloting or elections are being held or when a speaker is speaking. Delegates do not need an escort to leave or enter the room. Smoking is not permitted. All electronic communication devices shall be turned off or placed on vibrate.

Number five, since it is deemed advisable for security purposes that all persons

in the National Convention hall be identified, admission to the business sessions at the National Convention shall be restricted to those persons displaying the official Convention badge or other acceptable official credentials or who are under the age of 12 years, Convention hall to be defined as that area predetermined and set aside for the general business session of the National Convention.

Number six, only authorized photographers shall be permitted on stage during the Convention sessions.

Number seven, there shall be no public presentation of gift to individuals from the American Legion Auxiliary except by prearrangement with the National President.

Number eight, the Chairmen of each Department Delegation shall be charged with the responsibility of seeing that only accredited Delegates having official Convention badges are seated with their Delegation. If a Delegate is to be absent from a meeting, she shall have an alternate take her place with the Delegation.

Number nine, only voting members of the Convention may make motions and address the assembly. To address the assembly, the voting member shall rise; one, go to a microphone; two, address the Chair; three, wait to be recognized by the Chair; and, four, give her name and Department.

Number 10, all main motions, resolutions, and amendments shall be presented in writing immediately to both the Chair and the Secretary on the motion forms provided signed with the full names of both the person making the motion and the person making the second. The completed motion form should then be handed to the nearest Presidential Page for immediate delivery to both the Chair and the Secretary. Only the Presidential Pages can deliver the completed forms to the platform.

Number 11, debate on any question shall be limited to two minutes for each speaker. No person shall speak on the same question more than twice without the consent of the Convention. During debate, Delegates, alternates, guests are to remain seated within their own Delegation or assigned seating area unless they are approaching the microphone, completing a motion form, or exiting, entering the general session. Pages may deliver messages to the stage and to other Delegations during this time.

Number 12, each Delegate shall be entitled to one vote. The vote of any Delegate absent and not represented by an alternate shall be cast with the majority of the Delegates present from her Department. This is in accordance with the National Constitution, Article 6, Section 5.

Number 13, voting shall be by voice vote or by using an electronic voting keypad or device except when the Chair deems it necessary to use some other method or when a roll call is requested by the Chairmen of three Department Delegations. Voting by electronic voting keypad or device shall be deemed to be a division of the assembly.

Number 14, when the Chair deems electronic votes are necessary, packets containing electronic voting keypads shall be provided for each Department. Electronic voting keypads are not to be removed from the assembly hall. Delegation Chairmen shall sign out and sign back in the electronic voting packet as instructed. Placed inside each envelope shall be; A, number of electronic voting keypads for each voting Delegate to be cast by Department; B, one certification sheet which shall have the number of votes to be cast as certified by the Credentials Chairman.

Number 15, when the Chair deems a paper ballot is used, a ballot envelope shall be provided for each Department. Placed inside each envelope shall be; A, number of ballots to be cast by each Department; B, one certification sheet which shall have the number of votes to be cast as certified by the Credentials Chairman.

Number 16, if a paper ballot is used, each Chairman of the Delegation shall appoint two Delegates to assist her in counting the number of votes cast. The Chairman shall give a ballot to each voting Delegate. If a paper ballot is used, the Chairman of the Delegation shall enter on the certification sheet the total number of votes cast plus the absentee votes witnessed by assistants. The Chairman of the Delegation shall place the certification sheet and all the ballots in the ballot envelope. The name of the Department shall be removed from the ballot envelope by the Chairman of the Delegation. The Chairman shall return the ballot envelope as instructed.

Number 17, the National President shall appoint an Election and Tally Committee.

Number 18, nomination of candidates for Division National Vice President shall be at the caucuses on Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Number 19, nomination of candidates for the Office of National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be on Tuesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Number 20, nominations of the National Officers shall be made from the floor.

Number 21, nominating speeches shall be limited to two minutes for each candidate except for the National President candidate. She will be allowed four minutes. There shall be no seconding speeches.

Number 22, after nominating speeches for National Officers on Tuesday, August 28, 2012, each of the nominees for National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be introduced to the assembly by the Auxiliary member making her nomination and said introduction to be only by name and Department affiliation. And in response to the introduction, the nominee for office shall be allowed a maximum of two minutes for remarks.

Number 23, election of National Officers shall be held on Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Number 24, when there is but one candidate for office, the nominee may be elected by voice. When there is more than one candidate for National Office, the election shall be by secret ballot.

Number 25, these rules may be amended during the Convention by a two-thirds vote.

Madam National President, by direction of the Rules Committee, I move that the 2012 National Convention rules be adopted as read.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of the National Convention rules for 2012 as read.

Is there any discussion?

MS. BEEG: Madam Chairman, microphone one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm look -- okay. The Chair recognizes microphone one.

MS. BEEG: I'm Meredith Beeg, Department of Maryland.

I move that Convention rule number 13 be changed by including the following as the next to last two sentences in the rule:

The procedure for requesting a roll call vote will be as follows:

If a Delegation Chairman requests a roll call vote, the Convention Chair will ask if there are any other Delegation Chairmen who also wish to request a roll call vote. If two or more additional Chairmen concur in the request, a roll call vote will be taken.

MS. DUTTON: Sandi Dutton. I second the motion.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and seconded that Convention rule number 13 by including the following as the next to the last two sentences in the rule:

The procedure for requesting a roll call vote will be as follows:

If a Delegation Chairman requests a roll call vote, the Convention Chair will ask if there are any other Delegation Chairmen who also wish to request a roll call vote. If two or more additional Chairmen concur in the request, a roll call vote will be taken.

The question is on the adoption of Convention rule number 13.

Is there any discussion?

MS. JEFFORD: Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the speaker at microphone two.

MS. JEFFORD: Janet Jefford, Department of Connecticut.

I don't see any reason to add this amendment to this current rule. If we are voting by the electronic voting, we will have an accurate count of the votes and usually the reason to have the ballot vote is so that we could have that accurate count.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

MS. BEEG: Madam Chairman.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone one.

MS. BEEG: The reason for this is that a Chairman may decide that we're just going to have a vote -- voice vote of the majority of those present. This disenfranchises the absentee ballots that might be cast on an issue. We have no opportunity to confer with other Delegation Chairmen since we have to stay in our places during Convention session.

So this only gives the opportunity for a like-minded Chairman to agree that a roll call, which could be obviously by electronic and probably should be, an opportunity to agree that we probably need an accurate vote in that particular instance.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The Chair is going to give a clarify -- clarification. After today, we will always use the electronic voting devices at this Convention for any vote that is taken. That's just a clarifying statement for you.

Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Hearing none, all those in favor of changing Convention rule number 13, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

VOICES: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The amendment has been defeated.

The question is on the adoption of the National Convention rules for 2012.

All those in favor, please stand. This is for the rules we just read, all the Convention rules. All those in favor, please stand.

(Whereupon, the audience complied with request.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Those opposed, please stand.

(Whereupon, the audience complied with request.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

There is a two-thirds in the affirmative. Motion is carried and the rules for the 2012 Convention have been adopted.

The National Secretary, Mary “Dubbie” Buckler, will give the Convention program report.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President.

I’m pleased to report that there are no changes to the printed program of which I am aware.

I do wish to make note that in addition to the material that is in your printed program, there is planned to be a joint session with The American Legion on Wednesday afternoon at which time candidate for United States President, Mitt Romney, is scheduled to speak. I will be announcing more information about that later as those details unfold.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the program as printed.

MS. CRONIN: Madam President, JoAnn Cronin from the Department of Missouri.

I move to adopt the program as printed with the changes made.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the motion to adopt the program as printed with the changes noted.

Are you ready for the question? The question is on the motion to adopt the program as printed.

All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The ayes have it and the Convention program is adopted.

By adoption of these reports, the 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary is officially organized for conducting business.

I am happy to start this morning with a visit from my friend, Sons of The American Legion National Commander Mr. Jim Roberts of Florida and his wife, Anita.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And I know they’re here.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Hello.

PRESIDENT NELSON: On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Jim Roberts was elected to serve The Sons of The American Legion as National Commander.

Jim has been a member of The Sons of The American Legion for 34 years. Jim establishes his eligibility for membership through his grandfather, James K. Roberts' honorable service during World War II, and his father, James K. Robert, Jr.'s honorable service during the Vietnam conflict.

Please welcome to the stage National Commander, Sons of The American Legion, Jim Roberts who will bring greetings.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Got up here pretty quick. I'm missing somebody. Is Mr. Huntzinger around? Right there. Okay. Just want to make sure I got everybody here.

First off, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce my wife because if I don't do that, I know I'm going to be in trouble when I get home. So let me introduce my wife of 20 years, Anita Roberts.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: The first lady of the Sons of The American Legion.

And, Madam President, if you don't mind, I'd like to take a point of personal privilege. Last year right before the election to this office as National Commander of The Sons of The American Legion, my father lost his battle due to a stroke and passed away. And I've carried his distinguished guest badge with me wherever I go. And I'd like to leave that here as I give my remarks this morning.

I will tell you that I've had a great year and it's in thanks to you and the rest of The American Legion Family to help us make that happen. But there's a reason we're here and that's because of our veterans.

How many veterans are in the audience today? Please stand.

(Whereupon, the audience complied with request.)

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Thank you for your service to this country.

As I've said everywhere I've gone, if it wasn't for you and the sacrifices of your families, we could not do the things that we're doing this week here in Indianapolis and the things that we do every day across this great nation.

I can tell you that early on in our campaign prior to us getting elected, I didn't really have an opportunity to meet the President as much as I would have liked to, but we did get a chance to cross paths. And the couple of times that we did have an opportunity to meet, I'd already been working on my theme for the year. And what was really cool is that albeit different, our messages were the same.

We all have our membership themes for the year and this year, The American Legion Commander Fang has -- we all serve with pride. Your National President in the

spirit of God and country, we serve our veterans, our military, and their families. And my theme for the year was honoring all of those who serve and those who have served by getting back to blue.

Everything has gelled this year and I can tell you that it's been a complete honor to serve this year with Kris as we have traveled around the country doing and seeing the good things that we as an American Legion family do.

We had the opportunity to be in Honolulu, Hawaii, together to watch the repatriation of six servicemen from Korea, Vietnam, and World War II. We were together at the Punch Bowl Cemetery where the Michigan band played for us while we were there.

And we had the ability to all be together as a Legion family to see the end results of our hard work with our Children & Youth at The American Legion World Series. I can tell you we've had a great time seeing what you all and The American Legion Family do.

Let me tell you a little bit about what The Sons of The American Legion do this year because the three things that my dad instilled in me in growing up was I have to be able to communicate. I think I do that pretty well.

I have to be committed to what I'm doing and for 35 years, I've been committed to The American Legion Family. And I have to recognize the hard work that is done by our Sons, our members of The American Legion, and our members of the American Legion Auxiliary.

This year, your Sons with your help and the help of the rest of the family have achieved over 412,000 total volunteer hours with 14,000 visits and over \$5 million in cash and gifts to the Veterans Affairs Rehabilitation Program.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Your Sons continue their commitment in our Americanism programs to the total of \$2 million and over 602,000 hours in support of all of our Americanism programs.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Our membership again is at another all-time high. We have -- we reached our hundred percent before the National Convention and I was kind of shocked about that.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Our goal this year is only \$350,000 or 350 -- \$350,000, shoo, where am I at -- 350,000 members. And at the Convention report, we were at 348,905, so we're this close to getting there.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: But the Sons of The American Legion's premier program is obviously our Children & Youth programs. We maintain the status as the single largest contributor to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.

Last year, David Dew, our detach -- our National Commander from the Detachment of Texas, set us on our drive for five and that's \$5 million in total contributions for the Child Welfare Foundation.

November of this past year, we attained the \$5 million mark.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: And what's equally as cool is this year, my goal was only \$400,000 for the Child Welfare Foundation and about the first week in June, some of you around the southeast U.S. probably felt a small tremor which was my jaw hitting the floor in Florida, \$506,000 for the Child Welfare Foundation this year.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: I just got this report this morning. I didn't have an opportunity to see a lot of the committee and commission reports, so I'm equally as stunned to hear this number is our total contributions for the Children & Youth programs this year was to the tune of \$9.7 million and over 160,000 hours.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: So your Sons have been working real hard this year. And it's thanks to you to help us with that.

There's another gentleman that is going to be equally as successful, I know, a very good friend of mine and we just elected him as our next National Commander of The Sons of The American Legion from the Detachment of Pennsylvania, Mr. Christopher Huntzinger.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: You got a fan club.

But there are a few folks that I want to thank. And, you know, it's fitting that here in the front center of the meeting hall, the Department of Florida, my moms. Thank you so much for all of your support these last three years.

It's coming to an end as all journeys do, but I know one thing that you all have instilled in me in the years is that no matter how high you go in the organization, the more people you start working for when you get up there. But, more importantly, don't forget where you came from.

And don't worry, ladies. I haven't forgotten because guess what? I'm coming home.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Focusing on the future is going to be the next step for me, so -- but right now I'd like to present Kris with a little something from my wife and I. And my wife actually has it, so -- we've had a great year traveling this year.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Beautiful. Thank you very much.

MS. ROBERTS: It's a pendant scarf.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes, it is. It's a pendant scarf and it's just beautiful.

Thank you.

And they know I almost always wear black.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Kris, hold on a second. I'm not done yet. The ladies of Florida know that.

But there was one person that we weren't able to come to our Convention this past week, this past weekend. We had the pleasure of having the first lady of The American Legion, Barbara Wong was able to attend with Fang.

Kris and Terry -- Kris was here much quicker. She got here by plane. Terry took a car.

So, Terry, you weren't able to join us, but, sir, if you'll come up here. And, Terry, I'd like to take this opportunity, sir, to make you a distinguished guest of the Sons of The American Legion's 41<sup>st</sup> National Convention.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: We've had the best time traveling this year and, you know, Kris and Terry come to Florida quite often, so I'm looking forward to the opportunity to just hang out with them now.

So we love you very much. Thank you for being with us this year and we truly appreciate everything.

But one thing I want to say before I leave the stage is one of the things that I say to my moms back home, The American Legion in 1932 had the foresight to create The Sons of The American Legion Program within the auspices of The American Legion. But I can tell you that if it wasn't for our moms, members of the American Legion Auxiliary, there would be no Sons of The American Legion.

So thank you all very much.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The National Sons of The American Legion Commander and his wife can't travel with us when we go on our foreign trips, but I brought something for Anita from France.

MS. ROBERTS: It's beautiful.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's made -- it was hand painted poppies at a china shop in France.

(Applause.)

MS. ROBERTS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And, Jim, this is made from the oak trees that they took down when they added on to the National Capitol, so --

(Applause.)

COMMANDER ROBERTS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Whereas, on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Jim Roberts from the detachment of Florida was elected to serve as the Sons of The American Legion National Commander;

And, whereas, Jim's eligibility is through both his grandfather, James K. Roberts' honorable service during World War II, and his father, James K. Roberts Jr.'s honorable service during Vietnam for whom he dedicated his year of service;

And, whereas, The Sons of The American Legion had a most successful year under the command -- under Commander Jim's leadership and motivation, especially in membership and Child Welfare donations;

And, whereas, Commander Roberts' wife, Anita, and their two daughters, Jessica and Jasmine, are active members in the American Legion Auxiliary and have also generously sacrificed this year;

And, whereas, President Kris and her husband, Terry, have shared many

memories and have enjoyed getting to know Commander Jim and Anita during this past year and look forward to many more years of friendship;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that by this courtesy resolution, the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana on this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August 2012 give sincere thanks and appreciation to Jim and Anita Roberts;

And be it further resolved that with a hardy applause, we recognize their loyal service and many accomplishments during this year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Jim would like a picture, so we're going to walk up here.

Thank you.

COMMANDER ROBERTS: All right. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for being with us here today.

We have a change in the program, but I'm going to read this anyway, so you know what Brittany has done this year.

Our Junior President, Brittany Watts, had to leave because of the hurricane, but this year, our Junior President was a member of Tucker A. Gregiore Unit 258 in Springfield, Louisiana and has been a member of the American Legion Auxiliary since birth.

She has held positions in the Unit, District, Department, and National levels including honorary Southern Division Junior Vice President, honorary National Junior Historian, and this year is honorary National Junior President.

Her many accomplishments in the Auxiliary include being awarded National Miss Poppy, National Junior of the Year, National Junior Home Service volunteer, National Junior Community Service volunteer, and two-time National Junior History Book.

I was able to be with Brittany at their Girls State where she served as a Junior counselor and she'd talk about the American Legion Auxiliary Junior Program and encouraged membership the whole week.

So even though she's not here, let's give Brittany Watts a round of applause for her year of service.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: With us today to speak for the Juniors is Amanda Washburn, the newly elected honorary National Junior President from the Department of Nebraska.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT WASHBURN: Good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT WASHBURN: I'm Amanda Washburn from Nebraska and I would like to thank all of you for the support you have given the Juniors through this year.

I would especially like to thank Nebraska, my home Department.

This year, my project will be for the National Legacy Fund and I hope you all can support this. It's a great thing for us all to help with. I would love for your support

this year and, Kris, you're having a great Convention. I hope you keep it up. And thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Alauna Sessoms-Hall of Modesto, California, was elected as the 2012 Girls National President by 97 Senators from 49 states who were carefully selected to attend American Legion Auxiliary Girls National at the 4H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Alauna plans on studying political science law and animal conservation in college, but first she has to wrap up her senior year of high school where she is a member of the speech and debate team, orchestra, and the marching band.

Outside of school, she volunteers at Modesto Animal Shelter and Pack With Pride, a veterans' care package organization.

Please join me in welcoming Alauna Sessoms-Hall.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT SESSOMS-HALL: Good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT SESSOMS-HALL: Jimmy Johnson declared that the difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra. The summer of 2012 has by far been my most eventful summer in a long time.

Now, why? Because it wasn't ordinary. It was extraordinary. There was something extra about this summer that made it great and that little extra was both my times at the California Girls State Program and the Girls Nation Program.

Never have I been surrounded by a group of young women who are as encouraging and as supportive as the 500 plus women I met at the Girls State Program and the 100-plus women I met at Girls Nation.

And I have so many people to thank for my experiences, so I'll start by thanking God for his constant blessings.

Next I must thank my family for being a constant support behind me and I also have to thank all of you, the American Legion Auxiliary. But I also need to throw a quick shot out to the District 12 Unit 74 women of Modesto, California because those are the women --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT SESSOMS-HALL: -- because those are the women that decided to send me to Girls State because they believed in me and believed that I could do something great.

So at this time, I would like to summarize some of the events that occurred this summer. At the California Girls State, we stayed on the Claremont McKenna Campus and I was a member of the City of Sutter.

Now, our dorm hall was the farthest from all the events that occurred and we stayed on the third floor with no elevators, so we called ourselves BOSS which stands Buns of Steel Sutter because we felt -- we entitled ourselves that because we felt that we had to work out the most. We had to take the long hikes to get to the dining hall. But, nevertheless, it was an enjoyable week.

The positions that I held included the Election Board Commission -- Commissioner and the Toy Platform member. On the Toy Platform, I wrote the education plank.

Now, the last position I held at Girls State was elected and it came more towards the end of the week. I was elected by my peers to be the 2012 Girls State Governor. Now, this was a highly prized position and I held it with great seriousness and great thankfulness.

I still have trouble believing that it all happened every time I log on to Facebook, but my Facebook friends remind me because we now have a Sutter Girls page and a California 2012 Girls State page. And we are able to encourage each other to move on within our own communities to do better.

So what I have gained from California Girls State are great bonds with the many women that I encountered. We are all great friends now and we are still meeting new people because in California with 500 plus women all on one campus, it's hard to meet everyone within one week.

So even though the weeklong trip ended, it ended with a great announcement and that was the announcement of the 2012 Girls Nation Senators. Now, for those of you who don't know, California does it a little differently than other states. For some reason, we have to be different.

So we didn't run for the chance to be Senators. Rather, the counselors observed our progress and our actions throughout the week and they came to a conclusion amongst themselves. So I don't know who it was that wrote all of the positive reviews on my performance, but I thank them.

I didn't tell too many people what I wanted out of my Girls State experience, but definitely one of the things I wanted was to be able to move on to Girls Nation.

So two weeks later, I attended the 2012 Girls Nation session. Now, it did not disappoint. With 98 Senators including myself, we stayed at the National 4H Center and once again became quick friends.

The first thing that we decided to do was not sleep because of the long plane rides. We had to switch pins and make sure that we got all of the states.

Now, I was a member of the Foggy Bottom community. We have no sly names for that. We couldn't change that around.

Now, at Girls Nation, I was a member of the Federalist party and, once again, I worked on the education plank because education is a dear thing to my heart.

Now, I also ran for President and was elected by my peers to hold that position. Now, for anyone who has been chosen by their peers to participate in something, you know how special that honor is. It's great to hold a distinguished position, but it means even more when you know that your peers want you there.

Now, it's difficult to pinpoint one moment as the best during either program, but if I had to choose, I would definitely say it'd have to be the friendships. I didn't originally have too many friends who genuinely wanted to talk about politics and America's economic status, but now I have over 600 friends who love to. Yeah, we're all nerds in heart.

Other highlights include my visit to see the wounded warriors in Bethesda. Now,

as President Nelson has already stated, I would participate in sending care packages to veterans and those who are abroad, but it meant even more to see them face to face.

What was even more special about that trip was how young those soldiers were. The oldest person I met was 25 years old. His name was Max and it just happened to be his birthday when we met him there. And it really touched my heart to be able to touch their hearts and spend time with them and treat them like ordinary human beings because that is exactly what they are.

Now, other highlights include, of course, meeting the California Senators and meeting President Barack Obama. I also deeply enjoyed the various talent shows and I'd be a liar if I didn't say I enjoyed writing bills and running for office.

Now, I tended to approach campaigning a bit differently than others. At both Girls State and Girls Nation, my competition tended to be more outgoing and enthusiastic. I tended to be characterized as the quiet girl and the one who didn't talk too much, yet I give a lot of speeches.

So what I found is that when I spoke, people saw a different side to me. They saw that I am passionate about our nation and making it better.

Now, in the words of Dr. Dennis Wately (phonetic), there are two primary choices in life. One is to accept conditions as they exist and the second is take the responsibility for changing them.

I know that I speak for all of those that participated in the programs that we are ready to accept the responsibility to participate and change within America because according to Liber Bray (phonetic), that is how change happens, one gesture, one person, and one moment at a time because in life, you're either a passenger or a pilot and the choice is up to you.

The Girls State and Girls Nation programs have enabled so many women to be the pilot of change. And when I gave my speeches, I usually opened with a Conan O'Brien quote and it goes as follows:

Approximately 10 years ago, America was all the rage with such figures as Steve Jobs, Bob Hope, and Johnny Cash, but, unfortunately, when you look around America today, you see that we have no jobs, no hope, and no cash.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT SESSOMS-HALL: Now, by opening with this quote, I issued a challenge to all of the young women in attendance to change this and they readily accepted that challenge. Just wait. I guarantee that the world will feel an impact from the 2012 California Girls State members and the 2012 Girls Nation women because Jackie Robinson himself stated a life is not important accept in the impact it has on other lives. And because of the American Legion Auxiliary, we are all able and we are all ready to impact other lives.

But looking back to the Conan quote, I would like to conclude with some of the words that the men Conan mentioned. I use an Apple product for this.

Now, Steve Jobs once stated that a lot of people in our industry haven't had very diverse experiences, so they don't have enough dots to connect and they end up with very linear solutions with a broad perspective on a problem. The broader one's understanding of the human experience, the better design he will have.

And I take from this -- what I take from this is that diversity is key. Respecting one's differences is important in developing one's self. I've spent my summer with a diverse group of girls who come from different walks of life. But what's most important is that we were able to turn the barriers dividing us into bridges uniting us.

Now, Bob Hope once stated that you never get tired unless you stop and take time for it. Now, taking this one completely literally, it means that if you stop, you will get tired. Now, the road to change is long and tiring.

Now, I was extremely thankful to the California Girls State staff for putting a nap time in our daily schedules because we did get tired. However, when we looked to Girls Nation, no, we did not have nap times within our schedules. And I told the Girls Nation girls and they were jealous of California.

What you see is that we had these long Senate sessions and we really wanted to fall asleep in them, but the staff was active and they kept us all awake. And at the end of the week, we were extremely grateful for that because if you look to the job that the girls did at Girls Nation, we passed -- we looked at -- we debated -- excuse me -- we debated over all of our resolutions and we debated over 14 bills. And I believe that that's some kind of record for Girls Nation getting that far. They told us we were really productive, so they kept us from sleeping.

Now, when you look to Johnny Cash, you see that he once stated you build on failure. You use it as a stepping stone, close the door on the past. You don't try to forget the mistakes, but you don't dwell on it. You don't let it have any of your energy or any of your time or any of your space.

Now, America has made some mistakes. We must continue to move forward, continue with innovation and continue with change for the better.

Now, after I used this quote to all of the women before me, one girl at Girls Nation mentioned that it would be terrible if America lost Kevin Bacon because that would theoretically lead to the loss of bacon. Okay.

So in the words of Kevin Bacon a good director creates an environment which gives the actor the encouragement to fly. Now, for me, God, my family, and all of you are the directors and I thank you all for the environment that you have put me in and the encouragement to be able to fly.

So now I would like to encourage all of you to continue with outreach programs and to get the younger generations more involved. We're not all about listening to music and playing video games. We want to contribute, but oftentimes we just need a little guidance.

The American Legion Auxiliary does not need to stop here. It must continue to grow. In the words of Henry David Gray do not worry if you have built your castles in the air. They are where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

So I'm sure we all have visions of what a greater Auxiliary and what a greater America can be like. America has this idea of being the most opportunistic nation. There's the American dream.

California is called the Golden State. So while we may not always live up to these visions, we cannot lower those visions. Do not lower that vision. Leave it there and build a greater foundation. Build a stronger foundation and one that will last forever.

People of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things. So let's happen to America and let's happen to the world.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Isn't she great?

Alauna, I'm honored on behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary to present you with a \$2,000 scholarship.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And a beautiful Tiffany bracelet with a Girls Nation charm on it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Packaged well.

PRESIDENT SESSOMS-HALL: There it is. It's beautiful. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: You're welcome. And thank you for your time at Girls Nation.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I got to spend five days with her and she is just as awesome as what you heard today.

Good luck in the future. Thank you.

Please welcome to the stage my close friend and your National Vice President from the Department of Virginia, Peggy Thomas.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Madam President Kris, it's been a fantastic year serving as your National Vice President. It all started with the installation of officers in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

I will share with you the most memorable experiences that I have had. It was a privilege to be the moderator at four of the five mission workshops, Hartford, Connecticut with a huge turnout and a major snowstorm, resulting in no electricity on Saturday night nor Sunday.

The Chairmen were super and carried right on without their PowerPoints and all the things that make presentation easier.

Branson, Missouri, was great. No disasters. Omaha, Nebraska, was great. We had snow again, but no disasters.

Las Vegas, Nevada, was a huge turnout and I picked up the norovirus and was in bed all day Saturday. My good friend Nancy Brown-Park had to fill in for me and that's what we call teamwork.

All the workshops were wonderful. The camaraderie and interaction between all the attendees was amazing.

In October, I attended the Veterans Creative Arts Festival in Fayetteville, Arkansas, interacting with the veterans and then watching them perform on stage at the end is a very moving experience.

I was present on the old train ride hosted by the VA Center in Arkansas that was carrying some of the attendees and was involved in old west train robbery asking for our valuables. One of the ladies I will not name begged the robber to take her instead. He declined.

In January, I represented the National President at the midwinter conference in Norfolk, Nebraska, and you can see they took very good care of me. Please note the empty plate. It was an excellent conference and I was very impressed with how they used the Pods in their presentation.

In February, I was privileged to attend the midwinter conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. My flight was cancelled. Otherwise, no disasters. But I still made it on time for my commitment. Again, an excellent conference.

The dedication of our Auxiliary members simply amazes me.

I was also privileged to attend the Junior Conference in Bloomington, Illinois, in April. There were 75 Junior attendees and 47 Seniors. It was really an outstanding meeting. Watching these Juniors conduct their meeting give us a glimpse of our future leaders.

The National Guard was present one day and served military field rations for lunch. And that was a reality check. We all should have to experience what our troops survive on when they're out doing battle.

Several visits have been made to National Headquarters to attend long-range strategic planning meetings, finance meetings, membership meetings, and other meetings to prepare for the 2012-2013 year.

I attended the Washington, D.C. Conference and I was also present when Commander Wong testified before Congress.

In June, National Secretary Dobbie Buckler and I attended the Veterans Creative Arts Festival site visit in Boston, Massachusetts.

I represented the National President at the Award Ceremony at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. I was escorted throughout by Lieutenant Gazette (phonetic) who took his serious -- his duties very seriously.

The award which was a watch was presented to Midshipman Catherine Wesley Jones (phonetic). After the award ceremony, we were treated to a performance by the Marine Drill Team, the only one of its kind and appointed by President Ronald Reagan. Another group of Marines performed the silent drill.

These men and women are our nation's finest being trained to defend America at a moment's notice. I was told several times how much our participation means to the Academy and the graduates.

This is only a snapshot view of what has been going on this past year as the Vice President's role is to assist the National President and it is also a planning year in preparation for the year to follow.

If you have an opportunity or had an opportunity to visit the National Headquarters, please visit the National President's office and you will see a beautiful picture of the President and Vice President that was done by a sketch artist at Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Kris and I worked as a team all year and believe it or not, we are still very good friends.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Peggy served with honor and dignity this year. She was my sounding board. She was my mentor. She was my friend.

This is from France for you. You can open it.

When we were in France, I saw a teapot and I know Peggy has a small collection, so we had one painted for her with poppies also.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: I love teapots and it's a teapot from France?

PRESIDENT NELSON: From France.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: From France and it has a poppy on it. Thank you, Kris.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Peggy, for everything you did to help this year become great. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: We're going to deviate a minute, so excuse me while I flip around these pages.

Here is our National Convention Parliamentary to explain the procedures we will use to process the housekeeping resolutions.

PARLIAMENTARIAN DICKEY: I'm sure when you received your packets of information concerning the business for this Convention you were perhaps maybe overwhelmed to see that there were 41 resolutions that would be proposed at this Convention. And I can say I was too.

So I was asked to -- how can we efficiently conduct all this business. So I wanted to give you -- make sure everyone understands what the plan is going to be to process the housekeeping resolutions that have been put before you.

And obviously you're doing great work trying to clean up your policies and procedures, so this is very worthwhile work.

All the housekeeping resolutions will be considered during the resolutions report on Wednesday and to expedite the handling of such a large number of housekeeping resolutions, the intent is to present in one motion the adoption of all housekeeping resolutions that receive a recommendation of to be adopted in the assigned Pre-Convention meeting.

So I wanted to report to you which ones those will be. Instead of reading all the numbers of the ones that receive that, I'm going to tell you the ones that did not receive it because it's a much shorter list.

You might want to make note of this. All housekeeping resolutions except for number two, six, and 21 received a recommendation to be adopted. And so there will be a motion made to bundle all housekeeping resolutions except for two, six, and 21, so they could be handled in one vote.

If for some reason you wish to consider any others of these separately on the request of one person can be made from the floor during the consideration of them to be bundled and you can remove any one of those from the bundle.

For the resolutions that did not receive a recommendation to be adopted, they will be considered separately and also if there's a request for any of those that did receive that recommendation, they can be considered separately too. And that will be done during the report of the Resolutions Committee on Wednesday.

Number two received a recommendation not to be adopted. Number six and number 21 received a recommendation to be adopted, though, with an amendment.

If for any reason you would like to consider another one separately, it would be helpful if you could notify us in advance so we could have the paperwork available since it is a large number to be considered.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Chris.

This year, our National Chairmen will give their reports as a pod. For the benefit of all units, especially smaller units, pods simplify the leadership structure in carrying out the American Legion Auxiliary's mission across program objectives in the Plan of Action.

Pod groups similar to American Legion Auxiliary programs and committees together so units regardless of their size can still accomplish many great and meaningful objectives.

Our first pod to present will be the Veteran/Military Support & Advocacy Pod. Veterans and Military Support Pod covers the essential ways we support our veterans whether they're deployed, transitioning, wounded, or in need of our voice to stand up for their rights.

Please welcome the members of the Veteran/Military Support & Advocacy Pod.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN OWENS: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN OWENS: Madam National President, the Veterans Support and Military Advocacy Pod had some setbacks with our project getting started. The unit that we were going to originally work with decided, due to size and few volunteers, that the food pantry and food bag project was just not something they could do.

While disappointing and it's totally understandable, so we kept looking for a unit. We found the Manuel Step (phonetic) Rose Unit 121 located in Berkley, Massachusetts, who has approximately 80 members. The unit was found by a simple phone call to another National Chairman.

This unit already had a food pantry program in place and agreed to allow us to report on how they began their journey into this project and its successes and failures.

After a discussion with the National President and National Vice President, it was approved to report on an established program.

As the project was originally designed to inspire a unit to start a pantry from scratch and give them a project to work with in their community to bring awareness to the Auxiliary as well as create partnerships within the community.

VOICE: In 1988, Marietta Fournier, member of Manuel Step Rose Unit 121, founded the food pantry in Berkley, Massachusetts. She enlisted several organizations to

help. Four groups finally shared the responsibility of the pantry. Each group sponsored the pantry for one week per month.

The Berkley unit continues to take one week each month to assist the food bank. While they allot up to \$200 per month, they find that they no longer use all of the money. They have four women who are extreme couponers. They work approximately four hours per week clipping and organizing coupons.

These volunteers are given the allotted funds to use when they shop, but their monthly shopping spree with coupons usually quadruples the original \$200.

Three members give ten hours each every month to the pantry. In some cases, they will deliver food bags to those that are shut in.

Marietta Fournier also would cook a Saturday lunch for anyone in need of a healthy meal. Some Saturdays, she would feed 40 people. The cost to the dinner was conversation and a smile. No questions were ever asked.

Since her death, her daughter-in-law carries on the tradition. Most of the food comes from the family farm. The family is an American Legion family.

1992, knowing that senior citizens were too proud to ask for help, Pat Griswold (phonetic) asked the unit to sponsor a monthly seniors bingo. Each player was asked to donate one dollar for four playing cards. Each player would receive a hot meal and play bingo for two hours. The prizes were canned goods and household staples. This also became a way to check on the well-being of our seniors.

VOICE: The food pantry program at Unit 121 is just one aspect of their community focus, caring for their local veterans as well as all citizens who are in need, the project, the mission of American Legion Auxiliary and promote the -- promote what God and country stands for.

Berkley Unit 121 has had an amazing year. As of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, 198 families were served. Forty-seven families have military ties. And 1,240 hours of time is spent in the pantry, 491 hours shopping thanks to the extreme couponers.

CHAIRMAN OWENS: The unit allotted \$2,400 for the year, but their extreme couponers were able to purchase \$13,976 worth of food.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN OWENS: Madam National President, this concludes the Veterans Military Support Advocacy Pod presentation.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Every day, hundreds of thousands of servicemembers are fighting for our freedom across the globe. While most of us will never know firsthand what they face while deployed, it is the purpose of our Legislative Committee to anticipate their needs when they return home.

To report on this year's Legislative activities, here is National Chairman Ann Rehbein.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN REHBEIN: Madam National President, across the nation, American Legion Auxiliary members have been honoring the service of veterans by advocating for them in their towns and cities, their states, and in our Nation's Capitol.

They have used snail mail, email, phone calls, Facebook, texts, Twitter, and other social media in their efforts to reach their elected officials.

The American Legion Auxiliary's Legislative Program mirrors that of The American Legion by supporting its priorities and mandates.

To learn more about these areas, Auxiliary leadership met with members of The American Legion staff in Washington, D.C. following the 2011 Awareness Assembly. Topics discussed were national security, economics, veterans' affairs, and legislation.

A meeting was also held with VA Secretary Eric Shinseki where upcoming legislative -- legislation was discussed.

Several members were able to attend Commander Wong's testimony before the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs.

At this year's Washington Conference, the entire Legion Family joined together in a legislative priority meeting to update members on the point sheets and priorities before individual visits to their Senators and Representatives.

The legislative council continues to grow and become a more important part of the legislative activities.

Each member of the council needs to be on friendly terms and preferably have a personal relationship with a member of Congress with whom she works so that she can communicate the views of The American Legion, especially in the case of emergency legislation.

I asked The American Legion's legislative director what he thought was most impacted by Auxiliary involvement. This is what he had to say.

Ultimately I think the Auxiliary assistance mattered most on our biggest success and biggest failure. As you're aware, amending our Congressional charter to better define the relationship between Departments, Posts, and National was a great legislative success not merely because it garnered more co-sponsors than any other piece of legislation in the history of our nation but because it was inconsequential and did so.

It would be easy to say the co-sponsor drive was because of the sponsor, Representative Altmire, or the efforts of the Auxiliary, but to gather 430 co-sponsors takes the involvement of many and I am sure the Auxiliary had a role.

The second, although a failure, was a similar action relating to an all-hands approach. As you are aware, we put together a concerted and careful attack to try and avoid -- to try and make sure we avoided sequestration.

We lobbied the Super Committee to choose carefully in the formulation of cuts to meet the \$1.2 trillion. Although we lost and the Super Committee ultimately didn't accomplish their task, we were the only veterans' organization to attack the problem in such a broad and aggressive manner.

That effort was absolutely comprised of assistance between the Auxiliary and Legion. Thanks for all you do every day in helping us build our legislative successes.

I would like to highlight a few of the unit and department activities for you. In Georgia, a unit had set up a legislative program that included education, grassroots mobilization and monitoring of both state and federal legislation.

They created an action alert network which summarizes current pending legislation and updates on the status of bills and then encourage members to take action

through email and phone.

After attending Commander Wong's testimony, Virginia's Unit 275 Legislative Chairman Jackie Doth (phonetic) wrote an extensive report about upcoming legislative initiatives and a photo was submitted and published in the Nuneaton Newspaper.

Many departments took part in a joint legislative day where members met with their state Senators and Representatives to stress the important issues in their area.

Cecil Tormey Unit 118 in Wisconsin has stamped postcards and legislator address labels available at monthly meetings to assist members in writing in support of legislative issues.

In the Department of Massachusetts, the members have overcome the redistricting of their state. One goal set by the Chairman was to seek out the newly redistricted legislator in their area and introduce themselves to them. This goal not only achieved a connection with our organization but gave the members insight on how government really works.

The members rallied on concerns regarding veterans' issues but especially women veterans' issues. Letters were written, phone calls were made, and face-to-face interviews were achieved. As you can tell, our members have been busy working the legislative issues mandated to them.

Madam President, that concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Ann. Thank you, Ann, for an excellent report.

By providing for the needs of our military families on the home front, we hope to ease the minds of our deployed servicemembers so they won't worry about their loved ones back home.

Here to tell us more about these important works of the National Security Program is National Chairman Vickie Koutz.

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: Madam President Kris, the National Security Program embodies your theme in the spirit of God and country. We serve veterans, military, and their families and serve we did.

Auxiliary members across the nation showed their true colors when they stepped up and filled the needs of our military and their families. We served by tying yellow ribbons on trees and flagpoles in support of our military. What a beautiful sight to see.

We served by honoring our military through the Blue and Gold Star Banner programs. Several members -- several units presented banners to family members. One Girls State program gave Blue Star coins to 28 Delegates who had close family members in active military. In that group of young ladies, two had already enlisted in the Marines and three others were ready to enlist.

A Unit in Oklahoma sent flowers on Mother's Day to two Gold Star mothers in memory of their fallen soldiers.

We served by Unit members spending hours and hours clipping coupons valued at over \$6 million and then sent them to commissaries around the world.

We served by volunteering our time and talents at USO facilities.

Unit 18 in Indiana donated 2,000 all occasion cards, bars of soap, shampoo, and

talcum powder to the US Center -- USO Center at Camp Atterbury.

Cookies valued at over \$6,000 were donated to a center in New Jersey.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: Unit 370 in the Department of Kansas supported the no dough dinners at Fort Riley. They served free dinners to troops and their families and also helped the families that were struggling financially with their needs.

We served by helping our military stay connected with their families. Virginia members donated phone cards that were loaded with 450,000 minutes.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: What a precious gift to hear a loved one's voice so many miles from home.

We served by sending pocket flags, care packages, and homemade quilts to the troops overseas.

Florida members can brag that every Unit in their Department sent care packages.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: Camo quilts were made by members in Wisconsin and comfort quilts were made by members in Michigan. Our soldiers are so lucky to have such caring angels.

We served by our monetary donations. Alaska members helped their members with medical bills, rent, heating fuel, and food for a medical emergency.

Arizona members served by donating money to a military couple with a premature baby that required air evacuation to a children's hospital.

We served by knowing the importance of training for emergencies.

Units in Kentucky completed and were certified in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's CERT Training Program.

We served by working with family readiness groups.

Mississippi Unit 71 worked with their group and sponsored a homecoming dinner at their local armory.

We served by inviting JROTC members to join us at special events.

A Unit in Utah provided donations to JROT -- JROTC programs and invited the members to assist in Unit activities such as stuffing 10,000 Easter eggs.

Awards, certificates, medals, and scholarships were given by several Units.

We served by honoring our vet heroes to hometowns.

Idaho members celebrated with a homecoming fund raiser at a restaurant and served their heroes a pancake and sausage breakfast. One hundred fifty hours were volunteered and lots of money was donated.

We served by standing side by side with The American Legion in committing to get a full accounting of all POW-MIAs from all wars and by adhering to the POW-MIA empty chair resolution that was adopted by them.

Delegates from Girls State sessions had their first opportunity to witness a POW-MIA ceremony with the table, chair, and adornments.

Puerto Rico Units posted the POW-MIA flag at meetings and educated their Junior members on the meaning of the flag.

In closing, I would like to share with you a quote from an army wife, Christina Kaufman.

We as a nation have a solemn obligation to care for those who fight and defend our way of life. When a soldier takes the oath of office, his or her family takes that office too. Behind every soldier in uniform today is a family struggling with the stresses of war.

I believe this says it all and is the reason we serve our veterans, military, and their families.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Vickie, for a very informative report.

Coming home may be the end of one journey for many of our veterans, but it is also the beginning of a new journey to transition to a new normal.

Helping with this transition is the core purpose of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program.

Please welcome National Chairman Nancy Brown-Park to share her report.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: Madam National President, this year, members have helped hundreds of veterans and their families across the country. They have participated in local Creative Arts Festivals, stand downs, built homeless shelters, connected with veterans' affairs hospital homeless coordinators, volunteered at veterans' hospitals and homes, plus volunteered many hours baking, sewing, making quilts and so much more.

National President Kris reported seeing Pringles Creative Arts cans across the country. The Department of Colorado reported the Pringles folks owe us a huge contribution.

Every American Legion Auxiliary unit within the state was given a can wrapped with Creative Arts information. Units were asked to circulate those cans frequently and submit donations to Departments by the end of the reporting year. The total contribution to National Creative Arts Festival at the time of their report was \$1,220, exceeding the goal of 18 cents per member.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: The Plan of Action asked volunteers to bring awareness to the plight of homeless. I want to tell you about Unit 53 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Judy Walters reported that their biggest project of the year was to get involved in Wisconsin's making connections women to women by helping women veterans, especially those at risk.

Their first project was to hold a stand-down for women veterans. They advertised the event by sending flyers to local colleges, the National Guard Armory, Army Reserve, women veterans' groups, their own newsletter, plus the County Service Officer.

They reached out to members, families, friends, bingo players and every -- and

anyone else who was willing to make a contribution. Thanks to everyone's generosity, they had clothing, housewares, outerwear, personal items, toys, books, games, bedding and lots more. Plus members donated enough Christmas baked goods so that every woman could take home a bag of goodies for the holidays.

They were excited that 12 women veterans attended the event. Each was allowed to come in and take as much as they needed for themselves and Christmas gifts for their children.

The University of Eau Claire and Globe University veterans' advisors were there to answer questions along with the County Service Officer. The local TV station covered the event and that brought in phone calls from four women veterans who missed the event. So in the true meaning of service, not self, they opened up the next night for those veterans.

Judy reported that it turned out to be a very emotional evening. She said it's hard not to become emotional when you have a homeless veteran who doesn't want to take anything for herself, but wants to pick up a present for each of her grandchildren or when one remarks that she thought she was going to have to stand on a street corner and beg for Christmas presents for her children.

During the holiday stand down, one homeless veteran made contact with her family, received help, and has been able to move into her own apartment. The Unit helped out with things that she needed and thanks to a local businessman, they were able to supply a brand new bed. The veteran said that it was the first time in six months she had slept in a bed.

I had the opportunity to talk with Judy. I asked her if this project had made a difference in her membership -- in their membership. She said it's the largest number of new members they have ever signed up. Today they have 60 new members. By working the mission, Unit 53 was able to grow their membership and find new volunteers to help make a difference in their community.

The Department of Mississippi, Clement R. Bontemps Unit 139, took on a project to help a 19-year-old wounded warrior who was in a military hospital in San Antonio, Texas. He was a triple amputee from Slidell, Louisiana, just about 34 minutes from their post home.

The Unit decided to adopt him and get his wish list for Christmas. They contacted the hospital who after a bit of red tape put his mother in touch with the Unit. His request was for an Xbox to help him in rehab and recovery.

During their Christmas party, they passed a stocking and were able to raise enough money for this request and had enough to spare. They went back to the hospital and found another amputee who needed help.

Their next young veteran is 29 years old with a wife and three children from New Mexico. This request was for an iPad. With the help of the -- of a UPS Store and at no charge, the gift was packed, wrapped, and guaranteed for delivery for Christmas.

The iPad arrived on time and to the joy of this family, he now can stay in touch during his recovery. Unit 139 I know felt the spirit of God and country on Christmas Day.

It is so humbling to read about all of the great work our members do for our veterans young and old and their families. I wish I could share every story with you.

Thank you. Thank you to each of you for all you do every day to honor their service.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Nancy.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: No, Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for an inspiring report.

On Memorial Day and Veterans Day, millions of red crepe paper poppies all handmade by veterans are distributed across this country in exchange for donations that go directly to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans in our communities.

The poppy is a symbol of the sacrifices our military has made, a symbol to open people's hearts and inspire them to donate.

Krisann Owens, National Poppy Chairman, please come forward and share your report.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN OWENS: Madam National President, the members of the American Legion Auxiliary strived this year to encourage education and awareness of the poppy and its significance in honoring all veterans and their service from the simple task of handing out poppies at a Veterans Day observance to the complexity of organizing a local Poppy Day celebration and distribution.

Our members created opportunity to share the story of the poppy and influence communities to remember our veterans. Local churches requested poppies to make wreaths and flower arrangements for the Memorial Day events which offered many units a way to create relationships within their community.

Poppy distribution at VA medical centers and nursing homes bring a bright surprise to our veterans who sometimes are forgotten. Tray favors, bulletin board decorations, and special delivery of poppies to each veteran confirms to them that they are important and not forgotten.

The Department of Virginia promoted poppies with a journey down the yellow brick road. They did not let the wicked witch of apathy ruin their journey to the Emerald City. And it didn't keep units from distributing more than 159,000 poppies, volunteering 2,204 hours in distributing poppies, and receive more than \$38,494 in donations.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN OWENS: They also created 700 poppy corsages for Delegates, staff, and guests arriving at Virginia Girls State.

The Flanders Field Poem by Colonel John McCrae, poppy bookmarks, the poppy story contributed to their success this year as well as using the poppy tool kit. A poppy proclamation was given to the Mayors through the Land of Oz to provide further awareness.

The Department of Virginia also distributed postcards reminding us all to not forget the sacrifice of our veterans and the promise we make to see that their needs are met.

Another way our members have promoted the poppy is to have a Miss Poppy

within their Unit. These young ladies gladly and excitedly promote the poppy and its story. From attending dinners to marching in parades, these young ambassadors of the poppy have an innate understanding of its significance and at an early age.

One very young poppy princess asked what's that little red flower. It looks like the color of blood, mama. Her mother replied that is the poppy, the flower of the veteran. You will carry a basket of poppies this year as the poppy princess.

The young poppy princess replied, well, then it is blood, mama. This is the flower I put on the graves, right, mama. They died and this flower helps their friends. I like this poppy flower, mama.

This young poppy princess who spoke these words was not quite four years old. Many adults could certainly learn from this young member.

There was a very high demand for poppies this year and production within the participating Departments continued as they worked to supply all those who requested them. We are very grateful for the efforts of our veteran poppy makers and we know that veterans around the United States are benefitting from their diligence and dedication to the poppy.

Poppy poster contest drew hundreds of posters and wonderful artwork. This has become a great way to teach not only the poppy story but to bring recognition to veterans in the classroom. We are very proud of all of the participants and winners from each Division.

The Poppy Program has encouraged our members, taught our communities the significance of the poppy, and inspired our youth to be creative, all of which have benefitted our nation's veterans.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks. May I introduce our guests?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN OWENS: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Do you have a guest?

CHAIRMAN OWENS: Yes. Miss Poppy age 13 to 18, Christine Mocsary from Tucker A. Gregiore Unit 258, Department of Louisiana, and Miss Poppy age 6 to 12, Susan Ferris, Merguild (phonetic) Unit 208, Department of Illinois.

(Applause.)

MS. MOCSARY: Hey.

VOICES: Hey.

MS. MOCSARY: This is -- this is a big crowd. It is such an honor to be here representing Louisiana and our nation as National Miss Poppy.

The memorial poppy symbolizes the memory of our veterans who sacrificed their time and often their lives -- and often their lives to ensure the freedoms we enjoy in this country.

Being Unit 258 Miss Poppy in Springfield has brought me awareness of all sacrifices our veterans gave to always wear and display this veteran-made red poppy with pride and gratitude in memory of our fellow soldiers.

We should all be mindful when honoring their service remembering not to take

it for granted the memorial poppy is perpetual light for our heroes, the American soldiers.

Thank you so much, everyone. It is such an honor.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Christina, we have a certificate for you. It reads 2011-2012 Miss Poppy ages 13 to 18 presented to Christina Mocsary, Unit 258, Department of Louisiana, for the best scrapbook and narrative on the memorial poppy. And it's signed by National Chairman Krisann Owens and National President Kris Nelson. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

MS. MOCSARY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Krisann and Christina.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you the 2012 Convention Preparation President and leading candidate for National Commander, Mr. Jim Koutz of Indiana.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT KOUTZ: Thank you very much, Madam President, Past National Presidents, Delegates, alternates, and guests, to this 94<sup>th</sup> National Convention.

As President of the Indiana Convention Corporation, I bring you greetings. Welcome to Indianapolis.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT KOUTZ: I hope yesterday that you all had a great time at the parade and you had a great time at the post parade party that we tried to put on and hoping maybe that will follow other Conventions. It's just a good thing it wasn't today or we probably wouldn't be having it.

But I just want to say thank you for coming to Indianapolis. I want to thank the Auxiliary for all that you've done. I want to thank the Indiana Auxiliary for everything they've done for this Convention and for me.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT KOUTZ: We hope you enjoy the rest of the Convention. If there's anything we can do to help make it any better, be sure and contact one of us. We'll make sure. This is a great organization and a great Convention.

I want to say a special thank you to my wife, Vickie, which she was up here a while ago. I haven't got to see her too much, but I can say hi to her this morning.

I want to say also hello to Peggy Thomas. I look forward to working with her next year.

Thank you all very much and God bless.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Also joining us the opening day of our 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention is the leader of the nation's largest veteran service organization, Fang Wong of East Brunswick, New Jersey, who was elected National Commander of The American Legion on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 during their 93<sup>rd</sup> National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Born in Canton, China, Fang immigrated to the United States as a 12-year-old in

1960 and became a naturalized citizen in 1963. Fang volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1969, served 25 months in Vietnam, and retired from the Army as a Chief Warrant Officer in 1989.

Please welcome my dear friend, American Legion National Commander Fang Wong, and his lovely wife, Barbara.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER WONG: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning, ladies.

VOICES: Good morning.

COMMANDER WONG: You know, this time, the dear friends come first. The most dear friend comes later. That's an inside joke.

It certainly is an honor to receive the invitation to come this morning and say hello. You know, following your President the last year is amazing. Listening to some of the accomplishments that the Auxiliary, the organization achieved as a whole is awesome.

The action, the effort, and the work you put in this last -- past year affected, impacted on a lot of, lot of young boys, young girls, young lady, young men's life because they learn from your program. They benefit from your program. And we could certainly see that the next generation will definitely have a brighter future.

The other thing that you accomplished by working with the VA on the Creative Arts festivities -- Festivals is awesome, too, encourage so many veterans that there are other life, there are things to do more than just looking at what the VA have to offer sometimes in the VA center or at home.

You generate, you revitalize a lot of the veterans that they could be somebody if they work on it. And your effort of visiting the veterans' homes, the hospitals and the many, many volunteer hours have not gone unnoticed. We know because you make an impact.

Everywhere we go, whether it's to a medical center or outpatient clinic or to one of those new, what do they call it, off-site clinics that they build up, you'll always see someone there volunteer. And a lot of time they will tell us proudly that they're a member of Auxiliary Unit so and so from the Department of so and so.

So congratulations and thank you for your hard work. Now -- yeah, give yourself a big hand.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER WONG: One of the other things that I have to do today coming over here is to tell you what a wonderful Auxiliary President you gave me for this year for us to share the year together, traveling. Well, we cross our path a few times, not that many, which is good. But we save the best when we traveled to the Far East and also to Europe.

We spent a few weeks in the Far East and then two weeks in Germany and France and it kind of really give us, us meaning the -- from The Legion side, a different perspective of what a fine lady you have here.

You know, in Germany, I thought she was going to die when she jump out of the car crying like, you know. I never seen anybody cry like that and say I'm not going back

to that car. I'm going to get killed if I go back to that car. That's -- I don't know if she ever relate that story to you.

But, you know, when you're traveling down the German Autobahn at about a hundred miles plus an hour driven by somebody that don't know how to handle the car and that individual happened to be trained to drive in Ireland which is on the other side with the steering wheel and here is your Madam President sitting there and yelling and then when she jump out, we have to make one stop waiting to get clear to pass a gate and she would just cry and say I'm not going to -- I'm not going to get back in there. I'm going to get killed.

But -- but she's a courageous woman. When we finally got our passes, say let's everybody get back in the car, I thought she was going to jump into my car. I tried to block the door, but she went back to her car. So -- but as you can see, we made it out okay.

When we visit France, we go to the cemeteries. You could see the passion. You could see how deeply touched each one of us, especially her. We go to the -- to visit and conduct a ceremony. When we laid the wreath, even though she's allergic to fresh flower, and the word never reached there, they was fresh flowers, and Kris took it as a trooper, went up there, did the right thing.

I was the one that messed it up. I held the wreath so close to my chest, by the time I'm done, everybody look at my shirt, say what do you do because they spray the flowers and the pollen, I got it all on my shirt.

But she was clean as a whistle. So it's amazing. I am very fortunate that this year, we were able to share the year together and travel together. And myself, my wife, and Kris' friend, Doug and Ann, we can't say enough to you for electing such a fine lady.

Of course, she happen to have a good, fine gentleman, Terry -- I don't know where Terry is -- as a husband. And when we travel together, we have so much fun. You know, when we do the right thing for The Legion, we do the right thing for the Auxiliary, but we also do the right thing by sharing, by believing, by helping each other.

And I thought at the end of the year, we're just like a family, the way that we promise you at the beginning of last year. We are a family and I truly thank you for giving her the opportunity, giving me the opportunity to work together. And I hope that at the end of the -- her Convention, you will say that we select -- we elected the right person because I truly believe you did.

Kris, they told me to keep saying nice things about you because I need to fill out some time, but I ran out of things about you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Sorry.

COMMANDER WONG: No. We're good. We're good. What are we doing?

PRESIDENT NELSON: We had a lot of fun.

COMMANDER WONG: Yes.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Stay here.

COMMANDER WONG: Okay.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Whereas, on September 1, 2011, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Fang A. Wong from the Department of New York dedicated himself to a year of leadership as The American Legion Commander, promoting his motto we serve with

pride;

And, whereas, Commander Wong demonstrated his concern for the future of our veterans and our military during his testimony before Congress and personal meetings with the President of the United States;

And, whereas, Commander Wong has traveled around the world visiting dignitaries and troops, supporting veterans and upon his visits with the President of Taiwan, the Defense Minister and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, he made them very proud that for the first time a National Commander could speak to them in their native language;

And, whereas, Commander -- Commander Wong's wife, Barbara, has faithfully served alongside her husband with a sense of caring support and loving pride;

And, whereas, Commander and Barbara have sacrificed a year of their personal life for the benefit of America's heroes;

And, whereas, Fang and Barbara Wong have shared gracious hospitality and friendship with Terry and Kris Nelson making it a wonderful year with the beginning of a life-long friendship;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that this courtesy resolution of the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August 2012 give a heartfelt thank you for the dedication and great role models you have been for The American Legion Family by a standing ovation, we offer our deepest gratitude and appreciation for a remarkable and distinguished year of service.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER WONG: Thank you.

We have some gifts for you. Who goes first? You want to go first? This is the fun part.

PRESIDENT NELSON: In case you forget what we look like, we gave you -- we thought we'd give you a picture. That's in Washington, D.C. at your Conference.

COMMANDER WONG: Is this by my photographer?

PRESIDENT NELSON: No.

COMMANDER WONG: Oh, okay.

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's by my photographer.

COMMANDER WONG: Okay. Just want to make sure. Thank you. Which one is you?

PRESIDENT NELSON: And just -- there's just a piece of your gift in here, so --

COMMANDER WONG: Piece of my gift? I guess go right to the bottom, right?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes.

COMMANDER WONG: Okay.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I talked to Barbara and he won't be able to see what -- tell what this is, but it's an electronic picture frame that will show 2,000 pictures of your year and your photographer said that he would load those for you. And 2,000 of your favorite pictures will just rotate through that frame.

COMMANDER WONG: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER WONG: I'm glad that she mentioned 2,000 because if you

didn't, the word 2,000 or only 2,000 favorite, you'd probably need to give me about ten more.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yeah. This is just for the favorites. For an example, the Headquarters staff told me I use a lot of Doug's pictures and some of my own. We downloaded 26,000 pictures, so it's the favorite 2,000.

COMMANDER WONG: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I got this in Seattle for Barbara.

MS. WONG: It's heavy.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's heavy.

And I know they're moving in a new place and that they drink tea every day, so it's a teapot and a variety of teas from around the world.

MS. WONG: Thank you, Kris.

PRESIDENT NELSON: You're welcome.

MS. WONG: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER WONG: This is the first time I look at it. I'll tell you what. This is for you and I'll let you open it. And then I can talk a little bit more about it. I'll help you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Oh, thank you so much.

COMMANDER WONG: Well, we visited South Dakota some time ago. Thank you. We help your economy. We went to the -- was it Terry -- Terry Redland -- excuse me -- Museum and I notice how Kris jumped right at some of the paintings. So I said, okay, let's take a look at it.

What we come up with here is one of the series that the author is kind of famous for. It's a series -- this is bad -- it's a series of eight paintings. This one is called The First Goodbye. This signify the young man when he grow up, he sign up, join the service. So it's first goodbye for him to go serve his country.

And I believe out of the eight drawings, this is the only one where the American flag would show. And here he is standing here at the taxi waiting saying goodbye to the family and go off to serve his country. And this is one of the limited editions, so I thought you would like that --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much.

COMMANDER WONG: -- because I believe you were looking at a lot of those, so I hope that this is the one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

COMMANDER WONG: Thank you.

Terry, you are not as fortunate because the museum didn't have the one that show or give me what I was looking for, so I have to settle on this. I hope that's okay. You have to open it. I have to talk about it. She'll open it for you.

This is a plate that basically have the whole series of that particular one from the first school day, the first date that he go to and the first -- what do you call -- the vet with the dogs and all that. It's got pictures of the eighth picture here.

But what -- what's in the middle, what's in the middle, actually it's the final goodbye, final goodbye when a servicemember give the ultimate sacrifice, in another sense when he retire, the family receive information or celebrate a retirement. I look at it both ways. That's how it ends in a lot of thing. We want to remember that.

And so I figured that it's a nice addition to the other one. I can't get that in a frame or picture form, so this will actually give you the whole story of that. And I hope that -- you know, the other way to look at that is the first goodbye and the last goodbye. In a lot of sense, it's what give each one of you the eligibility to be here to serve. So I figured that was, you know --

(Applause.)

MR. NELSON: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I would now like to introduce you to Doug Malin and his wife Ann who have become very close friends of ours this year also, Doug and Ann.

(Applause.)

MR. MALIN: Good morning, ladies. Thank you. Thank you for inviting me here and thank you for letting me take Madam President's picture so many times.

You know, I have 15,000 photos posted on the Web and anybody that knows that I took that picture knows I take two of each. And when I told that to the Commander, he told me no wonder I'm so tired.

But you give me that -- you gave the Commander that box for the pictures and 2,000. Well, we'll have to -- I'll bring it over to your house. You can pick 2,000.

And thank you. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Whereas, the National Commander's aide, Doug Malin, has served Commander Wong with dedicated service second to none;

And, whereas, Doug dutifully carried his camera through his travels and recorded the significant events and highlights of Commander Wong's year of service;

And, whereas, he also diligently assisted with scheduling and details of Commander Wong's busy itinerary and with Commander Wong's luggage and President Nelson's luggage, plus his own luggage;

And, whereas, he continually has shown numerous kind personal courtesies to the members of The American Legion Family during this past year;

And, whereas, Doug's wife, Ann, has been supportive and generous throughout the year and Doug and Ann have become special friends;

And, whereas, believing behind every good National Commander is a great aide;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that by this courtesy resolution, the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August 2012 give sincere thanks and appreciation to Doug and Ann Malin for their commitment to Commander Wong, President Nelson, and The American Legion Family;

And be it further resolved that with hardy applause, we commend this unsung service and untiring support in a successful year of service.

(Applause.)

MR. MALIN: Oh, wow. Wow.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's a Rolodex. Inside of there are some of our trips that

we went on together and you can make some more for yourself. I looked all over for one that had a flash drive in it, but they don't make them.

And then, Ann, this is for you. You didn't go with us in France to the poppy store, so I got you something from there.

MS. MALIN: Oh, thank you so much. Oh, beautiful. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: This is in Hawaii when we laid the wreath on the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

MS. MALIN: Thank you so very much.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Fang, Barbara, Doug, Ann, and Terry, and have a wonderful Convention.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Introducing the National Headquarters staff is something I've looked forward to. I wanted to do this since my first day in office. We have an amazing team behind us and I wanted to give you all a chance to see their faces and express our thanks. Please hold your applause to the end.

The Finance Division processes 2,600 payments per year including but not limited to volunteer travel reimbursements, Auxiliary Emergency Fund grants, and educational scholarships.

They accurately account for and report to budgets and investments of the American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. And they prepare and file charity legal registrations in each state, assemble the 990s, and is key to A plus external audits for both the American Legion Auxiliary and the Foundation.

Here are Sara Riegel, Shelley Johnson, Cindy Radcliff, Susan Stewart, and Tim Bresnahan.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The Human Resources and Administrative Service Division is responsible for all HR functions for staff and AmeriCorps -- and AmeriCorps VISTA members, as well as processing orders for over seven million poppy kits and 700,000 brochures and handling 39,000 pieces of mail and answering over 10,000 incoming front desk phone calls, emails, and faxes each year.

Here we have Donna Parrott, Anita McCoy, John Switzer, and Christina Becker, and not able to be with us today is Cathi Taylor.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Communications' responsibilities include telling the story of who we are, what we do, and why we matter. To increase public awareness of our mission outreach, they ensure that the American Legion Auxiliary brand is highlighted and maintained so that members and non-members can more easily identify with why our organization matters.

They create internal and external print and electronic communication pieces including the Auxiliary Magazine, [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org) Website, ALA eNews, ALA

eBulletin, the National Convention guide, and numerous brochures, booklets, videos, and information posted through social media outlets.

Development responsibilities and achievements include creating, implementing, and communicating a broad philanthropic program to maximize fund raising that will help offset the Auxiliary and Auxiliary Foundation operation expenses, raising nearly one million in direct mail donations with over 80,000 gifts coming from non-members and surpassing a quarter of a million dollars in endowed funds for the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation that will ensure the long-term viability of the American Legion Auxiliary mission outreach programs.

Here are Stacy Poca, Travis Perkins, Stephanie Holloway, Aaron Meyer, Nathan Brown, Madison Maves, and Michael Butt.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The Events Programming Division manages over 20 different email boxes every day. They process 5,000 registrations and ticket orders, 500 travel expense reports, issue about 350 travel authorizations. They handle meeting requests for over 610 internal meetings, in addition to the logistics for the Washington, D.C. Conference, President and Secretary's Conference, mission training, and this Convention.

Additionally, they issue over 1,500 Junior Activities patches, 650 hour bars, 150 Youth Hero and Good Deed awards, 35 scholarship certifications, and 25 scholarships.

Here are Nicole Chernish, Tabitha Rhoda, Stephanie Abisi, Laura Baim, Ariel Meyers, Maria Potts, and Colette Fike.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Membership and IT Division respond to more than 25,000 inquiries via phone and e-mail each year. They process an average of 300 Auxiliary Emergency Fund applications annually excluding major disasters. They update over a million membership records annually and they coordinate the production of nearly 800,000 renewal notices.

Here are Kelly Cochran, Amanda Hoffman, Tammy Wiggins, Jeri Mutchler, Russ Pawlowski, and Marta Hedding, our National Treasurer and Deputy Executive Director.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The Washington, D.C. Office administers the American Legion Auxiliary Call to Service Corp, national grants that we receive from the Corporation for National and Community Service which places 64 AmeriCorps National and VISTA members annually into service terms with nearly 30 organizations supporting veterans, servicemembers, and their families, and Auxiliary National Headquarters, and the Departments of Missouri and New Mexico.

They build relationships with similar mission-focused organizations such as the Statements of Collaboration and Action Guides developed last year with the USO and Operation Home front.

Here is Robert Reeg. Also in the D.C. office is Sharon Riegsecker.

(Applause.)

MR. REEG: And I'm going to give you a hug.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And last but not least, you all know our National Secretary and Executive Director Dubbie Buckler and Executive Assistant Penny Carnagua?

MS. CARNAGUA: Carnagua.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Huh?

MS. CARNAGUA: Carnagua.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Carnagua. I blew that one. As well as my Executive Assistant to the National President Tamara Shumate.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

This year, I started some awards for the members of the National Headquarters staff for going above and beyond and Tamara was not eligible, but I'd like to give her the wind beneath my wings in the spirit of service, not self.

The mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of veterans, military, and their families both at home and abroad.

For God and country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, and mentor youth and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace, and security, presented with appreciation to Tamara Shumate for the tremendous support and assistance throughout the administrative year arranging schedules, logistics, and handling one million details and for creatively performing above and beyond the call of duty, lifting me up and personifying all that is good about the American Legion Auxiliary.

Tamara, I am honored to give you the wind beneath my wings.

MS. SHUMATE: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And included in that award, I presented a gift card to the members who received it for something special for them. But Tamara brings her lunch to work, so there's a lunch box here and some cash so that she can bring lunch to work.

Thank you, Tamara.

MS. SHUMATE: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: She just said I can't believe you did this on stage. I'm going to kill you.

Now I have to figure out where we're at because we really changed the schedule.

Krisann Owens is going to come back because our little Miss Poppy is here. Krisann Owens.

CHAIRMAN OWENS: Madam National President, I would like to introduce to all of you Miss Poppy age six to twelve, Susan Ferris, Merguild Unit 208 from the Department of Illinois.

(Applause.)

MS. FERRIS: Thank you.

My name is Susan Ferris and I come from Merguild Unit 208 in Arlington Lake, Illinois.

I am thankful to have represented the state of Illinois and now honored to serve as National Little Miss Poppy.

The work we do promoting the Poppy Program and sharing the memorial poppy story with others is for a very important cause, raising money to support our veterans.

I would like to thank my family, my mom, dad, Uncle Dan, grandpa, and especially my grandma, Sandy, for all of her support throughout the year.

I appreciate everyone's efforts in supporting our veterans. Their sacrifices have helped keep us safe and free.

Thank you all again.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Susan, I am honored to give this to you. It's a certificate that says 2011-12 Miss Poppy ages 6 to 12 presented to Susan Ferris, Unit 208, Department of Illinois for the best scrapbook and narrative on the memorial poppy. And it's signed by National Chairman Krisann Owens and National President Kris Nelson.

Congratulations on your awesome year of service. Thank you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The American Legion Auxiliary co-sponsors the annual National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Along with monetary donations are the countless hours of volunteering and the local and National Festivals which allow us to assist veterans receiving their treatments throughout the VA system.

Through the years, we have also gained a great respect for the men and women of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the VA system who treat these patients and make fine arts and performing arts possible.

Here today to say a few words about the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is Liz Mackey, Director of the program.

DIRECTOR MACKKEY: Hi everyone. I think I'm the last speaker before lunch, so this is a good thing.

Thank you, Madam President.

It's truly an honor to be here, everybody, not only as a representative of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival but also as a proud member, and I say this every year, of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 428 in Waite Park, Minnesota.

(Applause.)

DIRECTOR MACKKEY: Yes. Thank you.

I'd like to thank all of you who have stopped by our booth in the exhibit hall over the past few days. The booth represents the six Department of Veterans Affairs National Rehabilitation special events.

These six events are the Creative Arts Festival, the Wheelchair Games, the Golden Age Games, the National Veterans Tee Tournament, the Summer Sports Clinic, and the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic.

I know that many of you are familiar with these National events and have worked in supporting them through the years as volunteers and also through donations raised by your individual efforts.

On behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs, I wish to express our most sincere appreciation.

The American Legion Auxiliary demonstrates service to veterans through their involvement with programs like the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition and Festival.

You understand how art, writing, music, dance, and drama can be used to help veterans cope with physical and emotional disabilities. And since the year 2000, you've been actively involved with making us strong and making a positive difference in the lives of veterans who participate in Creative Arts as therapy.

Because of the American Legion Auxiliary, we've been able to expand the program and opportunities to veterans. We've been able to work with the Public Broadcasting System and the National Educational Telecommunications Association over the past seven years to create a presentation that has been offered to PBS stations throughout the country.

Your funding has helped us enhance our Festival Stage Show by providing better staging, special effects, lighting and audio in order for the show to have a special look for television.

Part of your funding has also been used toward providing the veterans with better costumes so that they look like the stars that they are.

We've also been able to add more categories to our Visual Arts Division and make it possible for veterans to have more of a selection among 53 categories of art instead of the 30 something that we used to have.

Thank you for making it possible to expand the Creative Arts Program to veterans across the country through your support.

Through your efforts over the past 12 years, the Creative Arts Program for veterans has increased to where this year, there were nearly three -- nearly 4,000 veterans from 130 VA facilities across the country that entered the competition.

Thank you to the leadership team that we've had the privilege of working with over the past 12 years. Each of the former National Presidents have become great friends to us and this year, it's been our sincere privilege to be associated with Madam President Kris Nelson.

Kris' commitment to the Creative Arts Program extends back to the year 2001 when she served as the Minnesota State President and chose the Creative Arts Program as her special project. Since then, she's become one of the best advocates for the arts in the lives of veterans.

Peggy Thomas has also been a friend to veterans and the Creative Arts Festival for several years and we're so looking forward to working with her this coming year.

Our hope is that the veterans who participate in the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition and Festival come away with a sense of accomplishment and with a feeling of strong motivation to explore other areas in their lives where they can achieve that same feeling of success.

Your support has a widespread and direct positive influence on veterans who truly need your involvement and who cannot always seek out your help on their own for reasons beyond their control.

And now 130 of the medal winning veterans of the arts, creative writing, dance, drama, and music National Competition will gather together in Boston, Massachusetts during the second week of October to participate in the festival experience.

The veterans will participate in rehearsals and therapeutic visual and performing arts workshops that the Festival host coordinator, Ralph March, and his team from the VA Boston Healthcare System and the New England area have planned.

It's a chance to show their community that the use of the arts as therapy in the treatment of America's veterans is strong and enduring.

The festival event will culminate with a live stage show performance and a 53-piece exhibit of the first place winning artwork from the National level of competition.

The art exhibit will be held on Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Massachusetts Statehouse in Boston and a stage show performance will occur on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at the Cutler Majestic Theater in downtown Boston. Michael Peterson will serve as the Master of Ceremonies for the stage show for the third year.

We're also pleased that again this year an edited hour-long version featuring highlights from last year's festival stage show and art exhibit will be presented on PBS stations throughout the country around Veterans Day.

As I mentioned before, this is the seventh year that the show will be on television and we so appreciate the successful efforts of the American Legion Auxiliary members for their part in making this happen.

Before I leave the Podium, I just want to say how grateful we are for all of your past, present, and continuing support of the National Veterans Creative Arts Program. We appreciate your role as presenting sponsor and your ongoing commitment to veterans and the arts.

Thank you and have a wonderful Convention here in Indianapolis.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: During Past National President Kris West's administrative year, she introduced the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and as Liz shared the following year, I served as Department President and chose the program as my project.

Will Kris West please join me on stage.

Liz, as this year marks the 11th anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary's official sponsorship of the Veterans Creative Arts Festival, we wanted to present you with this small award as a token of our appreciation for all you do for our veterans.

DIRECTOR MACKKEY: Oh, it's beautiful.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And it says Elizabeth Mackey, for your continued dedication for the Veterans Creative Arts Festival 2001.

DIRECTOR MACKKEY: Thank you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Whereas, Elizabeth "Liz" Mackey worked as a board certified music therapist with patients at the St. Cloud, Minnesota VA Medical Center

from 1985 to 2001;

And, whereas, in 1993, she served as host site coordinator for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and was the Chairperson of the Visual Arts Division in 1994;

And, whereas, since 1995, she has served as the Director of the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition and Festival with a deep sense of commitment and understanding of the positive impact the arts have in the treatment and rehabilitation process of our nation's veterans;

And, whereas, Liz's dedication and love for these veterans is apparent each and every year as the culmination of their talents is shared at the National Festival;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that by this courtesy resolution, the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August 2012 give sincere thanks to this great Auxiliary friend, Liz Mackey;

And be it further resolved that with a hardy applause, we acknowledge her tremendous love and support for our nation's veterans and service to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: So mark your calendars and plan to go to Boston. Once you've seen the festival, you will fall in love with it and you, too, will become one of their biggest supporters.

The Chair now asks National Secretary Dubbie Buckler to read any announcements.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President.

A reminder that breakout and training sessions will begin this afternoon at 1:30 p.m. They're listed in your program.

There has been a request that immediately upon adjournment, will the 2010-2011 Department Presidents of the Central Division, Central Division 2010-2011 Department Presidents please meet at the back of the room.

Rehearsal for installation of officers will occur on stage following this session. This includes rehearsal for both incoming and outgoing officers.

Leading candidate for 2012-2013 National President Peggy Thomas announces that the Thursday morning installation will include special seating for the 2012-2013 Department President. And she asks that they assemble on the floor near the stage prior to installation for instruction.

And in the infamous have a ticket, need a ticket, so far all I know is that for State's dinner, Ohio has one ticket available.

Ohio, where are you? It's been a long sit. Ohio, where are you?

So if you need a ticket, anyone who just made noise, you can seek them out.

And, finally, my announcements for this morning are lost and found, we will not be handling lost and found items from the stage. There is a security office here in the Convention Center. The number you're going to want to jot down in your Convention program or in your notes somewhere if you find something that you want to return or that you think is lost or if you have lost something, please call on any of the house phones in the Convention Center 3350, 3350 if you've lost anything or found anything. And we

understand there's quite a collection.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I would like to welcome a special guest, Kenneth Governor, Chairman of The American Legion National Legislative Commission.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOVERNOR: Madam President, Madam Secretary, Officers and members of the American Legion Auxiliary, I bring you greetings from the National Commander of The American Legion.

More specifically, however, I'm here to acknowledge the hard work and support of the world's largest patriotic women's organization.

During the past year, it's been a distinct honor and privilege for me to work with your Chair of your Legislative Committee, Ann Rehbein.

Therefore, in recognition of the great spirit of cooperation, teamwork, and assistance to the American Legislative agenda, on behalf of National Commander Fang A. Wong, I'd like to present this token of appreciation to the Chair of the Legislative Committee, Ann Rehbein.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN REHBEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And this is really your award. You're the ones that do all the grass roots work as you heard earlier this morning and we appreciate The American Legion recognizing all of your hard work.

Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOVERNOR: And, Ann, I wonder if you would also accept an award for the Vice Chairman of your committee, Marcia Wheatley.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN REHBEIN: Thank you.

Marcia, find me.

CHAIRMAN GOVERNOR: Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you to all our National Chairmen who presented this morning, to The American Legion and The Sons of The American Legion for sharing this morning with us, and to all of our guests today.

This concludes the opening session of the 2012 National Convention. We are now adjourned.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 11:31 a.m., the above-entitled Convention was adjourned.)

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2012**

PRESIDENT NELSON: Good morning. The 92nd National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will come to order.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Before we begin, I would like to once again ask everyone to put your electronic devices in silent mode. And I have one quick announcement. The National Headquarters tours have been so popular that another tour has been added. And it's at 3:00 p.m. today. So please go into the Headquarters Office in Hall B if you want to sign up. The bus will depart at 3:00 and will return at 5:00. Will our National Chaplain Nini please come forward and lead us in the Invocation?

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: May we pray? Father in Heaven, we stand before you this morning grateful for a productive, informative, and entertaining opening session to our 92nd Annual Convention. We ask that you please continue to grace us with your presence in our ongoing activities. Let your spirit be with our presenters and may we all be attentive and receptive. Once again, Lord, please aid us to remain focused on our purpose and mission. Be with our heroes, past and present, those serving the cause of freedom around the world. Bless their loved ones and may they know they are not alone. We ask, Father, that you be with all those in the Gulf this morning. May they be prepared and get them through this storm, Isaac. We ask much, Lord. But we know that you are indeed an Awesome God and through you all things are possible. In your Holy Name we pray, Amen.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Please be seated. We're going to begin today's sessions by watching a short video illustrating our Faces of Freedom.

(Music.)

VOICE: Welcome to Lynchfield, Illinois, a small town near St. Louis located on historic Route 66. Coming home from work is Illinois State Trooper Andy Hale. One of his other jobs is a pilot for the Air National Guard. And yet another job is husband, and father of four, with another one on the way. There's Garrett, Evelyn, Audi Regan [phonetic], Gussie, and their newest, affectionately and temporarily known as Number Five. To say the least, this is one hectic, loving, and sometimes frantic household.

TROOPER HALE: I'm in my 12th year serving in the United States military with the U.S. Air Force, but also with the Air Force Reserve, and the Air National Guard where I'm at currently flying tankers. I've been deployed three times for the Air Force, not including the Libya trip I did also last year as well.

VOICE: Enter brand new Illinois State Police Auxiliary Unit #1922.

(Applause)

VOICE: Our activity pod was suggested to adopt a military child. And instead of that, we wanted to kind of step out of the box and adopt an entire military family.

MRS. HALE: Until I met my husband, I knew very little about the military or The American Legion. And up until recently I knew nothing about the Ladies Auxiliary. But we were contacted last fall by Delmar and Luella, and they told us about the

American Legion State Police Post.

VOICE: We're really proud to be involved in this program because we've had the opportunity to adopt a family. And we know the deployment situation that occurs in the military, how tough that can be on the family. And the interesting part of this program is that as members of the Illinois State Police we're all retired officers, we've been able to adopt an individual, a State Police Officer, who is part of our State Police family, and now he's part of our American Legion Family too. And so we're able to help out in assisting whenever the deployment takes place to help the family to get through those times when there's those challenges that are facing our soldiers and our State Police officers, too.

VOICE: Since we adopted this military family it's been much more rewarding than we ever expected. We get to come and play with the kids. We honor their birthdays by giving them a birthday gift. We have honored the mom and the dad by giving them a night out and we babysat for them. I know we did a Halloween meeting at the McDonald's where they could dress up. And they are just like they've been our family all along. We enjoy spending time with them. We're welcome at anytime to come and visit. And the sacrifice that the family has made, being in the National Guard and working for the State Police, has been some long hours and some time away from home. And we just want them to know that we appreciate all that they do for us.

TROOPER HALE: You know, I tell you, I have such a blessed life. Being where I'm right now. Not only being in the best country in the world, and the best military in the world, and the great chain of command there, but also the State Police. What an awesome family that they have been, and a great chain of command, a supportive chain of command for me as I go away to support my family. In addition to that the American Legion, the Auxiliary, and the SAL, and the State Police Post #1922 that stepped for me and my family, it has been a great burden lifted off my shoulders for me. While I can go do what I got to do, and not have to worry about them, and I can come back home to them having been taken care of. And I'm very, very grateful for that and very blessed.

MRS. HALE: Well, this past year has just been wonderful for our family. And just all the ways that the Auxiliary has poured out love and support and sent it our direction in times of need. Luella and Tonya always seem to call just when I needed to hear a voice. But I would say any family that gets to experience this in the future are so lucky. It has certainly meant the world for the Hale family.

TROOPER HALE: Thanks to the Auxiliary and the entire American Legion Family.

HALE FAMILY: Thank you! Thank you!

VOICE: Of note, Andy is a member of the Hale-Combest Legion Post #315 in Wylie, Texas, named after his uncle and his uncle's friend who were killed in Vietnam. Andy is also a former American Legion Boys State Citizen and Counselor. But above all, Andy Hale is another shining example of the American Legion Auxiliary's Faces of Freedom.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Wasn't that awesome? Thank you for adopting that family. Every one of you can do that. Just seek out a military family in your community and all you have to do is make them become a member of your family. So can you do it?

VOICES: Yeah!

PRESIDENT NELSON: All right.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: This morning I am truly excited as we will be utilizing the electronic voting during our National Convention. For the first time delegates can truly vote with their conscience and all members can clearly and easily see the voting count for each item of business. Your delegation should have already picked up your voting keypads before today's session began. Please remember that Standing Rule #14 states voting keypads are not to be removed from the Assembly Hall. Each department representative is responsible for all keypads issued to said department. Departments will be charged \$100 for any missing keypads so be sure to count them before you turn them in to the Election Committee at the end of the day.

If for some reason you have a delegate missing and no alternative to take her place, votes for those keypads will be cast by the delegation. If you choose to abstain do not press any keys. If you press the wrong number on the keypad wait a moment and then press the correct number. The keypad registers the last key pressed. Let's take a minute to get familiar with our new electronic voting keypads by doing some practice votes.

Everybody should have their keypads and everyone should have their flashlights. Our first practice vote will tell us how many first time Conventions we have today. If you are attending National Convention for the first time, press number one. If you have attended previous National Conventions, press number two.

Now when you pressed it, it should turn green. And you should all have your Gallagher Benefits flashlight.

MS. THOMPSON: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes?

MS. THOMPSON: I, over here, Microphone #1, Linda Thompson, Minnesota, I have a defective keypad. It's going red when I'm pushing either one or two.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Then you need to go and exchange it. Okay. That's why we're testing, to make sure that it turns green when you push your number. And if it didn't, then push it again and make sure that the vote was cast.

Okay, I can't hear when everyone is talking. Are there any other defective keypads? Okay. We're going to keep going because we, these are just for fun. Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen. So now we can all see the results on the screen so let us welcome our 150 first-time attendees. Please stand so we can welcome you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: How awesome! Thank you. Okay. Our second practice will tell how many voting chocoholics we have with us today.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: If you think that chocolate is the most important food in the food group, please press one. If you disagree, please press two. Once again, it

should flash yellow, once you cast your vote it should turn green. Now mine turned red and I pushed it again and it turned green, so keep pushing so it turns green. And remember, the last time you push is the only vote that's cast. Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: So 435, I think we should buy some Heath bars and distribute them. What do you think?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Our third practice question I want to simulate what it will be like it vote on a resolution. The resolution before the Convention body is, whereas the American Legion Auxiliary currently does not have an official theme song. Whereas, it would be a good idea to select a song that depicts the spirit of our family. Therefore be it resolved that the official theme song of the American Legion Auxiliary be "We Are Family."

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: All those in favor of the resolution, please press number one. Those opposed, please press number two. So keep pressing until it turns green once you cast your vote. Is it working for everybody?

VOICES: No!

PRESIDENT NELSON: Ha! Keep pressing the number. Wait a couple seconds and press it. When it flashed yellow, press it.

VOICE: It goes red.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Have you got it to turn green?

VOICES: No!

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay, where's our technical people? Okay, ladies. I was wrong. It does not stay green. They have over 700 votes cast. So.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: So let's start over with this vote. Okay. Whereas the American Legion Auxiliary currently does not have an official theme song. Whereas, it would be a good idea to select a song that depicts our spirit of family. Therefore, be it resolved that the official theme song of the American Legion Auxiliary be "We Are Family." All those in favor, press one. Opposed, two. And now we'll wait for the count. I guess as long as it doesn't turn red and stay red, we don't have an issue. Was it 20 seconds? Okay, as soon as you press your vote they are telling me it registers. Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen. The affirmative have it. The results will now be displayed -- sorry about that. The affirmative have it. "We Are Family" is now the official theme song of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: We've always said that our American Legion Auxiliary is a family. So now we have a song to prove it.

The first order for business this morning is the nomination of National Officers for the 2012-2013 administrative year. Representatives making the nominations as well

as candidates are to be seated on the stage.

Before we hear the rules governing nominations, I must announce that National Secretary has received a letter regarding Christine Howard withdrawing her candidacy as National Historian. Christine is withdrawing for personal reasons with her apologies to this Convention and an understanding that she intends to continue being a highly involved member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

National Secretary Dubbie Buckler will read the rules governing nominations.

MS. SICKMOND: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm looking. Where --

MS. SICKMOND: Microphone #1, Phyllis Bachman, Department New York.  
Phyllis Sickmond -- wow!

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #1.

MS. SICKMOND: I wish you would ask those whose little key cards aren't working to stand. We have a lot of people and with all of this "We Are Family" nobody got a chance to register that their voting machines aren't working.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. We, the numbers cast were -- can someone tell me the numbers that were cast? Okay. We believe we are working because we have 812 cast votes. So if they, if you feel yours is not working please go in the back of the room while we're working the nominations so that you can get them replaced. But --

MS. SICKMOND: Question? You did say it's supposed to show green if the vote registers?

PRESIDENT NELSON: No. I said that and I was wrong. If it stays red your vote is not registered and then you need to replace it.

MS. SICKMOND: All right.

PRESIDENT NELSON: As soon as you push it the vote will register. That was my fault. That was my understanding and the technical people told me, no, it doesn't stay green. It stays red if it does not register. So that was my fault and I apologize for that. Any other questions on the voting? Okay. Dubbie?

MS. SICKMOND: I'm sorry --

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #1.

MS. SICKMOND: I'm sorry to interrupt again.

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's okay.

MS. SICKMOND: The total votes registered was 812. But there are 852 registered.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Right. So anyone whose stayed red please go and check your -- why don't we just say all in favor, just push your voting fob so we can see. All in favor of continuing this -- oh, we can't? Oh, it's not polling right now. Can we set it up? Okay. We want to remind the departments that don't have enough delegates that you should have the voting machines for all of your delegation and you need to cast those votes. If you don't have someone sitting in the chair as a delegate. So everybody knows that, right? So the delegation chairman is responsible to know that everyone sitting in the chairs will vote, and all of us up here should have our voting fobs also.

MS. BRIERE: Madam President? Madam President, Microphone, I think, #2?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #2?

MS. BRIERE: Robin Briere, Department of Florida. I can only speak for the delegation of Florida, but we have nine absent members of our delegation. And in the time allowed we could not cast all of those. You do have to wait a little bit before it will register.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay.

MS. BRIERE: And so if you could allow us enough, there may be other delegations that also have numerous absentee ballots to vote --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Would you like to make that a motion to increase the seconds? Right now it's 20 seconds.

MS. BRIERE: I move that you increase it to 30 seconds.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and seconded that we increase the time for voting from 20 to 30 seconds. All in favor say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The ayes have it and we will increase the time to 30 seconds. Thank you, Robin. Any other questions? And they are going to try to set up something so we can just push and we can try one more time. Dubbie will now give the rules for the nominations.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President. Nomination of candidates for Division National Vice President shall be at the caucuses, August 25, 2012. Nomination of candidates for the Office of National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be on Tuesday, August 28, 2012. Nomination of national officers shall be made from the floor. Nominating speeches shall be limited to two minutes for each candidate, except for the National President candidate. She will be allowed four minutes. There shall be no seconding speeches.

After nominating speeches for national officers on Tuesday, August 28, 2012, each of the nominees for National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be introduced to the assembly by the auxiliary member making her nomination, said introduction to be only by name and department affiliation. And in response to the introduction the nominee for office shall be allowed a maximum of two minutes for remarks. Madam National President, this completes the reading of the nomination rules.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nominations are now in order for the Office of National President. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Department of Virginia has an announced candidate for the Office of National President. The delegation chairman should ask the Chair to recognize a delegate for the purpose of the nomination.

MS. CABOT: Madam Chairman, Dianne Cabot from the Department of Virginia.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the delegate from the Department of Virginia for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. CABOT: We respectfully ask that you recognize Lisa Chapman for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you. Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. CHAPMAN: It is indeed an honor to have this opportunity to represent the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Virginia in nominating our candidate for the Office of National President.

Peggy has been a member for 31 years and her eligibility is through her late husband John, who served in the Army during the Korean War. She is also eligible through her five brothers, two in the Air Force, twins in the Marines, and one in the Navy.

Peggy has served in most chairmanships on the unit, district, department, and national levels. She has served as Unit President twice, District President, and Department President. Her greatest love, though, is the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation. For years she has served as a Deputy at the Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Hospital in Richmond, accumulating more than 800 hours.

Professionally speaking, Peggy has been in business the biggest part of her life. She retired from a large petroleum distributorship in late 1997 where she held the position of Vice President, Corporate Secretary, and Operations Manager, overseeing three divisions.

Growing up in a large family, Peggy has always been an achiever. Hard work is certainly not new to her and failure is not in her vocabulary.

She is very much a family person, has one daughter and son-in-law, two living brothers, and lots of nieces and nephews.

Despite her involvement on the national level, she still attends functions on the unit, district, and department levels as time allows. She is never too busy to take time to call a sick friend or work at her church if she is available. She is a team player and has strong leadership qualities. She is loyal and committed, a good listener, enthusiastic and fair, all of which are good qualities that will serve her well and make her a great National President.

With the support of the entire Department of the Virginia American Legion Family, it is with great pride I place into nomination for National President my mother, Peggy Thomas.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Peggy Thomas is nominated. Are there further nominations for the Office of National President? Hearing none, nominations for National President are closed.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's the first time I've ever seen Peggy cry.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nominations are in order for the Office of National Vice President. The National Secretary will call departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Madam President, the Department of California has an announced candidate for the Office of National Vice President. The delegation chairman should ask the Chair to recognize a delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. FERCHO: Madam President, Linda Fercho, Department of California. Would the Chair please recognize Linda Workman for the purpose of a nomination for the Office of National Vice President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the delegate from California for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. WORKMAN: Madam President and delegates to this 92nd National Convention, it is with great pride and honor on behalf of George Tadlock Unit #472, and the great Department of California, to present our most outstanding, qualified, and innovative member, Nancy Brown-Park, for the Office of National Vice President.

Nancy is eligible for membership of the American Legion Auxiliary through the service of her late father, Richard D. Brown, a World War II Army Air Corps veteran, and dual eligibility through the service of her husband Jim, a Navy Vietnam War veteran.

She has been a dedicated Auxiliary member for 64 years, where she worked diligently for our veterans and their families. Nancy has served most offices and chairmanships in her unit as both senior and junior member. Actually as a junior member Nancy was honored to be elected as the first Honorary Junior President of the Department of California.

On the district level, Nancy has served the district as District President and has served many chairmanships throughout the years, and is currently active in serving the district as its Legislative and Public Relations Chairman. Nancy served as the Department President in 2002-2003. She served as Department Vice President, and Membership Chairman, Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman, and served five-year term as the Girls State Director and dedicated many previous years serving on the Girls State Committee. Her passion for Girls State continues as she serves every year as a Girls State counselor.

Working on the national level, Nancy has continued her dedication to this organization by serving as the NEC and Vice Chairman of the Junior Activities Committee in 2003-2004. She has chaired the National Junior Activities Committee for two years, National Public Relations Committee, National Security Committee, National Constitution & Bylaws, National Membership, National Children & Youth Committee, as a member of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation, the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee, and is currently serving the national organization as the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman.

As well as being very active in her community and other philanthropic organizations, Nancy and her husband Jim, who is an active Legion member of Santa Clara Post #419, own and operate a sales and marketing company with a customer base that includes many major department and specialty stores. Nancy's retail background includes buying for major department stores and working for large textile mills.

They have two children, Christopher and Chloe, who are both members of the Legion family.

The Department of California feels confident that Nancy's natural leadership

and organizational skills, as well as her vision for the future of this great organization, make her an excellent candidate for the Office of National Vice President. On behalf of the members of the Department of California, it gives me great pride and honor to place in nomination for the Office of National Vice President for the year 2012-2013 my very dear friend Nancy Brown-Park.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nancy Brown-Park is nominated for the Office of National Vice President. Are there any further nominations for the Office of National Vice President? Hearing none, nominations for National Vice President are closed. Nominations are now in order for the Office of National Chaplain. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Madam President, the Department of Wisconsin has an announced candidate for the Office of National Chaplain. The delegation chairman should ask the Chair to recognize a delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. CHWALA: Joan Chwala, Department of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has a candidate. Will the Chair please recognize the delegate Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan from Wisconsin for the purpose of the nomination?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Department of Wisconsin has an announced candidate for the Office of National Chaplain. The delegation chairman asks the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Madam President, once each year our organization like many others convenes for a variety of purposes. To establish policies and procedures for the ensuing year; to reevaluate existing programs and make changes if necessary; to renew old friendships and to make new ones; and in most cases to change the old guard and elect new officers for the coming year. So once again we look to you, the delegates to this Auxiliary Convention, to make your choices based upon the qualification of each candidate presented for election.

I am pleased to present the qualifications of the candidate from Wisconsin, Gayle Janson, for the Office of National Chaplain. Gayle's qualifications for this office are numerous, starting with 33 years of continuous and tireless service to our organization and the veterans we honor.

Gayle's eligibility comes from the military service of her father, Alton Egge, Navy Seabees, World War II; husband Bill, Korean conflict; son Matt, 20 years including Desert Storm; and grandson Philip Goldman currently serving in the Air Force. Gayle is a member of Brask-Fossum-Janke Unit 185 American Legion Auxiliary in Grantsburg, Wisconsin.

Gayle just completed a year as Department Parliamentarian and Alternate NEC. Gayle has served all offices on the unit, Burnet County, and District 12 level, and has served as Department Chaplain, Historian, First, Second, and Senior Vice Presidents, culminating in her election as Department President in 2009. Her many Department Chairmanships included Americanism, Education, Field Service, Leadership, Publication, and Children & Youth. She has also been a counselor at our Girls State Program for 13 years.

On the national level, she has been Wisconsin's NEC, alternate NEC, and

Central Division Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chairman.

Gayle is a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 25 years as a religious education coordinator and teacher, two terms on the parish council, serving as president for one of those terms. Current she serves as a reader and communion distributor, vice president of the church's women's club, Southwest Division Deanery, Superior Diocesan Treasurer, and commissioned by the Bishop as a lay leader of prayer.

Gayle is retired from the Bremer Bank and the Town of Wood River's clerk's position. Gayle was married for 52 years, presently widowed, and has eight children, 18 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren, all members of the Legion Family.

Gayle is a dedicated and devoted member of our organization. Faith in her capabilities has been expressed by her endorsement by the Department of Wisconsin. So with confidence in her ability and pride in her record, I consider it a privilege to place in nomination Gayle Janson for the Office of National Chaplain. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any further nominations for the Office of National Chaplain?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Sorry, Madam President, my foot was caught. The Department of Missouri has an announced candidate for the Office of National Chaplain. The delegation chairman should ask the Chair to recognize a delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. GOODIN: Madam President, Claudia Goodin, delegation chairman for the Department of Missouri. Please recognize Past National President JoAnn Cronin for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Missouri for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. CRONIN: Madam President, the Department of Missouri proudly endorses Rosemarie W. Hauck as a candidate for National Chaplain for the year 2012-2013.

Rosemarie is a member of the Florissant Valley Memorial Unit 444 in Florissant, Missouri. She gained her eligibility in the American Legion through the service of her husband, Joel Hauck, who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. And as an active member of the American Legion Auxiliary on the unit and district level Rosemarie has served as President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, Chaplain, and chairman of many committees. She is currently serving as Girls State Chairman and on the Executive Committee.

On the Department level Rosemarie has served as President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Vice President, Historian, Chaplain. She also served as Membership and VA&R Chairman, as well as many others. The Department met the 100 percent membership goal during her President year, which had not been done in several years. Rosemarie currently serves as Sergeant-at-Arms.

On the national level, Rosemarie served as Vice Chairman for the 2003 National Convention in St. Louis. She served on the Strategic Planning Committee for three years, a National Executive Committee woman. Rosemarie served on the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee for three years. She has also been on the IRS 990 team and election judge for the 2010 National Convention.

Rosemarie is very active in the West Side Baptist Church of St. Louis, Missouri, having served on the board of trustees for many years, Girl Scouts leader, and youth adviser. She is currently serving as a class teacher and the wedding adviser. Rosemarie is a very active volunteer in the local community where she has served on many committees and boards.

Rosemarie has been an employee 39 years at McDonnell Douglas Boeing instrumentation design engineering where she was awarded the Value of Diversity Award in 2005, and the Amelia Earhart Society St. Louis Chapter Women's Achievement Award in 2008. She represented the department many times at the annual Women in Aviation International Conference.

She and Joel have one daughter, four granddaughters, three great-granddaughters, and two great-grandsons who are all members of the Legion family. In view of her dedicated compassion and active service in the Auxiliary and the community, it is my pleasure and honor to place the name of my good friend, Rosemarie W. Hauck, as a candidate for National Chaplain.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any further nominations for the Office of National Chaplain? Hearing none, nominations for National Chaplain are closed. Nominations are in order for the Office of National Historian. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Madam President, the Department of Mississippi has an announced candidate for the Office of National Historian. The delegation chairman should ask the Chair to recognize a delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. RIED: Madam President, Mary Smith Ried, delegate, Chairman for the Department of Mississippi. Please recognize Department Secretary Nancy Sanders for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Mississippi for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. SANDERS: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. SANDERS: Madam President, with the knowledge of her capabilities and passion for the American Legion Auxiliary, the Department of Mississippi is proud to endorse one of its outstanding members, Angela Kilcrease, as a candidate for National Historian.

Angela is eligible for membership through the service of her husband, Jack Kilcrease, a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the United States Army. He served his country for 32 years and did four tours of duty in Vietnam.

Angela is a member of Walthall County Unit 56 in Tylertown and is currently serving as Unit President. She has served as District Vice President and President. Her service on the department level includes Chaplain, Historian, Second Vice President, First Vice President, and Department President in 2009-2010. She has chaired a number of department committees and will serve as Leadership Chairman for 2013.

Angela served the national organization as NEC and Vice Chairman of Public Relations in 2011, alternate NEC and Southern Division Membership Chairman in 2012,

Credentials Chairman for the 2011 National Convention, and has been a member of the Long Range Strategic Plan Committee for the past two years.

Angela is a dedicated and devoted member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She often reminds us this organization has the greatest potential for good. We know Angela will give her best if elected to this office. You will enjoy her smile, her laugh, and her love of life as you get to know her more. Madam President, on behalf of the Department of Mississippi I proudly nominate Angela Kilcrease for the Office of National Historian for 2012-2013. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Angela Sullivan Kilcrease is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the Office of National Historian? Hearing none, nominations for National Historian are closed.

With these nominations and the nominations made during the division caucuses on Saturday, August 25, 2012, nominations for the 2012-2013 national offices are completed. Rule #22 of this Convention provides that the nominees for the Office of National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian, shall be introduced to the assembly. The Auxiliary member who made the nomination will introduce the candidate by name and department affiliation only. Each nominee will be allowed a maximum of two minutes per remarks, with the exception of the nominee for National President who will be allowed a maximum of four minutes for remarks. Will the representative from Virginia please introduce the candidate for National President?

MS. CHAPMAN: Peggy Thomas, Department of Virginia.

(Applause.)

MS. THOMAS: Madam President, ladies of the Auxiliary, the first thing I want to do is to thank my daughter Lisa for the nomination of me this morning.

(Applause.)

MS. THOMAS: I promise you that if I am elected I will do all in my power to grow this organization and to take it to new heights. I will try my best, with the help of all of you, to build on what my predecessors have done. Kris Nelson, Carlene, Rita, and it goes all the way back. Each year we try to build on what has been accomplished the year before.

I'm asking that we all work together to serve our veterans, our military, and their families. This way we can honor their service yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

I want to tell you that I am eligible through my late husband John. He was a Korean War veteran. He served in the Army. And as you heard Lisa say earlier, I'm also eligible through five brothers. So my love for the military and our veterans runs deep.

The Auxiliary has been the biggest part of my life for many years. And as I said earlier I pledge I will give to you 101 percent working for this organization. But at the same time I ask that all of you give something back to honor the service of the person that you were eligible to join under. Because who better is there to take care of our veterans than The American Legion Family? And as you heard earlier, I do volunteer at a VA hospital and have for many years. And when you see the devastation of war and what the price these people have paid to keep us free, you want to give more.

And I will also say that Lisa is a 20-year Auxiliary member. Twenty years.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Will the representative from California present the candidate for National Vice President?

MS. WORKMAN: Madam President, I would like to present to this delegation from the Department of California Nancy Brown-Park.

(Applause.)

MS. BROWN-PARK: Madam President Kris and delegates, I pledge if elected tomorrow to support the National President and am committed to the success and legacy of the American Legion Auxiliary. My history and love for the organization and those we serve started when I was a small girl and it continues today. Together we can make a difference, as we have this year by honoring those who have served.

Having this opportunity to run for National Vice President is a dream come true and it would not have happened without the support of my amazing husband Jim, a Vietnam veteran. Jim, would you stand please and be recognized?

(Applause.)

MS. BROWN-PARK: And my wonderful Department of California, who have supported me all along. Will you please stand? And they are wild and crazy, so hold on to your hat. And please, the Western Division for all of you support, I really do appreciate it. So you can stand, too, Western Division.

(Applause.)

MS. BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you, everybody, for your support. And Peggy, if elected, I pledge you all of my support, 110 percent. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Will the representative from Wisconsin please present the candidate for National Chaplain?

MS. PULVERMACHER-RYAN: It's my pleasure to present the candidate from Wisconsin, Gayle Janson.

MS. JANSON: Thank you, Jan, for all of your help. And I want to thank all of the Wisconsin delegation for your support. The opportunity to possibly serve both my God and my Auxiliary as your chaplain is overwhelming. But whether I become your chaplain or not, I love all of you. I will continue to work for this great organization in any way I can. God bless everyone.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Will the representative from Missouri present the next candidate for National Chaplain?

MS. CRONIN: It is my pleasure and honor to present to you the delegate from Missouri running for National Chaplain, my friend Rosemarie W. Hauck.

(Applause.)

MS. HAUCK: Madam President, first I want to recognize and thank JoAnn for the nomination and for a true friendship. Earlier this month I had the opportunity to install new officers at a unit. And I suddenly realized what the charge of the chaplain really means. I had been installed as a chaplain three times and heard the charge. I had given it many times as I installed officers. But suddenly I realized what it really means.

The charge says the chaplain will announce the invocation and benediction at all meetings and ceremonies. I had a new awakening that night because the duties really mean more than reciting the invocation and benediction. The charge does not say, but should say, that the chaplain needs to be a good listener. Listening is an important part of being a chaplain. When a member, or a family member, or a military, need a shoulder to lean or cry on, if the chaplain is not a good listener how can she pray for what they are asking for?

If elected as chaplain I will not only recite the invocation and the benediction during meetings and ceremonies. Above that I will be a good listener who is concerned and compassionate by showing love to one and all. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: This concludes the nominations for the 2012-2013 national officers and elections will be held tomorrow. Oh, I'm sorry. Oh, Angela, that was good, President. Will the representative from Mississippi present the next candidate for National Historian? I flipped my page too quick. Thank you for letting me know that.

MS. SANDERS: The Department of Mississippi proudly presents Angela Kilcrease as candidate for National Historian for 2012-2013.

(Applause.)

MS. KILCREASE: Madam President, delegates, thank you my dear friend Nancy for the nomination and to the great State of Mississippi for your support and endorsement.

Years ago while Department Historian I took the time to read all of the histories of my department, hoping to get a sense of where we have been and how far we have come. I learned much about the ladies who came before me and of the dedication and service they unselfishly gave. So, you see, the histories we record in our units and departments are the guiding light for others and an invaluable tool we can use in developing future leaders.

History is what we make it. If elected as National Historian, I pledge to serve each of you to the best of my ability. I also pledge to safeguard and transmit for posterity the service given by this organization in the coming year with accuracy and with great pride. When you cast your vote in the morning for National Historian, I respectfully and gratefully ask for your support. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Now that concludes the nominations for 2012-2013 National Officers and elections will be held tomorrow.

Okay. We will do one more test run of voting devices. Departments, please make sure that on this test you cast all of your delegation votes. We will allow 30 seconds. And remember that the light does not stay green after you have finished. So anyone who has recruited or renewed one member this year, press number one. If you have not, press number two.

The 30 seconds are up. Okay. Can we see the results, please?

MS. MEYERES: Madam President? When we vote -- Ida Meyeres, Department of Kansas. And it comes up with a square and a line through it, and a C-H. What does that mean?

PRESIDENT NELSON: It means you should go get a new keypad.

(Laughter.)

MS. MEYERES: Thank you very much. That's all we needed to know? And now are they going to be in the back of the room? They are gone at this time. Where will we find them to replace, please?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Those who are responsible for the keypads, please go in the back of the room. That C-H means the channel has been changed. So be sure when you press the keys that you only press one or two, and no other key. And if you press the wrong one, press it again. But we'll make sure you can get that.

MS. MEYERES: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And I asked the Parliamentarian what's going on and she said this always happens, that's why we test. So that we make sure we get all the bugs out before we have official voting. So that's why we're testing. Can we see the results, please?

MS. MEYERES: Madam President? Ida Meyeres again. Could we once we get the result of that have the same, clear that one and vote one more time so we can try before we go through the process of replacing these?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes.

MS. MEYERES: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I asked them the wrong question so they can't display the results. So we're going to go through the chocolate question again. But the results for this last one cast were 589 yes, and 188 no. So we're going to do the chocolate question as soon as I see -- so I'm going to go ahead with the next speaker and then we'll do that. So if you need new voting pads they are opening up in the back.

How can you shop and support the American Legion Auxiliary at the same time? With a USAA credit card. American Legion Auxiliary's new relationship with USAA not only rewards you, it supports your American Legion Auxiliary Department, the national organization, and all the great mission outreach programs on which we all work so hard. Your purchases support our veterans, military, and their families. I think that's a great reason to shop, don't you?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Please join me in welcoming Glenda Oakley as she talks to us today about USAA's exciting partnership with the American Legion Auxiliary. Glenda?

(Music.)

MS. OAKLEY: Good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. OAKLEY: I was going to say, I saw you guys dancing backstage to the new theme song. So I know you can do better than that. I am truly excited and blessed and honored to be standing here before you all today not only as a representative from USAA, but also as a military spouse, a fellow Legionnaire, in addition to being a military brat. Both of my parents have served in the military, so thank you for having me.

(Applause.)

MS. OAKLEY: Today I want to talk to you a little bit about the wonderful

alliance that USAA has formed with the American Legion Auxiliary. But before I get started I just want to point out and reference these lovely bags that you may have discovered in your chairs.

(Applause.)

MS. OAKLEY: I hope you all enjoy them as a mere token of our appreciation and excitement to this new partnership. Now and I have to tell you, I have been carrying my bag around all week since the beginning of the Convention and I have been stopped in the halls by Auxiliary members, as well as Legionnaires, trying to find out where they can purchase them, or get them for their spouses. So I am so elated that this day has finally come and we can share them with you so now you have them, at no cost.

(Applause.)

MS. OAKLEY: Thank you. USAA is proud to be the preferred provider of credit card services to your organization. And some of you may be looking at your neighbor trying to figure out exactly who USAA is and what we do. And so hopefully I am able to answer some of those questions for you during this presentation.

USAA was founded in 1922 by 25 servicemembers for the mere purpose of providing financial security for the military community, veterans, and their families. Today we stand at around nine million members strong and we are growing everyday. We have over 23,000 employees to support members. If you are too a USAA member, thank you for that. And we have around \$19 billion in assets.

Like the American Legion Auxiliary, USAA has a purposeful mission. We provide and support for those who have gone above and beyond to defend this great country, just like you. Every decision that we make is based on our mission and vision. And we use that as a compass to everything that we do and every decision that we make. We are so appreciative for this opportunity to align with veterans service organizations such as yours, whose mission and vision truly complement each other.

We launched the initial credit card program with the American Legion Auxiliary in April of this year and since the beginning we have over 628 active credit card accounts. And I just want to know where the delegates from New York and Florida are? Raise your hand? All right! Florida and New York right now, and I checked the numbers, and they have the most active credit card accounts open, as well as the most people that shop. So thank you for supporting the Auxiliary. We really appreciate it.

Through this program, so you know, the Auxiliary will be compensated for every new credit card account that is opened, as well as every year for the account renewal, and of course your wonderful shopping. Your husbands might not like it, but the more you spend the shop the more the Auxiliary will benefit.

We have three custom credit card designs. One is actually displayed on the outside of your bags. And if you don't have one yet, don't worry. The applications are in the bags. The number is also printed on the outside. So you can go ahead and call that number and get yours today, whichever one you may carry.

And we will continue to work together to promote this wonderful program through numerous marketing strategies and channels. But our company was founded in 1922 by 25 servicemembers and have grown to be nine million members strong through work of mouth. So we understand and appreciate that word of mouth is extremely

important. So if you can, when you get back to your units you let everybody know about the wonderful program so they too can continue and further the mission of the Auxiliary.

As I conclude my presentation, again I just really want to thank you for your servitude to support the military and their families, and veterans. And if you are a spouse, or you have served a family member, you too have served. So thank you for your service to this great country. Thank you again for having me. I really enjoyed it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Glenda, and thank you for your service.

MS. OAKLEY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And thank you for bringing us this benefit. I'd like to give you my coin and my pin. Thank you very much.

MS. OAKLEY: Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Because people are still working on getting their voting machines replaced, we're going to go on and we will do the vote, one more practice, before we go on to a regular vote.

Our next Pod to present is the Youth Development Pod. This group of programs serves as a reality check as to how well we are connecting with today's culture. Kids growing up today have a real hunger for service and finding meaning in their work. These are the core values for the Auxiliary members. But we have to know how to communicate in their language. Please welcome the Youth Development Pod, who has chosen to dedicate their presentation to Elsie Bailey-Comer, a beloved Past National President and former Pod member.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Good morning. I'm Lisa Williamson, National Junior Activities Chairman. During last year's National Convention my department, Alaska, sat directly behind the Department of Illinois. Knowing that the Youth Development Pod was searching for a unit to mentor from the Central Division, National Constitution & Bylaws Chairman Sharon Conatser introduced me to Luella Buske, Unit Membership Chairman from the newly formed State Police Unit 1922 in Illinois. And history was made.

The Youth Development Pod, which includes Children & Youth, Child Welfare Foundation, Girls State, and Junior Activities, chose adopting a military child as our pod activity. After talking with Luella and hearing how eager her unit was to learn the programs and seeing their enthusiasm for the American Legion programs, it was an easy decision to choose Unit 1922 to mentor this year. Here is Janet Jefford, our Pod Chairman.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Let me give you a brief history. State Police Post 1922 was chartered at the beginning of 2010. All members are active or retired Illinois State Police Officers. Less than a year later State Police Unit 1922 was chartered on April 19, 2011, with 12 members. Most of the members are either Illinois State Police Officers or are the wives, daughters, granddaughters of State Police Officers. Both the post and the

unit hold their meetings at a different location throughout the State of Illinois.

Unit 1922 now boasts 26 members, including six junior members. That's a 217 percent membership increase. Way to go, Unit 1922!

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Just this year a new Sons of The American Legion Squadron was chartered, and they are about to charter an American Legion Riders Chapter. They are a great example of understanding what it truly means to be an American Legion Family and how much they can accomplish working together.

VOICE: We started this State Police Post about two years ago. And about six months after we started it we got the women involved with the, by asking for an Auxiliary Unit. And just several months ago is when we started doing the SAL and the Legion Riders. So we've got all four aspects of the Legion family.

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: So in that spirit both the unit and the post joined together and agreed to adopt an entire military family, not just one child. Let me turn this over to Luella to explain how they selected their family.

(Applause.)

MRS. BUSKE: When I returned to Illinois from the National Convention I explained about our unit being chosen to be mentored by the Youth Development Pod. The members were very excited. One of our first decisions was to adopt a military family, not a child. And President Tonya knew the perfect family.

Tonya had worked with Andy at State Police Headquarters at District 18. She saw a new trooper that held solid family values, integrity, and belief in God and Country. He talked about his family as well as wanting to excel as a trooper. He has been deployed several times as a pilot and when this opportunity arose to adopt a family his family fit the bill.

As you saw in the opening video, the military family selected by our unit consists of a mom, dad, four children, and one on the way. The children are all under the age of five. Amy is a very devoted mother. She is always upbeat and smiling. She loves to sew and quilt. The members of our unit are very happy to get the chance to adopt not just a family, but the Hale Family.

It is always enjoyable to stop by and spend time with the family, especially the children. There is never a dull moment when going to see the Hales. All we can say is, we love them. They are part of our unit family and we are looking forward to welcoming the new arrival in September.

Here is Girls State's Chairman Kathy Dungan to tell you about Unit 1922's work.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: The unit began plans to assist their adopted family. For their first event the unit provided a generous gift card to Amy and Andy for an evening out and so Luella and her husband Delmar, Commander of the Post, stayed with the kids while the Hales had their evening out to eat, relax, and enjoy. Now that's what I call a Legion Family working together.

Of course, at Christmas a special event was planned including gifts to the kids. How exciting! Other things the unit did for the family were they took them to McDonald's, invited them to a Unit meeting and provided gift memberships in the

Auxiliary. The Juniors babysat. Members played with kids so Mom could rest. They took the family out to dinner. And just spent time with the family.

At the very beginning their Legion Post wanted to be involved. Here's another video clip from Delmar.

MR. BUSKE: By doing this program the Legion of course wanted to help the Auxiliary Unit. And we all pitch in on the different programs, the different aspects of this adopted family.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Adopting the Hale Family isn't the only thing Unit #1922 did this year. They worked all the programs of the Youth Development Pod. For example, Luella was part of the staff at Girls State this past June. This was her fourth year to volunteer at Girls State and they already have a citizen lined up for next year. Lisa?

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: I had the privilege of working with Luella throughout the year as she is also the Department of Illinois' Junior Activities Chairman, and what an exceptional job she did this year.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: The Juniors learned about personal safety and had the opportunity to experience the dining pleasure of MREs. What a marvelous way to teach our Juniors our programs and focus on our military and our veterans. And one other Junior, Luella's granddaughter Sierra, was named Illinois Miss Poppy for 2011. Janet?

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: This Unit was active in other Children & Youth projects. The pillowcase project has been promoted in Illinois for about six years and Unit 1922 joined in by attending deployments. They take pictures and then iron the picture of the deployed parent onto a pillowcase, which is then given to the child left at home. What a nice way for these children to feel a connection with a parent so far away.

To honor the children of veterans the Unit held a Christmas Party and an Easter Egg Hunt. We have been so fortunate to have chosen a Unit that so enthusiastically adopted our Pod project this year. The Adopt a Military Child/Family Project is something even a small unit of ten to 15 members can do. We encourage your unit to adopt a military child, or the entire family, and let your members experience first hand what the American Legion Auxiliary is all about. Service to our military, their families, and our communities.

VOICE: If your Unit has the opportunity to be mentored by one of the pods, please do it. Not only do you learn about the programs in the pod like we did, but you also gain a family. And we've gained the Hale Family.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: You have heard the story of our adopted unit. Now we hope you enjoy this short presentation of our versions of the Faces of Freedom. The faces of Our Littlest Hero, Children of Military and Veterans, and the Faces of Our Future, our Juniors and Citizens of Girls State and Girls Nation.

(Music.)

VOICE: There's a hero if you look inside your heart you don't have to be afraid of what you are. There's an answer if you reach into the soul and the sorrow that you know will melt away. And then a hero comes along with the strength to carry on, and you

cast your fears aside and you know you can survive. So when it feels like hope is gone look inside you and be strong, and you'll finally see the truth that a hero lies in you. That a hero lies in you.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Thank you. Madam President, this concludes our pod report.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much, Children & Youth Pod. That is an awesome success story. Thank you.

Auxiliary units in 49 states proudly host Girls State, an amazing week of learning focused on responsible citizenship and love for God and Country. Girls State and Girls Nation have been the marquee program since 1937 and continue to teach lessons in civics and American government in a fast paced interactive program of campaigning, debating, and voting in mock elections. Here to share more is National Girls State Chairman Kathy Dungan.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Madam National President, what an exciting year it has been for Girls State. Following your theme, Honor Their Service, the Girls State sessions incorporated service projects focusing on veterans and active military. Some of those projects were asking delegates to bring canned food and personal toiletries for our troops, homeless veterans, and veterans in medical facilities; making cards to send to active duty military; folding pocket flags for distribution; inviting female veterans to be guest speakers; touring a military facility; and many, many others.

The Department of Virginia used the theme Honor by Serving at their session by using pictures furnished by staff members of their special veterans as a background for their program cover. They had two women veteran speakers and a speaker from the Virginia Wounded Warrior Project. They incorporated an Oral History of Veterans Class where veterans were invited to share and record their stories. They had a POW/MIA ceremony at their session and the poppy story was told. Their delegates' city tax money was donated to the Girls Nation Project by providing gift cards to the wounded warriors and their families at Bethesda. Great job, Virginia Girls State for honoring their service.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: I received some very impressive reports of Girls State programs incorporating mission based projects. Special mention and thanks go to the Departments of Tennessee, California, and Arkansas for their excellent reports.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Once again Girls Nation was held at Chevy Chase, Maryland at the National 4H Center. We had 98 of the brightest and most talented girls in the United States. We had a wonderful and successful session with the help of an awesome staff and National Program Coordinator Ariel Meyers. Special thanks to Marian Chirichella, who helped tremendously with the Wounded Warrior BBQ Picnic. And speaking of the picnic, for the second time the event was hosted by the girls for wounded warriors and their families. It was held in Bethesda. It was a very moving experience for

the girls and staff who visited with the wounded warriors. Again this year departments donated money to purchase gift cards for the warriors. Response to the calls for donations was overwhelming. A total of \$11,389 was given from post, Auxiliary units, individuals, and Girls State sessions.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: One department, Texas, donated over \$3,000.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Thank you all for your generous donations.

Some of the highlights of Girls Nation were the laying of the wreath at Arlington National Cemetery; visits to the Korean, Vietnam, and World War II Memorials, and the Roosevelt and King Memorials; Capitol Hill Day, where the girls met with their respective U.S. Congressmen; visit from National President Kris Nelson; excellent speakers; and of course the visit to the White House. We met the President of the United States and he shook each of the girls' hands. In addition we had excellent Senate debates and exciting elections.

Girls State Programs across the United States accomplished their objective this year of Honoring Their Service. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Kathy. Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: If I may have a moment I would like to present something to you. I understand that you already received your Tiffany bracelet?

PRESIDENT NELSON: I did.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Wonderful. And on behalf of the Girls State Committee this year Girls Nation presents your memory book. And we were so excited that you came and spent time with us at Girls Nation this year.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. Thank you. It was wonderful. Kathy did an excellent job. The staff there were committed and dedicated. And it was just, I was able to spend four days and those citizens learned so much. Senators, they are senators, they are not citizens. Thank you, Kathy, for your dedication and your help with this program. You did an excellent job. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Thank you. And if I might have a moment, I would like to introduce the Vice Chairman of the Girls State Committee, Gwen Schroeder-Zulch to make a presentation to you also. Gwen?

MS. SCHROEDER-ZULCH: Madam President Kris, on behalf of the Girls States and the departments, we would like to present you with this collage.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Oh, look at that. This is so awesome. It's all the pins from all the different, all the charms from all the different Girls States. Thank you, what an awesome, awesome memory.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. Thank you. Excellent report, Kathy. A core element of the Auxiliary's mission, Caring for Our Children & Youth, is sharply focused on educating adults about the needs of our young people. We believe that more people need and understand the needs of children in their communities, the more interest they

will have in learning how they can help meet those needs. Here to tell us more about the accomplishments of this year's Children & Youth Program is National Chairman Janet Jefford with her report. Janet?

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Madam National President, today I am thrilled to share a few of the innovative ways that units and departments are taking care of our youth and honoring the service of our littlest heroes.

The Department of Washington started this year with the Kids 'n Coats Program. At each district fall conference units brought in coats, hats, and gloves to be distributed to schools and daycare centers where they were most needed. Unit #76 in Arlington, Washington holds fundraisers all year long for their innovative project called Toys For Kids. With over \$16,000 raised the unit went on a shopping spree. Gifts were set up in the Legion Hall and families were sent over by the local food bank to pick out toys and gifts. Over 527 kids had a merrier Christmas thanks to these Auxiliary members. To honor the newest --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: -- and littlest of our heroes, Department Chairman Terri Angel motivated the department to get involved in a unique project: making welcome babies for moms and their newborns at Madigan Army Medical Center. These babies are basically a layette. Each is made out of a baby sleeper, diapers, bibs, bottles, and other baby items. These are then wrapped in a blanket to resemble a baby. The birth of the babies was scheduled for department convention. As they prepared for their convention Terri and her crew found that they had a surplus of supplies for their Welcome Babies project. They needed to find a creative way to give these supplies to new military families. And so motorcycle babies were created.

Since many units are also part of the Legion Riders Program, anything motorcycle always gets their attention. These motorcycle baby centerpieces decorated the tables at convention at the convention Children & Youth luncheon where the Welcome Babies were born. Even the Department Commander and President got in the act. Of course, the Commander said she could have custody of their new baby so now she's asking for child support.

What a great way to have fun while working our programs! The motorcycles along with 100 welcome babies were given to the Madigan Pediatrics Unit.

One of the best overall programs came from the Department of Virginia. Building on the department's theme of the Wizard of Oz, members spread sunshine, lollipops, and rainbows for our Children & Youth. Each month Children & Youth Chairman Cindy Kokernak utilized monthly communication tools to help members grow their passion for the program through the department bulletin, monthly postcards, emails, Facebook, Twitter, personal phone calls, and face to face meetings the Children & Youth team succeeded in inspiring members to stretch and take on new projects.

To promote ALA Kids, members participated in mental health training and a child safety summit. An OMK Ready, Set, Go training was given at their Spring Conference and was livestreamed so that members who could not attend could watch from home. The OMK power point was presented and is now on the department website.

Units were asked to consider innovative unit activities to honor the service of our littlest heroes. Cindy reports, “the creativity of our members is always amazing and as sweet as any lollipops.”

Unit 177 adopted premature new babies at Bethesda Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, providing 60 crocheted hats and baby blankets. Sadly, they also crocheted 35 special blankets that were used to swaddle newborns who had passed away. Says Unit President Sandra Price, “These two projects reminded us just how precious children are and to always nurture them.”

Unit 16 partnered with Operation Homefront to provide school supplies for National Guard children, and in December held a Christmas party with an added bonus. They distributed care packages filled with toys for soldiers to give away to children.

A member of Unit 12 donated 40 frustration kites to military and community children. The children used their imagination to decorate the kites. When the kites were flown and then released the sky was full of bright colors and laughter, and frustrations disappeared into the sky.

And of course, Auxiliary members throughout Virginia wore their brightest purple on Purple Up Day, April 13th, to honor military children. In all the Department of Virginia logged in 16,500 volunteer hours helping 991 children with donations totaling \$77,747.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: According to Cindy, Virginia is now out of the woods. “We have rung our bell loudly at the Emerald City door for our Children & Youth munchkins and melted that wicked witch of apathy. Our Auxiliary road is red, white, and blue with pride. We have clicked our heels and we’re home.”

Madam President, our members have indeed melted the wicked witch of apathy.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: And have enthusiastically supported these young faces of freedom. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Janet. Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: No, there are not.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much for a very wonderful and informative report.

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. In 1954 The American Legion endorsed the separate corporation of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Since then the Foundation has granted more than \$13 million to nonprofit youth oriented organizations. It is my pleasure to introduce Past National President Phyllis Sickmond, Vice Chairman of the Liaison to Child Welfare Foundation, to present her report. Phyllis?

(Music.)

VICE CHAIRMAN SICKMOND: Madam National President, the American Legion Auxiliary is proud of its participation in and support of the American Legion’s foremost philanthropic priority in educating the public about the needs of children across the nation, the Child Welfare Foundation. Established in 1954, the Child Welfare

Foundation has awarded nearly \$12 million in grants to assist America's children. The 548 foundation grants were shared by 279 organizations in 40 states. Eighteen grants were awarded this year, totaling \$506,683.

The Auxiliary sponsored 14 of these grants. One of which went to the Mercy Medical Airlift of Virginia Beach, Virginia in the amount of \$43,400. Their project will provide for five modernized and upgraded websites making information available to the public and the pediatric medical world regarding child patient long distance medical transportation. These interactive devices will provide the means for requesting transportation, assistance for children whose families are unable to cover the cost of long distance travel for specialized care available only at distant facilities.

The Auxiliary also sponsored a grant of \$25,500 awarded to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to fund the development of the iPhone Child ID application. The need is crucial, because some 800,000 children go missing each year. More than 2,000 a day. And the most vital piece of information in locating a missing child is a recent photograph. The Child ID application will be made available online free to families across the country.

The American Legion and the Department of Arizona were recipients of a \$49,500 Auxiliary grant for their Deployment Josh Program. The grant will provide start up costs for the program and Josh and Friends, familiar to our membership, will fund the remaining \$110,200. Targeting two- to 11-year-old children of deployed parents, an exclusive inventory of 10,000 kits containing deployment *I'll Be Okay* book, and camouflaged golden retriever Josh, housed in an American Legion logo box made available to the Legion Family for \$26.

Other Auxiliary sponsored grants targeted homeless students, autism research, teen suicide, grieving children, and family group decision making. A complete listing of Child Welfare Foundation grants was distributed to department representatives at the Pre-Convention Meeting.

Contributions to the Foundation increased well over \$50,000 this year. The Sons of the American Legion topped the charts at over a half a million dollars.

(Applause.)

VICE CHAIRMAN SICKMOND: Contributions of \$167,740.86 from the American Legion; and \$84,158 from the Auxiliary; together with contributions and bequests brought the total contributions to \$787,950.

It has been my honor to report on the Auxiliary's participation in the Child Welfare Foundation on behalf of Chairman and Past National President Elsie Bailey-Comer who passed away a few weeks ago.

Madam National President, that concludes my platform remarks. And with your permission I would like to present two distinguished guests who have joined us this morning.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Phyllis.

VICE CHAIRMAN SICKMOND: The two gentlemen who are about to address you are well known to the seasoned delegates of this Convention. Dennis Boland, Commander, Department of Florida, was appointed to the Commission on Children & Youth in 1993 and its Chairman in 2006. He was appointed to the Child Welfare

Foundation Board of Directors in 1999 and its President in 2004. Bob Caudell, veteran and Legionnaire from the Department of Indiana, joined the Legion's Headquarters staff in 1991 as Assistant Director, Americanism, and Children & Youth Division. In 2008 he was named Deputy Director of Americanism and Children & Youth, serving as staff liaison to the National Commission on Children & Youth, and Executive Secretary to the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Gentlemen?

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: Thank you, Past National President Phyllis. As we say in Southwest Florida, how you all are? It's always an honor to come before the hardest workers in the American Legion.

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: You know, in 1982 I never belonged to anything. I believed at that time that heroes don't wear capes, they wear dog tags. But in 1982 I was introduced to the American Legion and the family. And then I started to think that's a pretty egotistical statement I just made to you. And then I realized that you, too, share the dog tags that I once wore, through your husband, your brother, your father. And I started to realize how a family gels together and does what we do. Not for our sake, but for other people's sakes.

I had the opportunity to go to a children's hospital, and which really got me involved in the Child Welfare Foundation. When I saw a little baby that I held in my hand, or I'm sorry that could be held in my hand. And I knew that through our hard work that child could have a life in front of them. And it has happened so many times because of your dedication.

I am in awe with the work you do for the children of our veterans and also what you do for our veterans. I can never give you the accolades that you deserve. The only way I can give them to you is through appreciation plaques and it seems so little. But I hope you know from the bottom of my heart, if you could picture me everyday hugging you and thanking you for what you do.

So at this time, Madam President, National Officers, Past National Officers, and delegates, I am pleased to recognize your efforts during the past year in support of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. With help the Foundation reached an all time high, receiving over \$787,000 in donations. I'm proud to say that at the Children & Youth meeting Vanessa Howard, your Eastern Division Honorary Junior President, presented us with a check of \$2,186.36 that she raised.

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: Also as you know we lost Elsie Bailey-Comer. People are making donations. So far we've received over \$1,000 in donations. But Jay has turned over a bunch of checks that people are giving him here today. So I can't give you a total figure, what has been totaled in her memory. But I'll guarantee you, it will be a lasting legacy in her honor.

At this time I'd like to present the awards. The recipient of the Excellent Award, given to the department with the highest per capita giving, is the Department of Wyoming.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MR. BOLAND: Can I have a representative? This is the Excellent Award. "You will find as you look back on your life that the moments that stand out are the moments when you have done things for others." Henry Drummond. Achieving the highest in per capita giving, 2011-2012, American Legion Auxiliary Department of Wyoming. The Board of Directors greatly recognize your outstanding support of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Service of the critical needs of American children is made possible through your caring and generosity.

(Applause.)

VOICE: Thank you. Whew!

(Laughter.)

VOICE: Hey, it's exciting!

MR. BOLAND: Oh, any pictures taken? No pictures? The recipient of the Meritorious Achievement Award, given to the department with the highest increase in per capita giving, is the Department of Connecticut.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MR. BOLAND: Meritorious Achievement Award. "There is a wonderful, mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life, happiness, freedom, and peace of mind, are always obtained by giving them to someone else." Peyton Conway March. Achieving the highest increase in per capita giving for the 2011-2012 year, American Legion Auxiliary Department of Connecticut. The Board of Directors greatly recognize your outstanding support of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Service of the critical needs of American children is made possible through your caring and generosity.

VOICE: Thank you so much. I took a chance this year. The Department of Connecticut hasn't had a separate Child Welfare Foundation Chairman for several years and I appointed a young lady, 18 years old, who had just crossed over from Juniors. And she took this program and ran with it. And we have to thank her, Ashley Abidathi [phonetic] from the Department of Connecticut, just really ran away with this and did a wonderful job. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: President Nelson, it is my pleasure to recognize the recipient of the U.S. "Udie" Grant Legacy Award given to the top Department based on combined donations, is the Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MR. BOLAND: The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, dedicated to the betterment of all children since 1954. The U.S. "Udie" Grant Legacy Award, 2011-2012, presented to the Legion family, Department of Ohio, in recognition of outstanding support for the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. We thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: Now my favorite. The recipient of the Garland Murphy Award,

given to the most active department, is the Department of Florida.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MR. BOLAND: The Garland E. Murphy Jr. Award, presented by the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, American Legion Auxiliary, to the Department of Florida for the program year 2011-2012 in recognition of their designation as the number one department in total contributions received from their volunteers in support of our annual program designed to meet the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of our nation's children through productive and meaningful grants. Signed by the Executive Secretary Bob Caudell, and myself, Dennis R. Boland as President.

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: If I would have remembered I would have probably brought a ribbon thing, a frog. I was just in Colorado and they gave me duck lips, so why couldn't I have frog lips?

(Laughter.)

MR. BOLAND: President Nelson, I would like to recognize your leadership with the Spirit of Excellence Award and present you with a diamond lapel pin from the Child Welfare Foundation.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'll put it right on. Thank you.

MR. BOLAND: Ladies, with your continued support the Child Welfare Foundation will continue to provide for the betterment of all children. May God bless you. I love you as my family, because you are my family. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. And he doesn't just talk the talk, he walks the walk. I've seen him all over the country supporting this program. So let's give Bob a hand for all he does for this Foundation.

(Applause.)

MR. BOLAND: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Phyllis, are there any resolutions?

VICE CHAIRMAN SICKMOND: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Phyllis, for your report. It is now my pleasure to introduce -- oh, I already did that. All right. Engaging the next generation to remain active members in the American Legion Auxiliary is the purpose of the Junior Activities Committee. These young women develop leadership skills while having fun and learning to become the future leaders of our organization. Please welcome to the stage National Junior Activities Chairman Lisa Williamson. Lisa?

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Good morning again. Madam National President, the 2012 Summer Olympics might have concluded a couple of weeks ago. But I can assure you the Junior Activities Committee worked with 49 gold medal winning Junior Members over the past couple of days. By honoring the service of the veterans through whom they obtained their eligibility, they completed not one but two service

projects that support our military, our veterans, and their families. And they did it in style.

The first service project allowed the juniors to be one of the first groups to assemble family packs for Operation Military Kids. Family packs are the new version of hero packs and are for children whose parents have returned from a deployment. The focus is on the family, allowing the family to reconnect. One hundred family packs were assembled and will be distributed to National Guard families at Camp Atterbury.

In order to incorporate the field trip aspect back into the National Junior Meeting the other service project was off site. The Juniors were transported to HVAF, an Indiana organization that helps homeless veterans who are transitioning from homelessness. We were able to provide residents with DVDs, recreational equipment, entertainment items, and were able to brighten their day with cheerful interaction.

Performing service projects for our military, our veterans, and their families is something our Juniors do at home in their departments and units as well. Our Juniors have helped at local homeless shelters, fundraised and volunteered around the country at Creative Arts Festival, Fisher House, Toys for Tots, Honor Flights, and participated in Wreaths Across American to name just a few. They have helped at their local veterans' Christmas gift shops. They have adopted deployed soldiers and sent care packages, and have folded many a pocket flag.

Our Juniors have also helped with American Legion family activities, from planting flowers, to walking in parades, from distributing poppies, to bake sales.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: The 2011-2012 Honorary National Junior Officers are wonderful examples of volunteerism in action. They have been active participants in Camo Quilts, Buddy Baskets, and to the Child Welfare Foundation.

When Honorary National Junior President Brittany Watts from the Department of Louisiana isn't volunteering with Special Olympics, she is spreading the word about her special emphasis the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship. Brittany has been an avid promoter and fundraiser for this scholarship. Most of the Juniors are eligible for the National President's Scholarship so they may be personally impacted by their fundraising efforts and Brittany is no exception. Thank you, Brittany.

Another Junior member that leads by example was named Junior Member of the Year. Courtney Anne Reardon from J.D. Lockhart Unit 14 in the Department of Nevada.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: She is a busy Junior. For example, with her unit she has helped make the deliver cookies to military and veterans. She regularly visits patients in the Boulder Veterans Hospital. Courtney participated in Sew-a-Thon for Stand Down, and also made valentines for the Salute to Veterans Patient Week. She was instrumental in developing a cookie recipe calendar that was used to earn money for the National President's Scholarship and helped the other girls earn their scholarship patch. And to top it all off, she helped create and maintain a Facebook page for her unit and the Department Juniors.

For those of you that think you are seeing double, I would like to point out that Courtney's twin Candace was also an active force in their Junior group. It made for a

very difficult decision for the unit department to select one over the other, and I'm thrilled I wasn't the one to make that decision.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: However, I'm sure you would agree that Courtney has certainly earned this award. Congratulations, Courtney.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Our Juniors have shown dedication, heart, and the ability to make a positive impact in their communities and within their organization. They are all gold medal winners in my book. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Lisa. Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: No, ma'am, there aren't.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for a wonderful report.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Before we go on to the next pod, I'm going to give you a few hints on our voting. When your vote is selected, your voting machine will display the vote, the green light will come on, and the device will clear. If you hit the wrong button, the display will be a zero and it will blink red. All of the keypads that were returned were tested and working properly. So we just need to practice and remember that when it's selected, to display the vote the green light will come on and the device will clear. And if you hit the wrong button it will hit zero, blink red, and then you push it again. So we're going to vote. So get out your keypads and your lights and we're going to vote again on the favorite food group. Are you ready for the vote? All those who believe that one of the main food groups should be chocolate, press number one. Opposed, press number two.

Time is up. Please display the results.

VOICE: Madam President? Microphone #2?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone #2.

VOICE: This is Sharon from the Department of Minnesota. We're getting, a bunch of us are getting the box with the CH with the line through it.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Can you see the technician in the back of the room? Here comes our, the messenger from the technical group. Okay. You can't hit the channel button. That's what you are doing. You are hitting the channel button, which is 3C. That's what they're telling me. Okay. Let's just do this vote again. Clear it. The technicians, please clear the keypads. This is not you. Don't do anything. The technicians are now clearing the keypads.

VOICE: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone #2.

VOICE: I wanted to test it. If I press two it turns red, but if I press one it works.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay, so wait till they clear it. Wait till they clear the keypads. You have to wait until I call for the vote. If you do anything right now, it's not going to work. So let's wait till they clear and they let me know that I can ask for the vote.

Please put up the voting screen. Okay. Now, chocolate is the most important food group. Press one if you agree, two if you disagree. And make sure when you hold it you hold it this way, with the lanyard at the bottom. Because if you are holding it upside down and pressing one you are getting the question mark.

VOICE: Madam President, it did the same thing.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Go see the technician. Please show the results.

MS. WHEATLEY: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: 792 votes were cast. Where are you? Please state your microphone.

MS. WHEATLEY: Microphone #1, Marcia Wheatley, Department of Virginia.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes --

MS. WHEATLEY: We discovered in our department if you hold it straight up it registers the vote. If you have it sideways or anything else they were not registering.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay.

MS. DIAZ: Madam President? Microphone #4? Sue Diaz from Alaska. I think the major problem we are having is everybody is trying to click in at the same time. If we could like have this side of the room vote --

PRESIDENT NELSON: That shouldn't matter. That should not matter.

MS. DIAZ: I think you are jamming your frequency.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Pardon me?

MS. DIAZ: I think perhaps we are jamming our frequency trying to do it all at the same time.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Stephanie? It should not matter if we all vote at the same time.

MS. BIGGS: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes?

MS. BIGGS: Microphone #3? #3?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Microphone -- yes?

MS. BIGGS: Anita Biggs, California. Another thing if you use your finger and not your nail it works better. A lot of people are using their fingernail and it wasn't registering.

PRESIDENT NELSON: So up straight, push the button. If you don't see it happen, push it again. No matter how many times you push it, it only is going to cast one vote.

VOICE: Madam President? Janet from Rapid City, South Dakota. I was just wondering, could we do a test where everybody hits yes or everybody hits no? Because when I do no, it doesn't work. The only time it works is when I say yes. And I'm a no person.

(Laughter)

VOICE: Just kidding.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Where is my technician? Stephanie, we can all hit yes or no? They would like to test it so if everyone hits yes, then the next time everyone hits no. So let me give them 30 seconds to reset the voting. So straight up, use your finger. I know we can get this to work. We have, they do this in conventions all over the world so

we, we can make this happen. Please let me know when you are ready, technicians.

Okay. Everyone press number two. Please show the results. Please show the results.

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT NELSON: So 11 of you didn't press number two.

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Let's reset and everyone, let's give them 30 seconds, we'll reset, and we'll press number one. And if you feel yours isn't working we still have some time before the votes. So you can go back and speak to the technician. Okay. Everyone press number one. Remember, mine had the C on it also so I pressed it again and I got my IA showing. So don't panic. Just press it until you get your vote cast.

MS. VAN KIRK: Madam President, Microphone #4.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes --

MS. VAN KIRK: Carol Van Kirk, Department of Nebraska. There are many of us in Nebraska that it did not work the last two times.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay, just press it a second time. Mine showed the C, I pressed it a second time and then it came up. So --

MS. VAN KIRK: They, we tried that. It did not work for a number of us.

MS. WHEATLEY: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Take it off, hold it up, and press number one. Take it off your neck, hold it up, and press number one.

MS. WHEATLEY: Madam President, Microphone #1, Marcia Wheatley, Department of Virginia. Even though we had figured out the correct way to do it, the past two times it has not worked at all for the delegation of Virginia.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. We'll have a technician in the back. Those of you who don't feel it worked go back and the technician will work with you while we go through the organizational Pod support so that they can test it with you. So we're going to, you're going to have plenty of time. Because we are going through the whole Pod reports. So let's not all go at once. Thank you.

Please show the results. Can I have your attention, please?

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: We need to do this quietly. You don't need to all go at once. We have a full organizational Pod to do before we vote. 744 votes were cast, 15 of you pressed number two. Thank you. All right. We're going to move on.

The Organizational Support Pod represents some of the behind the scenes work that keeps the Auxiliary ticking. Quiet ladies, please. Let's give the Organizational Support Pod your attention. Remember, some of you can sit down. We don't need to do this all at once. We have plenty of time. Please welcome the Organizational Support Pod.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President Kris, the Organizational Support Pod consists of the following programs: the Audit Committee, Constitution & Bylaws, Parliamentarian, National Finance, Cavalcade of Memories, Past Presidents Parley, and the National Historian.

The objective of this pod is for the adopted unit to build and foster relationships with The American Legion Family, the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of The American Legion, and the American Legion Riders. Step by step instructions were given to the unit. At the Washington, D.C. Conference we asked for a unit to work with us. Sharon Doran from David C. Johnson Unit 93 approached us and said she would talk with her American Legion Family when she returned home to Arizona. Within days Sharon contacted us and said they had decided on a project.

When she returned from Washington she contacted the Auxiliary, the Post, the Sons of the American Legion, and the American Legion Riders about doing this joint project. Since this is the centennial year celebration for the State of Arizona, and since their town does not have an event for the Fourth of July, it was decided that The American Legion Family would sponsor a parade and an old-fashioned picnic type of event.

In the Autumn of 1976, 200 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed, a group of men who had served to protect those very ideals and women who had served or who had remained home to support those who had served banded together to form a more perfect union. Therefore, in the Spring of 1977 the David C. Johnson Post and Unit 93, Camp Verde, Arizona received their official charter.

It took the month of March to get permission from all the entities involved. A member from each organization was appointed different tasks. First of all, they had to get permission from the Town of Camp Verde. They met with the Town Manager and his staff in April and started the application process and worked with the insurance company for the Post.

Since many of their members belonged to other organizations it was decided to partner with the VFW, Lions Club, Shriners, et cetera. They held two meetings with just The American Legion Family, and then held a third meeting with other members of the community. On the 10th of May they had another meeting with more people. To keep it simple with the Health Department and the Town of Camp Verde, everything they did was donated by the group and they asked for donations from the public to offset the cost.

As their plans came together, here is what transpired. They asked the Yavapai Apache Tribe to lead the parade, as they had been there longer than anyone else. The Town of Camp Verde let them use the facilities at no charge. The local Lions Club is participating and several merchants offered to donate hot dogs, buns, and water.

The Post, Auxiliary, and SAL are splitting the cost of the food. A local church was responsible for the old-fashioned children's games, such as sack races, three-legged races, etcetera, and the Auxiliary unit supplied the prizes. They had an apple pie baking contest and a watermelon eating contest.

Getting the word out is so important. They used the local newspaper and put out articles early and often. They continued to use the media to get the word out and create interest in the community. They also had spot radio announcements.

The festivities were opened by posting of the colors by American Legion Color Guard of Post 93, included prayer by a local pastor, and the National Anthem by an Auxiliary member, and the Pledge of Allegiance by the Chaplain of Post 93. The crowd was addressed by the Grand Marshal, Marshall Trimble, who is the Official State

Historian of Arizona. The theme of the parade was The Declaration of Independence: The Way It Was, The Way It Is Now. They had asked that all parade entrants pick a period since 1776 and use that as the theme for their float or parade display.

The parade commenced by Sharon Doran 2011-2012 Department President began by the Yavapai Apache National leading proudly. During the parade Sharon asked questions referring to the history of our nation. One was, who were the first 13 colonies? Three young men came up with the answer and were given parchment scroll of the Declaration of Independence, along with a book that had the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States in them.

Miniature American flags and whirligigs were distributed to onlookers. Members of The American Legion Family also handed out information on their organizations and even signed up a returning Marine. Membership is everyone's job. Good job!

The community was involved in all facets of the day. For instance, the fire marshal, a marshal's deputy, and a local reporter judged the apple pie contest. The American Legion Riders helped with the parade line up and set up. And the Lions Club held the ice cream social and watermelon eating contest. There was also a membership table set up in the park which had information for all four American Legion family organizations.

Well over 800 people attended the festivities. Several attendees asked if this was the beginning of a tradition. Congrats Arizona Unit #93! You did a great job.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: As an American Legion Family we can build our internal relationships by planning activities to foster our relationships. I would like to close the pod report with a quote from Sharon Doran's report to me. "When all was packed up and the grounds were clean, and all went home, there remained one soul who had been given the keys to the City. Okay, it was just the gym and the bathroom key."

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Sharon thanked God for a gloriously cool day of 89 degrees and rode home in the sunset knowing that once again The American Legion Family and the community can accomplish great things when they work together as a team.

Madam President, that concludes the Organizational Support Pod's report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Women who have served as president of a unit, department, or national organization are encouraged to continue to contribute to the Auxiliary as members of the Past Presidents Parley. These leaders share their wisdom and provide ongoing mentorship to empower and bolster the Auxiliary's present leaders, ensuring the continuity and strength of the organization at all levels. Here to tell you more about the accomplishments of this year's Past Presidents Parley is Past National President and National Chairman JoAnn Cronin.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: Women who have served as president of a unit, department, or national organization are encouraged to continue to contribute to the

American Legion Auxiliary as members of Past Presidents Parley. These leaders share their wisdom and provide ongoing mentorship to empower and bolster the Auxiliary's presence. Leaders ensure the community and strength of the organization at all levels.

This year we are extremely privileged to have a representative from four branches of service with us. Our first Salute goes to Servicewoman Chief Warrant Officer Natasha Wortman.

(Applause.)

MS. CRONIN: Officer Wortman in 2005 was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and served a 16-month tour that had her stationed in Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. While on a humanitarian mission in Islamabad, Pakistan she met female Chinook pilots who changed her life. It was in that brief encounter that she realized, "If these girls can be pilots, so can I. Someone is going to get those wings, and why not me?" In the Fall of 2009 Natasha graduated flight school and headed for Fort Hood, Texas. Since then she has flown 350 combat hours, served as the female engagement team chief, brought food and supplies to Afghan women and children in need, and only got shot once. Chief Wortman's accommodations include Army Accommodation Medals, Army Achievement Medals, Army Superior Unit Awards, Army Good Conduct Medal, and a National Defense Service Medal, just to name a few.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: Please welcome Chief Warrant Officer Natasha Wortman.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: Hi, everybody.

VOICES: Hi!

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: I'd like to extend a couple of thanks to Madam President, to Post 85 of Newark, Ohio.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: To Post 110 from Port Charlotte, Florida.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: I have a special message for you guys that comes from the Female Engagement Team. I am good friends with them and they told me to extend a thank you to guys for the t-shirts and sweatshirts that you sent them. So that's coming all the way from Afghanistan. To my family. This is my mother in the front. Please stand up. I have to say please, it's my mom.

(Laughter.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: Stand up, mom.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: My stepdad. I think he's on camera duties right now.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: And my, I can't say little brother, it's younger brother.

(Laughter.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: Stand up, Jeremy.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: First and foremost, I would really like to take an opportunity to recognize anybody that's worn the uniform that's in this room right now. Please stand at this time.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: And also a big thanks goes out to anybody that has supported us. It's because of ladies like that that came before me that I'm able to do what I do now.

I just wanted to say that it's a big honor to accept this award, especially this year. You know women in combat have been in the news quite a bit lately, so we're making strides, getting through some doors that we haven't been through before. And we really kicked butt in the Olympics this year, too. So it was pretty awesome.

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: There's just one quick story that I'm going to tell you guys about. It involved an organization called the 160th SOAR. That's our special operations aviation regiment, of which still is one of the places that females are not allowed to serve. So they know me by name. I make it a point to go to every one of their briefings. And I think I'm probably a part of their briefing now. When they come I always sit in the back and they know that there is one question that I'm going to ask. And it usually goes something like this. "I was just wondering if having a vagina is a mitigating factor in your selection process?"

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: To which they just say, "Hello, Ms. Wortman. I'm glad you could join us."

(Laughter.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: But all in all we're friends and those guys are great guys. And I just want to let them know that we're always waiting in the wings, we're always interested. And whenever the doors do open for us that we will be there.

The last thing I want to close with is you guys know that the wars are kind of drawing down, they are coming to an end. So you are going to have a lot of soldiers that are home. And I would charge you with stopping to ask them how they are doing, and actually waiting for an answer to hear what they have to say. You have a lot more in common with them than what you think you do.

The common ground that you have is that you all have a passion about something in your life, your family or whatever it may be. There is something that you all feel passionate enough that you would give your life for. So you have that. You've also probably both experienced moments of absolute fear and absolute joy that have brought you to your knees. So you also have that. And I'm sure that all of us can meet on the common ground that we all hate powdered eggs.

(Laughter.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: So I think this award is just an honor to all of us ladies. And we just wanted to kind of show that you can kick ass and still be pretty and still be a girl. So --

(Applause.)

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER WORTMAN: Thank you to my family again, to my mom. She's amazing. I wouldn't be here without her. She's my number one fan. God bless America, and thank you to the American Legion. You're amazing.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: Thank you, Chief Warrant Officer Wortman. Our next Salute goes to Marine Sergeant Margaret Gean. Sergeant Gean was recruited out of Salinas, California.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: She stepped onto the infamous yellow footprints in Parris Island, South Carolina on September 6, 2002. She graduated boot camp not only as platoon honor graduate but also as company honor graduate, earning her meritorious promotion to lance corporal as she entered the Marine Corps Fleet. Currently serving her tenth year in the Marine Corps, Sergeant Gean has experienced many things in her aviation career. She has served in multiple units, such as MALS-24 Kaneohe, Hawaii, and twice at Camp Pendleton. In April, 2008 Sergeant Gean was deployed to Iraq and served seven months abroad serving ground units in flight. Through all of her achievements she has been thankful for her dynamic family, including four wonderful children and a supportive husband who also served as a United States Marine. Please welcome Staff Sergeant Margaret Gean.

(Music.)

STAFF SERGEANT GEAN: Hi, thank you for that warm welcome. I had to lower this down. And can everybody see me past the Podium? Or I might have to step to the side. But after Chief Warrant Officer coming up here and doing her announcement, my husband said, "Please, don't cuss." But after she said vagina, I think it's a free for all now. So --

(Laughter.)

STAFF SERGEANT GEAN: All right. First and foremost, I want to thank the American Legion for this honor. I never have heard of this award before until I came around. And now knowing about the Woman of the Year, where it's like different branches of the armed forces. I want to do a shout out to all the posts in California.

(Applause.)

STAFF SERGEANT GEAN: Whew! And all the Marines and active duty spouses who are here. The main thing I want to talk about is how you guys give back to us and how you guys support us.

The recognition of what you guys do, you guys don't even recognize how much it just embraces us in the military. Not only do we need our support from our spouses when we are married for our children, we need the support from others. And all you guys do that for us. So thank you to everybody who is here who joined in all these posts around here to support all the military, and also the spouses and the children, engaging us for the freedom of America and freedom of what we stand for. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: She has a lovely family out there and dad is out there taking care of the four children. So let's give him, if you would please stand and be recognized?

(Applause.)

STAFF SERGEANT GEAN: And how can I forget? I didn't introduce my family. I also have my sister here, who has always supported me throughout my whole career. She was always the one that was there when I graduated boot camp. So also my sister Kieu Ngan [phonetic] also served in the Navy. So you want to stand up, please?

(Applause.)

STAFF SERGEANT GEAN: Thank you for your support.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: Our next Salute to Servicewoman Award goes to Lieutenant Commander Jennifer Thomas. After Jennifer earned her masters degree in physics, she reported to Aviation Pilots Indoctrination. Following training as a SH-60B pilot she was assigned to the San Diego base, HSL-49. She deployed with a Detachment 3 of USS Jarrett with the First Expeditionary Strike Group in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After earning her helicopter aircraft commander designation, Thomas served as Detachment 4 Operations Officer in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. She then served as Quality Assurance Officer for HSL-49 before receiving orders to Test Pilot School in Patuxent River, Maryland. Commander Thomas is currently the Safety Officer with the Wolf Pack at HSM-57. Recently returning from the historic rim of the Pacific underway as officer in command of Combat Element 1 on the USS Stockdale. She has over 200 flight hours and her personal decorations include the Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal and the Navy-Marine Corps Achievement Medal. She is married to Lieutenant Commander Brian Croteau, who is currently stationed with VAQ 134 at a Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington. Please welcome Lieutenant Commander Jennifer Thomas.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER THOMAS: Ladies, gentlemen, distinguished visitors, honored guests, Madam President, thank you so much for this incredible honor. I'm humbled to be standing in front of you all today and I'm deeply moved by your recognition.

I'm lucky and I'm blessed to have had a career that I get to serve my country doing what I love to do. But I couldn't have made it this far without the support of my family. So I'd really like to say thank you to my family, my extended family, especially my husband. They have been constant sources of support for me, both home and away. And I'd like to give a shout out to HSM-75 and to Jeanette Smith in San Antonio, Texas for nominating me. Thank you!

(Applause.)

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER THOMAS: None of us would be serving without the pioneering women who blazed the path before us. The success of each woman in today's military comes on the backs of those who came before us. I'm no

exception. We've had a long history of women who have served, from those in the Civil and Revolutionary Wars who had to dress as men to pretend to be men to serve, to all the pioneering women who served in World Wars I and II. The women in the WAC, the WAVES, the WASPs. And they really showed the country what women are capable of and changed the face of war fighting forever. I want to say thank you to all the brave women who served in Korea, Vietnam, Operation Desert Storm, and everyone who blazed a path in front of me to make it possible for me to be here.

The Air Force opened the aircraft open to all women in 1993 and the Navy assigned the first woman aboard a combat ship in 1994. And if it wasn't for everyone who served before, and the women who fought for the right for us to serve, I wouldn't be here now, and I wouldn't be able to be a Navy helicopter pilot. So I'm very, very grateful to everyone who has come before me and paved the way. Today women make up about 20 percent of the U.S. military so I want to say thank you to all the mentors, peers, and role models who have shown me what it is to be a woman in the military and for all the opportunities that I've been given. I hope that I'm able to continue to faithfully serve and to make it better for everyone who serves after me. So I hope I'll be a good role model, too.

Thank you so much. I am really honored for the award. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: Thank you, Lieutenant Commander Jennifer Thomas. Our fourth and final Salute to Servicewoman Award goes to Air Force Brigadier General Dana Born. General Born is Dean of the Faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy. She commands the 700 member Dean of the Faculty Mission Element and oversees the annual design and instructions of more than 500 undergraduate forces for 4,000 cadets in 31 academic disciplines.

General Born graduated with distinction from the U.S. Army Academy in 1983 with a degree in behavioral sciences. She holds a masters degree in experimental and research psychology and a doctor of philosophy degree in industrial organizational psychology from Pennsylvania State University. Her staff assignments include Assistant Director for Recruiting Research and Analysis of the Office Assignments, Secretary Defense for Force Management Policy, and Aide to the Secretary of the Air Force, and Deputy Chief of the Personnel Issues Team in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. She commanded the 11th Mission Support Squadron at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C., providing personal education and training and family support to servicemembers in the National Capital Region and around the world. Prior to her current assignment the General was a permanent professor and Head of the U.S. Air Force Academy Behavioral Science and Leadership Department. Please welcome Brigadier General Dana Born.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

GENERAL BORN: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

GENERAL BORN: Thank you so much for this wonderful way that you honor our women in uniform. I think I'm the clean up act and there's been a word said two

times, things happen in threes. I will not say it a third time. But I want to just say thank you from the bottom of my heart. I am truly humbled to join these incredible women on behalf of all of the extraordinary women who serve, both past, present, and in the future, those that are coming behind us.

I am truly grateful to my hometown of Penn Yan, New York.

(Applause.)

GENERAL BORN: To the Johnson-Costello Unit 355.

(Applause.)

GENERAL BORN: Outstanding. I, my hometown was saluted on Hee Haw in 1982.

(Laughter.)

GENERAL BORN: Now I know how old all of you are.

(Laughter.)

GENERAL BORN: The younger generation doesn't usually respond. Hee Haw? But I also want to thank the Past Presidents Parley for considering me for this incredible honor. I would also most importantly like to thank the American Legion Auxiliary. Over three-quarters of a million people who devote yourselves to honoring those who are making sacrifices of service. The support that you offer for our veterans and our family members is absolutely stupendous. I give you an A+ from the Dean at the Air Force Academy. Thank you.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

GENERAL BORN: You know, I also want to say congratulations to the fellow award recipients today. You heard a theme, I think, in all of our comments. And one of them is that none of us really see this award as anything that we have done individually. And we really want to thank the really good fortune of being able to be on the trail of those that were paved from our women pioneers. And we also had the great fortune and privilege of working alongside of incredible teammates, both men and women, some of our nation's best and brightest.

You know, women pioneers, there's a quote by 330 years ago the immortal words of Sir Isaac Newton. And he said if we see further than most, or "If I see further than most it's because I stand on the shoulders of a giant." And the women who have trailed before us are truly giants who opened up doors, crashed through glass ceilings, and made it possible to do what we're doing. We can only imagine what the future holds for the next generation and what they will contribute to our freedom and to our country.

I also think that we owe a debt of gratitude to all of you, you who are servant leaders in your own right who really devote yourselves and your time to making this world a peaceful place and a better place. And so I thank you on behalf of all of the women who serve. We thank you.

(Applause.)

GENERAL BORN: God bless the American Legion Auxiliary. God bless America. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: Weren't they great? Let's give them another big round

of applause.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CRONIN: They will be joining us for lunch today so you will get an opportunity to see them at the lunch today, too. My thanks to Barbara Kranig and Katherine Morris for their support on the Past Presidents Parley program. And Madam President, this concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, JoAnn, for an excellent report. On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary's more than 800,000 members it is my privilege to thank you personally for your dedicated service to our country. And this is to all of the award recipients. JoAnn, are there any resolutions?

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any resolutions? No? No resolutions. Excellent.

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And thank you again for giving us this opportunity to meet an amazing group of active duty servicewomen. How about another round of applause for Chief Warrant Officer Natasha Wortman, Staff Sergeant Margaret Gean, Lieutenant Commander Jennifer Thomas, and Brigadier General Dana Born?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Weren't they great? The National Finance Committee, in addition to developing an annual budget, oversees the financial policy of the organization and makes recommendations to the National Executive Committee for action to ensure the organization is meeting nonprofit benchmarks and government mandates. Here to report on the financial state of the organization is Nicole Clapp, National Chairman of the Finance Committee.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Good morning. Thank you, Madam National President. Our National Finance Committee is a five member committee with each member appointed currently serving a five-year term. The principal responsibilities of the Finance Committee include a variety of functions. Monitoring financial statements, investment planning, fundraising campaigns, and member benefit enhancements. Each of the five Finance Committee members takes her responsibility very seriously and brings invaluable skills and knowledge to our discussions.

One member of the Finance Committee is a liaison to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation, and another Committee member serves on the American Legion Auxiliary Audit Committee. This photo was taken at our June Finance Meeting.

Our responsibilities include in addition to developing an annual budget, overseeing the financial policies of the organization, reviewing the annual audit of the ALA and the Foundation, and making recommendations for the National Executive Committee to take action to ensure the organization is meeting the not for profit benchmarks and government mandates.

We would like to highlight a few major areas of financial accomplishments during President Kris' year in the spirit of For God and Country: We Serve Veterans,

Military, and Their Families. Our financial performance thus far for 2011-2012 fiscal year has been positive. But our expense of this National Convention, along with others during the fourth quarter, has yet to be captured.

Due to the success of our investments, of a \$2.5 million unrealized gain, in conjunction with your donations to the National President's Scholarship Fund, we were able to increase each scholarship by \$1,000.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Thank you. For a total increase of \$15,000. The success of financial fundraising efforts by Quadriga are continuing with three campaigns designated for the American Legion Auxiliary and one for the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation during this fiscal year.

We appreciate your continued support of these efforts. For example, the holiday card campaign netted \$160,000 versus \$120,000 last year.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: And in 2011 calendar year donations totaled over \$330,000. The data analysis of those donations through May of 2012 indicated 90,000 gifts were received. Thank you, members, for your generosity.

There is an interesting side note that 34,000 of those gifts came from non-ALA members.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Yes. In the area of member benefits, two major initiatives were accomplished. At the Washington Conference in February Gallagher Benefits Services joined with the ALA in a service agreement with the mutual goal to add value to our member benefit program. Through this relationship we will be able to enhance the depth and breadth of the benefits we offer to our members.

In April a five-year contract with USAA regarding a credit card affinity program for members with an annual royalty guarantee of \$25,000 commenced. Our intent is to share the royalty revenue with the departments. So members, please consider obtaining your USAA card if you have not already done so. Your participation can benefit both national and departments alike.

With the passage of the increase in membership dues the Finance Committee has had the fortunate opportunity to consider initiatives that in the past have only been called pipe dreams. The Finance Committee, while continuing our efforts to control expenses, has been brainstorming opportunities all year to improve the services we offer you, our members, our veterans, and their families. The Finance Committee and National Headquarters staff explored during the fiscal year 2012-2013 budget planning process in June possible ideas and related cost effectiveness options, ranging from defraying Conference registrations, travel, and rehab assessments. In addition, we believe in the value and knowledge earned by our members through mission training. As a committee we plan to support the future of these learning opportunities at least through 2014.

On behalf of the Finance Committee I want to thank you for your dedication, commitment, and generous financial support of the American Legion Auxiliary's tireless efforts to fulfill our mission. Thank you, Madam President. This concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nicole, are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: No, there are not.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for an excellent report. Let's hear it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Auxiliary's 92nd Anniversary Year has been a special time for members to look back and reconnect with our organization's rich past. The National Headquarters staff, along with the Cavalcade of Memories Committee, has spent the last year preserving, displaying our history, so that it can be shared with generations to come. Please welcome our Cavalcade of Memories National Chairman Elizabeth Stewart.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN STEWART: Madam President, your National Cavalcade is taking a giant leap forward in connecting Auxiliary members with the history of our organization. A major multimedia project with information that will benefit the world outside the ALA and potentially draw in new members interested in learning about our history in a virtual tour accessible from the Auxiliary website, [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org).

We are showcasing some of the best of the best artifacts in the Cavalcade at National Headquarters. The Virtual Cavalcade Tour is made possible thanks to the efforts of Joan Savage, a female Navy veteran, and Jay Hartman, CFO of Virtual Fireflies. Both Joan and Jay are graduate students of the widely acclaimed School of Informatics at Indiana University, Purdue University, Indianapolis. And their professor, Dr. Joseph Defazio.

Helping to orchestrate this project was National Headquarters Michael Butt, Communications and Business Development Director, and his multitalented staff. Nathan Brown, Communications VISTA, has been an integral part of the entire process including the IUPUI website working cataloguing and displaying items in the Cavalcade. In addition to Nathan, Madison Maves, Development Coordinator, has spent countless hours sorting, preparing, polishing, helping to move materials in the Cavalcade Room. Kay Wigley, lists on to our Committee; Kenya Ostermeier, Vice Chairman; and Dubbie Buckler, National Secretary; have also assisted with several projects related to the enhancement.

Members of the National Headquarters Communication Division as well as Cathi Taylor, AmeriCorps and Special Projects Coordinator, have also been instrumental in this process from materials selection to site approval, proofing, scripting, and more.

The numerous special artifacts that you will soon see on your own computer will be displayed in several general categories. In additional phases of this project we will continue to add artifacts as they become documented so let's take a look at a few of those.

A few of the historic and must see items in the museum include the States Dinner gown of the Auxiliary's first National President Mrs. Edith Hobart of Ohio that she wore in 1921.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN STEWART: This beautiful gown has been restored and sealed in a

special museum case. Historical pieces, historic media pieces are framed in group by decades, from the 1920s through today. Frame covers of ALA magazines from the past nine decades are also new additions.

Visitors to the 2012 National Convention here in Indianapolis are sure to make National Headquarters and the Cavalcade a tour stop. We hope to find your names in the guest book at your Cavalcade of Memories. Madam President, Unit and Department Chairmen have incorporated your theme, Honoring Their Service, by interviewing those they owe their eligibility and in various programs and displays to pass on to future generations memories of the way we were. The members of this committee also include Kenya Ostermeir, Vice Chairman; Past National President Pearl Behrend; and member Rosey Newman. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN STEWART: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Being no resolutions I want to say it's an excellent report. Elizabeth, thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN STEWART: Thank you, Madam President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been said that we cannot know where we are going unless we know where we've been. Our National Historian is tasked with recording our history and telling the story of where we've been and what we have accomplished. Please welcome our National Historian Diane Harley.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

HISTORIAN HARLEY: Madam National President, imagine for a moment if you will a place where women work together to make this world a better place in which to live, a place of diversity where young and old, regardless of race and creed, strive to live their lives in such a manner that brings honor and respect to those who have served or are serving to preserve and protect their rights and liberty. Does such a place exist only in fairy tales and our pipe dreams? No, this is every community in which an American Legion Auxiliary Unit exists. Members in every corner of every department work daily to honor the mission of fulfilling the mission of In The Spirit of God and Country, We Serve Veterans, the Military, and Their Families.

It has been a distinct honor and privilege to serve as your National Historian this year. Reading through the 21 reports that were submitted has been a truly awesome and enlightening experience. The Plan of Action stated four objectives for department historians. Developing or enhancing an archive of written materials; the Veterans History Project; creating a Wall of Honor of veterans in Post homes; and Where Are They Now?

Six departments reported that they have developed an archive for their written materials. Seven Veterans History Projects were reported, one of which was completed by a Junior member. Five departments stated that the units had created a Wall of Honor in their Post homes. The Department of Maine wrote a Where Are They Now? report on Senator Susan Collins, a lifetime ALA member who is still very active.

Three trends wove themselves between the reports that were received. Homeless

veterans were a priority in all departments. Many stand downs were supported, with the Department of California holding a stand down specifically for homeless female veterans. The second trend was care packages for the troops. And the third was Operation Military Kids. This was a favorite project for Junior members from several departments, as they filled backpacks for the children of deployed servicemembers.

Unit and department historians burned the midnight oil as they recorded their work for posterity. Twenty-eight senior and three junior history books were submitted for judging. Each one was unique and filled with the rich history of their department. Judging them was very difficult, but there was one that stood above the rest. This year's Toomey Award Trophy goes to the Department of Mississippi, Carolyn Tardy, Historian.

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN HARLEY: Each historian who submitted a book will receive a certificate. This was an exciting year for all Auxiliary members who were able to experience an incredible journey by following National President Kris on Facebook as she traveled throughout the departments and every corner of the Earth. Wherever she visited she was delighted to see the work that was being done to support the troops, honor the veterans, and memorialize those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Of course being a firm believer of grass roots work, she was already ready to jump right in and help get the job done. Whether it was packing care packages, folding pocket flags, or playing bingo and visiting with veterans in VA facilities, she was there delivering service with a smile.

As in the saga of the Never Ending Story, this year is but a tiny segment of Auxiliary history. It will be on and on and it will continue to grow better and better. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are there any resolutions, Diane?

HISTORIAN HARLEY: There are none.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for an excellent report. At this time, for your comfort this meeting is adjourned for ten minutes. Recessed, recessed -- again, recessed.

(Ring of the bell.)

(Music.)

(Recess.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The meeting is now reconvened.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: At this time I want to ask Stephanie Abisi to come to the mike and explain how to use the voting little thing that you have.

(Applause.)

MS. ABISI: Good morning. I just wanted to, I've been talking to the technicians back in the back of the room. And we have, we want to assure you we are registering, when we did the first two test votes. We got almost every keypad. We know that sometimes people don't vote. But one of the things that I noticed when I was helping people out in the back of the room, you are holding it, some people are holding it down. You may say, "Oh, I'm just pressing it." But did you just see how quick I pressed it? Quick. Don't, if you hold it down I think that's when you are getting some of the weird

messages. And right now if you pressed it you would get just a circle with a line through the middle of it because there's nothing open, if you press the one or the two. Okay, well they just opened it back up for me and didn't tell me they were going to do that. Don't look at the light. Look at the display. Sometimes you are going to press it real quick and watch the display. If it says 1A or 2B depending on how you voted, that means your vote counted. Just ignore the light. I think that is kind of some of the confusion.

The other thing is we're going to, we're going to extend the voting time to allow you some more time because we also know that we have 852 votes all feeding down into one frequency. And it may take a minute for it to register. So count to 15. If you don't see your thing displayed, hit the button again. If you get a weird message that's when you should go back to the back of the room. So that, but yeah, just hit it really, really quickly and just don't hold it down. And watch the display. And it doesn't matter which angle you hold it on. They have a 400 foot radius. It doesn't matter which angle. You can be sitting on it and press the button and it should work, so.

(Laughter)

MS. ABISI: So we promise they really are working.

MS. CRAIG: Madam President? Flora Jean Craig, Microphone #1.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #1.

MS. CRAIG: Madam President, is it possible that we can simulate an actual vote with everybody seated?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes.

MS. CRAIG: And maybe even the doors closed and see if we can get closer to 852 votes? Because many of us are concerned how far off we are to 852 votes total.

(Applause.)

MS. ABISI: Okay, this second vote that we did for the chocolate, we had 812 register. We know that there is a department that has many votes, that have probably about 20 people who aren't here. So that would be 832 that we know about. And we probably know that there are, we know that Florida said earlier they had eight people not here. So that is getting, so we are getting -- not everyone, even when we do paper ballots, I spoke to the Parliamentarian earlier, even when we do paper ballots, not everyone votes. You don't have to vote. So we may, we probably will never hit 852.

PRESIDENT NELSON: But can we do the chocolate one more time? Very quickly? Okay. We will do the chocolate one more time before we vote. Okay?

MS. MICHELLINE NELSON: Madam President, Microphone #1?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #1.

MS. MICHELLINE NELSON: Michelline Nelson [phonetic], South Dakota. If we have absentee votes or we do not want to vote, we will not get 852. Because you don't need to press 1A or 2.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Right. If you don't want to vote, do nothing. All right. Okay. But we will do it, one quick vote before we start. But right now it is my pleasure to introduce to you today a delegate from the Veterans Affairs Republic of China. Each year they host The American Legion Family as we make our visit to Taiwan. Here with us today is Mr. Han Song, the Director of the Overseas Liaison Department representing the Veterans Affairs Commission of the Republic of China. Please join me in welcoming to

the stage Mr. Han Song.

(Music.)

MR. SONG: What time is it now? Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MR. SONG: Well I'm Han Song, the Director for Overseas Liaison Department of Veterans Affairs, which is equivalent to the VA in the United States. And I'm lucky and I'm honored to have this opportunity to greet you all on behalf of my boss, Minister of Veterans Affairs in Taiwan, equivalent to VA Secretary in Taiwan, General Tseng whom the National President Kris Nelson met last November. Okay. He had planned to come in person. However, too many things dragged him back. And for necessary management he had to stay in the country. Therefore, he assigned me to greet you on his behalf.

The American Legion Auxiliary and the Veterans Affairs in Taiwan have been associating over 50 years. Can you imagine that? I was only, what, two or three?

(Laughter)

MR. SONG: No, more than that. In those past years with your, we call that role model, we have been trying to help our ladies of our veterans to learn so much by helping raising the funds, by helping the organizing the volunteer groups. And we hope that this is going on in the years to come. When your future National Presidents come to visit us we will arrange for our ladies to meet with, your visitors, next year and in the years to come.

We always say in Taiwan, this may not be true in the Bible, saying that God is so busy that he created mothers and ladies to help the men.

(Applause.)

MR. SONG: I agree because Mother's Day in Taiwan is the biggest holiday in Taiwan. Nobody really gets aware what or when Father's Day is. But never ever, never ever would children forget Mother's Day. We really appreciate and we salute all the ladies.

Okay. Last year Madam President, joined by the National Commander Fang Wong and their party to visit Taiwan. And I hope she and the party had enjoyed the whole trip. She is just saying, "Wonderful!"

Well I must tell you that Taiwan is small but Taiwan is beautiful. You know, Taiwan used to be called Formosa. And Formosa actually comes from Portuguese language, which means a beautiful island. It is beautiful. It is small, and because it is small we get to take you to tour more of the places. So please come. If you get time to visit Southeast Asia please consider Taiwan into one of your agenda. As long as I am there, or my colleague Tim is there, you will be having the good host.

(Applause.)

MR. SONG: Thank you for allowing us. And very sincerely I greet you and I extend our veterans welcome to you to visit us. Thank you, again. Thank you very much. And I have a little gift for Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'll share with you. We were so honored to be in Taiwan. And Hans and Tim took us all over the country. We visited military establishments. We were able to see how wonderful in Taiwan they treat their veterans.

We were able to see transitional living centers, and we got to go to where they train them so that if they, and if they don't make it in the program they are trained on they get multiple opportunities so that they are productive citizens. We got to go to their retirement homes, which were fabulous. They flew us to Kinmen Island where we were able to see the island that, we could see Mainland China from there. And it's the island that our country helps keep liberated. They were wonderful hosts. And it was two weeks that I will never forget. My husband and I thank you personally for your hospitality. We enjoyed every moment.

MR. SONG: She meant Colonel Sanders.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: At that time Terry had his white beard and everywhere they went they called him Colonel. So they would salute, and he would say, "I'm not really a Colonel!"

(Laughter)

MR. SONG: A gift for you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

MR. SONG: All that shines is not gold.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Oh, that's beautiful. It is beautiful. It's compliments of the -- I have to take it out. Look at this, isn't that beautiful?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Compliments of the Veterans Affairs Commission, ROC, Republic of China. Thank you. This is very beautiful. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. SONG: Can we hold it for one picture?

PRESIDENT NELSON: I think, let's take another one. We'll put the box down.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'd like to also recognize Tim, who was, who is Han's assistant. Tim, can you stand up and wave?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And Han and Tim hosted a dinner for us last evening. And at that time we gave the gift, we gave a Terry Redlin painting entitled, "America, America." That will go back to the Minister. But this is a small token of our appreciation for you and Tim, for your hospitality.

MR. SONG: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much for coming. Thank you for spending an hour backstage waiting for me. And God bless you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Can I get the chocolate resolution up, please? Are we ready? And do we have people, we are going to ask that we have pages and staff and technicians throughout the audience when the real voting starts so that if you have any questions, stand up and someone will come around and make sure that your vote is cast. Because we don't want any doubt. We want everyone to be able to vote. So we're going to have people displayed -- not displayed. I guess they can be on display. We will have people placed within you so that they can help you.

All those who feel that chocolate is the most important food group, please press one. Opposed, please press two. Remember, if you don't see anything wait 15 seconds and then press it again. And if anyone had trouble, they are standing up. Let's please have someone help them. Ladies, while you are standing up press it again and see if your 1A or 2B shows up. We already have 800 votes cast, so some of you who are standing your votes were cast because we have more standing. We have 820 votes cast. So if you still feel that your vote was not cast, we will have a technician. How many? We now have 836 votes cast. It is now closed. Okay, can I have your attention please?

VOICE: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: We have 836 votes cast. So take out your flashlights and really look at it. Because it flashes quick. It flashes quick and shows 1A or 2B. So when you are doing it maybe you need your flashlights out so you can see it. Because some of us are thinking it's not happening when it really is.

VOICE: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #1.

VOICE: Thank you. Janet from Rapid City, South Dakota. I think that everyone is going to be wondering when we are done if this is really effective. So I was wondering, are these serial numbers on the back registered? Do they know what votes came from which ones? Because if they do at the end, I mean next month, or whatever, we could get a tally of our votes or request online our own fob numbers. We can write them down and we can find out and make sure --

PRESIDENT NELSON: There is no way that we can do that.

VOICE: There's not? So there's no way of verifying --

PRESIDENT NELSON: These are used at national conventions throughout the country.

VOICE: Okay, thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: When you push them it registers on the equipment in the back. That's, this is what they use at the Democrat and the Republican Convention. They use it at the Convention of Parliamentarians. I think that we're just, people are just not trusting them. Look at your book, because as we told you to press again the counts kept going up. So I think that they are being cast. And we'll have a more, we'll have exact numbers as we vote.

VOICE: Thank you.

MS. VAP: Madam President, Microphone #4?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #4.

MS. VAP: Cheryl Vap, Department of Nebraska. Ladies, I pressed it five times and after the fifth time it did work. So it is going to take you several times to press it before it works.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yeah. Just wait 15 seconds before you do it and it should work. So just keep pressing, you will see it. Now the Chair recognizes Microphone #2.

MS. PORTER: Madam President, Terry Porter from Colorado. I was wondering if just to, for a timing thing, if we did stand up, because it seemed as though when we stood up and then we sit down when the buttons have clicked then it kind of calmed to

know that our votes have counted before a 30 seconds is up.

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's a good idea. When I ask you to vote, stand up. When you see your vote cast, sit down. And then I'll watch and make sure we're seated before we ask for the results. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I thought it would be much easier than this, but we're going to get there. Okay, here we go. The success of any nonprofit organization depends on a sound governance structure that relies on sufficient governance documents to frame the organization's fundamental policies for driving its mission. The Auxiliary's most important governing document is our Constitution & Bylaws, a document that should be known by all of our members at all levels of our organization. Sharon Conatser, National Constitution & Bylaws Chairman, will present her report.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: Madam National President Kris, it is important that all unit members know and understand our governing documents. Why not present them at an initiation ceremony or a meeting where you welcome new members? New members should be recognized and introduced at each meeting to make them feel welcome. As of this report, the online, and I repeat the online National Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules are up to date.

Your department chairmen are working very hard. I heard from many of them concerning the wording for the dues increase, the correct wearing of a hat as an Auxiliary member, and eligibility to serve as an officer. Remember that when a member joins they are eligible to be an officer of your unit.

Governing documents are a very important part of our organization and each of us needs to understand them. This also applies to the documents in your unit and in your department.

Department of Ohio Chairman Susan Masten gave a presentation at their department Junior Conference. She explained Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules, what should be in them, what should not, and their importance. This is a great way to teach our juniors about the governing documents which they need to understand if they truly are our future.

Sue worked very hard and prepared information on how to submit unit constitution and bylaw changes to department chairmen, and the process for the unit approval of changes to Constitution & Bylaws.

DeeDee Buckley, Department of Minnesota Chairman, gave their units guidelines on nominations, the Nominating Committee, and elections. She also shared tidbits of information with the units. Where are corsages worn? Corsages may be worn on the left side, over the Auxiliary pin, as a corsage is considered part of the dress once it is pinned. Where do I wear my Auxiliary pin? On the left side. Members are encourage to wear the pin of their current office in which they are serving or the highest office held. Does an officer need to be installed to assume her office? No. These may be simple questions to many members. However, did you know the answers when you joined?

Not everyone knows the answers. Why not have time at each unit meeting to go

over some policies, procedure items. Everyone can always learn something new.

In New Hampshire Chairman Jessie Bernard set up a display table at Junior Conference and distributed information to them to take back to their units. Ben Franklin visited Junior Conference and they all left with a better understanding of why we need a Constitution & Bylaws to run our organization effectively. She explained the difference between bylaws and standing rules at the Spring Conference.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today." The Constitution & Bylaws sets forth our responsibility to our organization and it will help you make the hard decisions today. Madam President, that concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for a great report, Sharon. Are there any proposed amendments?

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Yes, Madam President. There are seven amendments and one resolution.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Before we give consideration to the Constitution & Bylaws amendments, the Chair reminds everyone that if you want to make a motion or an amendment, it needs to be on a motion form per Standing Rule #10. Motion forms are located at the left of the stage. The debate will be limited to two minutes per each speaker. No person shall speak on the same question more than twice without the consent of the Convention body. The Chair reminds you that we do have a timer and will enforce this rule fairly.

The rules also state that during debate delegates, alternates, and guests are to remain seated within their own delegation or assigned seating area unless they are approaching the microphone, completing a motion form, or exiting and entering the general session. Are there any questions on the rules? Hearing none, Sharon?

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: It is the responsibility of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee to bring all proposed amendments to the floor for deliberation, apart from the endorsement status by the Pre-Convention Committee. Therefore, regardless of the Pre-Convention Committee's recommendation on the adoption of the amendments I will, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, move for the adoption of all amendments. Before moving on to the business at hand by direction of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee be authorized to correct article and section designations, punctuation, and cross references, and to make such technical and editorial changes as may be necessary to assure the accuracy and readability of our governing documents.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee be authorized to correct article and section designations, punctuation, and cross references, and to make such technical and editorial changes as may be necessary to assure the accuracy and readability of our governing documents. Is there any discussion?

Are you ready for the question? Please stand. Delegates only. Those in favor, press number one. Those opposed, press number two. When your vote is cast please sit down.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Wow! Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen. 823 in favor, 13 opposed. The affirmative has it, the motion is adopted. Sharon, please continue.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment #1. To amend the National Bylaws, Article 1, Sections 3 and 4, submitted by the National President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. This amendment allows departments the authority and discretion to establish districts, or counties, or other intermediate bodies recognizing a long standing practice.

This amendment also includes consequential amendments to the Bylaws. If the above amendment is adopted the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and governing documents shall be updated where appropriate to reflect the additional wording "intermediate bodies." The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment be adopted.

If amended Article 1, Section 3 and 4 of the Bylaws will read, "Section 3, there shall be one department in each state, in the District of Columbia, and there may be one department in each territory of the United States. The National Executive Committee may establish departments or units in the insular and other possessions of the United States and may also establish units in foreign countries." "Section 4, departments shall have authority to create intermediate bodies between the units and departments to act as a liaison between such organizations and for the purpose of promoting the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary." "Section 5, a unit in the territorial or insular possessions of the United States, or in a foreign country which does not have department status, may have the status of a foreign unit not attached to any specific department of the American Legion Auxiliary. Any such unit which requests affiliation with a department shall be assigned to the same department as its American Legion Post if accepted by the department. If there is no department of the American Legion Auxiliary, the National Executive Committee shall assign said unit to a department." On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee I move the adoption of Amendment #1.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment #1, to amend the National Bylaws, Article 1, Sections 3 and 4. This amendment also includes consequential amendments to the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and governing documents. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion?

Are you ready for the question? Please stand. All those in favor of Amendment #1, please press the number one key on your electronic voting keypad. By pressing the number one key you are in favor of adopting Amendment #1. All those opposed to Amendment #1 please press number two on your electronic keypad. By pressing #2 you are opposed to adopting Amendment #1.

Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen. 830 in favor, 13 opposed. The affirmative has it and the National Bylaws, Article 1, Sections 3 and 4 are amended. Thank you, ladies. I think we've got it.

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Sharon, please continue.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment #2 to amend the National Bylaws, Article 5, Section 2 and 3 submitted by the National Girls State Committee. This amendment provides for the renaming of the National Girls State Committee to the National Girls Nation Committee.

This amendment also includes consequential amendments. If the above amendment is adopted the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and governing documents shall be updated where appropriate to reflect the committee name, Girls Nation. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee voted to remain neutral on this amendment.

If amended the sections will read, "Article 5, Section 2, there shall be the following standing committees: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Cavalcade of Memories, Children & Youth, Community Service, Constitution & Bylaws, Education, Finance, Girls Nation, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Liaison to the Child Welfare Foundation, Membership, National Security, Past Presidents Parley, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation." Article 5, Section 3 of the standing committees named on Article 5, Section 2, "The following shall consist of five members: Americanism, Community Service, Finance, Girls Nation, and National Security. The following shall consist of four members: Cavalcade of Memories, Education, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. The following shall consist of three members: Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children & Youth, Constitution & Bylaws, Liaison to the Child Welfare Foundation, Past Presidents Parley, and Poppy. The following standing committees in addition to the committee members shall consist of five division chairmen, one of whom shall be appointed from each division for a one-year term: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children & Youth, Community Service, Education, Girls Nation, Junior Activities, Legislative, Membership, National Security, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation."

On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee I move the adoption of Amendment #2.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment #2 to amend the National Bylaws, Article 5, Sections 2 and 3. The amendment also includes consequential amendments and if adopted the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and governing documents shall be updated where appropriate to reflect the committee name Girls Nation. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee voted to remain neutral on this amendment. Before opening this question to debate the Chair calls upon the National Secretary to give the answers to the questions that arose during the Pre-Convention Committee meeting.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President. There were some questions, I think there was some confusion, and so therefore I consulted Counsel General. I'm going to read the letter that he sent to me and then hopefully that will answer the questions.

"I understand there is some question about changing the name of Girls State to Girls Nation as that affects producing the Girls State Guide for department use because Nation does not control departments. It is perfectly proper and indeed advisable to have

such a guide. The American Legion's corporate charter makes it crystal clear that National has no power to control posts or departments. The charter provides," U.S. Code, Section 36, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, trust me on that one. It's a long string of numbers. "That the corporation, the American Legion, may establish state and territorial organizations and local chapter and post organizations, and provide guidance and leadership to organizations and local chapters established under Paragraph #4. Nonetheless, the American Legion has made a number of guides or manuals, such as the Officers Guide, Manual of Ceremonies, a Post Adjutants Guide, and the Post Operations Manual, so as to make the expertise of the national staff available to posts and to departments. The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Guide was written with full input, review, and approval of the counsel general. The guide contains recommendations for how a department should run its Girls State program. Parts of the guide state what a department must do to comply with federal law and other parts advise what a department should do in consultation with state, legal, and tax advisers. The American Legion National Headquarters is very pleased with the Girls State guide and its Americanism Commission may recommend a similar guide for all Legion youth programs. I repeat," this is the counsel general speaking, "the national organization's role is to advise. The national organization does not operate the department Girls State programs but attorneys who sue Girls State programs are also suing the national organization because the National Committee has been named for a department program. This implies National's legal responsibility for the department's actions. This is not the case, but it is costly to defend the national organization and makes defense of the department more costly than it needs to be because the attorneys always think there is a deep pocket available. Changing the name from Girls State Commission to Girls Nation Committee does not change the role or purview of the committee and it absolutely does not conflict with the NEC recognizing the Girls State Guide and recommending departments follow the advice. This is the same as having a unit handbook. The national organization is not responsible for units. But since units and Girls State use trademarks owned by the American Legion the national organization is appropriately responsible to recommend the best way to operate and to state legal obligations in order to protect both the nationally owned names and trademarks of the department operations and funds. Sincerely, Philip B. Onderdonk, National Judge Advocate.

Now if I may, I just want to paraphrase real quick. Because we had a lengthy conversation. Changing the name, and we've covered this -- for those of you who were at the NEC 101 Orientation we ended up having a lengthy discussion about that and I think there was a lot of clarification. Could I have some sound of affirmation from those who had participated in NEC 101?

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It was more clear after we discussed it, is that correct?

VOICES: Yes.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. The confusion is changing the name to Girls Nation does not change the purview of the committee. It does take the name Girls State

National Committee out of your governing documents, which attorneys look at before they file lawsuits. And they say, “It says right here in your governing documents that you run these programs because you have a national program and a national committee named after a department program.” So all changing the name does is protect the legal status of the programs and it protects departments and the national organization from unnecessary lawsuits, which are just costly to get out of and to defend.

Having the guide is appropriate because the name and emblems are owned by the American Legion. They own all the names, American Legion Auxiliary, all the emblems, American Legion Auxiliary Girls State, all the variations thereof, and all the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State logos. All of those are filed with a federal patent trademark division. And counsel general does that for the organization. So is that clear? Okay. Then I’m done. Thank you. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any discussion? Hearing none, are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Please stand. All those in favor of Amendment #2 please press number one key on your electronic voting keypad. By pressing the number one button you are in favor of adopting Amendment #2. All those opposed to the amendment press number two. By pressing number two you are opposed to adopting the amendment.

Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: 732 in favor. 108 opposed. The affirmative has it. The National Bylaws are amended.

We are going to go out of order and we’re going to do one that we think won’t take a lot of time, and then the rest of them we will do tomorrow morning. Do I have your consent to go out of order?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. We’re going to Amendment #6.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment #6 to amend the National Bylaws to insert a new Article 5 with remaining articles to be renumbered. Submitted by the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee, this amendment provides for amended Bylaws to establish a National Executive Board to augment current governing structure. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment not be adopted.

If amended the section will read, “Article 5, National Executive Board, Section 1, Role, the purpose of the American Legion National Executive Board is to conduct business on behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee between regular meetings of the NEC when timing is critical to improve organizational effectiveness and meet best practice governance standards to provide continuity and knowledge and understanding of ongoing issues and matters affecting the organization, and ensure continuous and timely mission delivery. Section 2, duty, it shall be the duty of each member of the National Executive Board to fulfill the responsibilities of the National Executive Board and to articulate the organization’s mission, accomplishments,

and goals to the public and to review and appropriately examine major issues and proposals to the organization to make informed recommendations to the NEC. Section 3, composition, the National Executive Board shall be comprised of no less than 15 members. Six members shall serve by virtue of their position: National President, National Vice President, National Secretary, National Treasurer, immediate Past National President, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chair. A minimum of nine shall be elected to serve three-year terms, six at large members elected from the NEC, one from each size membership group as defined in the Standing Rules, and three at large members elected by vote as National Convention Delegates. Section 4, meetings, the National Executive Board shall meet at the call of the National President and elect its own chairman. The National President shall call a meeting of the National Executive Board upon written request of not less than five members. Section 5, quorum, a majority of the voting National Executive Board members shall constitute a quorum of the National Executive Board. Section 6, authority, the National Executive Board has the authority to conduct business of the NEC between meetings of the NEC. All decisions of the National Executive Board shall be ratified or confirmed at the next regularly scheduled NEC meeting. The NEC will have the authority to accept or reverse any and all decisions of the National Executive Board.”

On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee I move the adoption of Amendment #6 with the following proviso: in the event that the proposed amendment is adopted all provisions in this article will not go into effect until the beginning of the 2013-2014 National Auxiliary administrative year. The at large members shall serve staggered terms commencing with elections to one-, two-, and three-year terms to initiate the staggered three-year term rotation.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment #6, to amend the National Bylaws to insert a new Article 5 with the following proviso: in the event that the proposed amendment is adopted all provisions in this article will not go into effect until the beginning of the 2013-2014 National Auxiliary administrative year. The at large members shall serve staggered terms commencing with elections to one-, two-, and three-year terms to initiate the staggered three-year term rotation. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment not be adopted. Is there discussion?

VOICE: Madam President?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes Microphone #4.

VOICE: On behalf of the National Long Range Strategic Planning Committee, I move that this amendment be referred to the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee to develop the additional documents discussed at the special governance meeting on Monday. The documents to be distributed to departments no later than June 1, 2013. Then this amendment will be brought back to the National Convention in Houston in 2013 for consideration with all accompanying documents.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICES: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I need a copy of that.

VOICE: Your secretary had one for you. I'm sorry.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved that this amendment be referred to the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee to develop the additional documents discussed at the special governance meeting on Monday. The documents to be distributed to departments by no later than June 1, 2013. Then this amendment will be brought back to the National Convention in Houston in 2013 for consideration with all accompanying documents. Is there any discussion?

Please stand. All those in favor of the amendment to refer this to the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee and be brought back to the National Convention in Houston in 2013 for consideration with accompanying documents, please press one. Opposed, please press two.

Wow, it's going quicker. Voting is closed. Please show the results. 783 in favor. 61 opposed.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The ayes have it and the amendment is carried. It has now been referred to the committee so action has been taken on that. I have to find my notes. We are going to listen to announcements, and we're going to come back tomorrow morning and finish the Constitution & Bylaws. I'd like to remind you that we go tomorrow until our business is completed. So you might want to think about grabbing a granola bar or something to bring with you. I think that it will go quicker because the voting, we all seem to have caught on. So we've got our technology working so I think it will be much quicker tomorrow. You are not excused yet, ladies. I am going to ask our National Secretary to give announcements.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President. In the interest of time and growling stomachs, I'm going to go through these as quickly as possible and I'm going to defer some of the ones that are not germane to the next 12 hours for tomorrow.

The important announcement. Once all keypads have been accounted for and placed in the envelope the department representative should walk them back to the Election and Tally Committee at the back of the room. The meeting will not adjourn until all of the keypads have been returned.

So was that instruction clear?

(Ringing of the bell.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay, let me get through the others and tiptoe quietly, but don't leave the room. The Woman of the Year Luncheon will begin at 12:30 p.m. in the Sagamore Ballroom. Transportation for the National Headquarters guided tours departs at 2:00 and 2:30 p.m. from the Convention Center on Maryland Street. That's the one right close to us.

Tomorrow's session -- oh, the American Legion Auxiliary Management Information System, ALAMIS training session will begin at 2:30 p.m. Do we know a room number? In room 109.

Tomorrow's session, reminder, will continue until all business is completed. This means we might work straight through the lunch hour so please plan accordingly. You might want to bring a snack. No coolers are allowed.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: No beverages you might put into a cooler are

allowed.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: But do bring something to snack on. Quick reminder, the Department of Louisiana has one States Dinner ticket. If you would see Syble Deshotel, she has been hanging out in the room right behind the curtain over there, or see someone from the Department of Louisiana.

The Indiana National Convention Committee, the Flower and Corsage Committee, has one carnation corsage left for sale. And that office is right next to the National Headquarters Office.

There are several meetings that are going to take place upon the adjournment of the luncheon, conclusion of the luncheon. The 2012-2013 Junior Activities Committee will meet at Table 54 immediately following the Woman of the Year Luncheon. And you will look for Marie Goede, Table 54, 2012-2013 Junior Activities Committee. 2012-2013 AEF Committee will meet following the luncheon by the doors. Look for Anne Rehbein, by the doors, the AEF 2012-2013 committee. The 2012-2013 Education Committee will meet following the luncheon in the Sagamore Ballroom. Look for Kathy Dungan.

And Madam President, in the interest of time I'm going to hold the rest of the announcements for tomorrow except one real quick one. How did you like your USAA bags?

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: They were made in the United States.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Keep in mind we just received a warm welcome from the Republic of China.

(Laughter)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Inside your bag is an application for the credit card. As much as we love you, when we say please get your USAA American Legion Auxiliary credit card it's not automatic. You do have to apply for it and be approved. So the application is inside your USAA bag.

I want to commend them because, this is a co-branded bag and they put the USAA logo on the backside. Everything on the front of the bag is strictly American Legion Auxiliary. And we just think it's a very attractive bag and we hope you enjoy it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I want to tell you that I think the best thing that was made in China was my National Commander Fang Wong.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'd like to just take a moment of personal privilege to thank you for your patience this morning. To thank you for going through that painful process with me to get those working. I really appreciate that you trusted me that that would work. And I think that will make things much easier as we move forward. So thank you very much for doing that. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Have all of the voting machines been turned in? Hearing that none -- I haven't heard a no so we are adjourned until tomorrow morning.

Enjoy the lunch.

(Whereupon, at 12:08 p.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2012**

PRESIDENT NELSON: Good morning. The 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will come to order.

We will begin today's session with a video that depicts the true price of freedom.

Please remember to silence all electronic devices or take out your checkbooks. We've been doing that really well, so thank you.

National Chaplain Nini Lynch, please come forward and give the invocation.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Let us pray.

Father, with humble hearts and a strong sense of responsibility, yet proud of the confidence placed in us by those who sent us here, we ask your blessings on this assembly, oh, God, that we may be fruitful in our accomplishments and that the effects be good and lasting for the American Legion Auxiliary.

Be with us, God, in our deliberations, inspire us with your wisdom, direct us in our thoughts and guide us as we work for you, our country, and our heroes.

Let us remember and honor our love for one another and our organization, Lord. Keep us respectful as we do our business.

Please be with the people of Louisiana this morning as they continue to deal with Isaac.

And, Lord, we ask that you hold in your strong arms Terry Renee (phonetic), Second District President and Delegate from Indiana who's in the hospital this morning.

All these things we ask in your holy name. Amen.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Please be seated.

(Ring of the bell.)

(Whereupon, a video follows:)

THE NARRATOR: Besides The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary, Indianapolis is Headquarters to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

If you are in the Armed Forces or are retired military, your pay comes through this building. And inside this 1.6 million square foot building is the workplace of the self-described luckiest man on earth.

Meet retired Army Master Sergeant Jeff Mittman.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: I've always considered myself the luckiest man on earth. I survived. I get to grow old with my wife, spend time with my children, watch them grow up.

THE NARRATOR: Jeff was severely injured on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in Iraq.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: The enemy initiated the ambush with IED or roadside bomb that I'm sure you've heard so much about and it sent a projectile through the driver's side window and exited the other side of the vehicle leaving a hole in the side of my face.

THE NARRATOR: Jeff regained consciousness at Walter Reed Hospital. His wife was told that her husband was VSI, military speak for very seriously injured, the worst classification next to being dead.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: I woke up a month later at Walter Reed in Washington, D.C. with my wife speaking to me. I couldn't figure out what the hell she was doing in Baghdad. My last memory was being in Iraq and I was confused and I was - I was scared.

And she started explaining to me my injuries and she started at my feet and worked her way up. When she got to my head, she told me about my most severe injury. I lost my nose, my lips, my teeth, and the majority of my eyesight in the attack.

THE NARRATOR: Yet through it all, Jeff has remained remarkably optimistic and upbeat.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: I've been really lucky. I've never faced any major setbacks. I've never faced any depression at any point. The only time I ever remember being upset is about a week after I woke up, the doctors came into my room to check my eyes. I was awake and alert at that point and able to communicate. They took me down to the clinic and they looked at my eyes and they realized that there's nothing else they could do, that my vision was gone. And I was, to be quite frank, upset. I was 35 years old and I led men into combat. And I realized that was over. I could never do that again.

And my wife wheeled me back up to the room, to my hospital room, and she does this to this day. She'll take my hand when I get upset and talk to me, calm me down.

And as she was talking to me, I received a phone call that a friend of mine had died from his injuries he'd suffered in Baghdad. And at that point, I realized that I was the lucky one. You see, I was going to grow old with my family, spend time with them.

And since that point, I've always promised myself and promised my family that I'd keep looking forward to recover from what had happened and keep moving forward into the future.

THE NARRATOR: Jeff leads a surprisingly normal life with his wife, Christie, and their daughters.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: You know, I lead a pretty much regular life. The only thing I don't do now is -- is drive a car or fly an airplane. I didn't fly an airplane before I got hurt, so it's not a big deal. I spend time at work and I come home and I spend time with my wife and my -- my children.

My children are a big support system for me. Sometimes you get tired and my children come running in the room yelling daddy, daddy and I know it's time to get up, to keep moving forward.

THE NARRATOR: And through it all, Jeff has maintained a sense of humor and perspective on life.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: I've been able to move on and I've started work on my second Master's Degree. And I've learned two lessons through it all. First is that I'm bomb resistant, not bomb proof and two is that you never do anything by yourself.

THE NARRATOR: And through four tours of duty that included the first Gulf War, Afghanistan, and two tours in Iraq, not to mention life altering traumatic injury, Jeff never crossed paths with the American Legion Auxiliary, though the Auxiliary has

impacted tens of thousands of veterans. Jeff is the soldier who got away.

SERGEANT MITTMAN: I really am the luckiest man in the world to have a wife, children, and a community who've gathered around me to support me during my recovery, but not everybody is so lucky.

The work the American Legion Auxiliary does is invaluable and I thank you for what you've done. But more importantly, I thank you for what you're going to do in the future.

THE NARRATOR: In every possible way, Jeff Mittman represents the call to recognize and assist our faces of freedom.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: So, Auxiliary members, they're out in all of our communities, veterans who need our help. And it's up to us to go and find them.

And so as you leave this Convention, remember the purpose of our organization is to serve for God and country and veterans, military, and their children and go out in your communities and find those veterans that need a little bit of help.

We will now proceed with the election of officers. Will all the nominees please come to the platform and be seated on the stage.

National Secretary Dubbie Buckler will read the Convention standing rule governing the election.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President.

Convention standing rule number 24 reads when there is but one candidate for any office, that nominee may be elected by voice. When there is more than one candidate for National Office, the election shall be by secret ballot.

PRESIDENT NELSON: On Tuesday morning, you nominated Peggy Thomas of Virginia for the Office of National President. In accordance with the rules you have adopted, as there is only one candidate for the Office of -- of -- nominees shall be elected by voice.

All in favor of electing Peggy Thomas as National President for 2012-2013 administrative year, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair declares Peggy Thomas of Virginia duly elected as National President for the 2012 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nancy Brown-Park of California is the only nominee for the Office of National Vice President.

All in favor of Nancy Brown-Park for the Office of National Vice president, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Nancy Brown-Park has been duly elected as National Vice President for the 2012-2013 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: At the Division Caucuses on Saturday, each Division nominated a candidate for Division National Vice President. The current Division National Vice Presidents have certified to the Chair the following nominees:

Mary Jo Berning of Iowa has been nominated for the Office of Central Division National Vice President.

All those in favor of Mary Jo Berning as Central Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Mary Jo Berning has been duly elected Central Division National Vice President.

Mary Jo, please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Joan Reinoehl of Pennsylvania has been nominated for the Office of Eastern Division National Vice President.

All those in favor of Joan Reinoehl for Eastern Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: You have elected Joan Reinoehl as Eastern Division National Vice President.

Joan, will you please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Doris Ann Werlinger of South Dakota has been nominated for the Office of Northwest Division National Vice President.

All those in favor of Doris Ann Werlinger, Northwest Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: You have elected Doris Ann Werlinger as Northwest Division National Vice President.

Doris, please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Shirley Fraser of Florida has been nominated for the Office of Southern Division National Vice President.

All those in favor of Shirley Fraser as the Southern Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Shirley Fraser has been elected the Southern Division National Vice President.

Shirley, will you please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Barbara Rutherford of Washington has been nominated for the Office of Western Division National Vice President.

All those in favor of Barbara Rutherford as Western Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Barbara Rutherford has been elected the Western Division National Vice President.

Barbara, will you please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: On Tuesday morning, you nominated two candidates for the Office of National Chaplain, Rosemarie Hauck of Missouri and Gayle Janson of Wisconsin.

We're going to vote, so please stand. And listen carefully before you push any buttons. If you wish to vote for Rosemarie Hauck, press one. If you wish to vote for Gayle Janson, press two.

Listen, listen. If you wish to vote for Rosemarie Hauck -- Rosemarie, can you stand.

Wait. If you're voting for Rosemarie, press one.

Gail, can you stand.

If you're voting for Gail, press two. You ready?

Voting is now closed. The Election Committee will consult with the technician and bring the results to the stage.

We could show the results right now if we wanted to, but we want them to be able to come, the tellers, and do that how we normally do. So they're going to meet with the technicians so that they can bring the results forward and give the election results.

In the meantime, Dubbie Buckler is going to give some announcements.

When I was at the workshops, there was some discussion and some confusion about Counsel General Phil Onderdonk and what he stated about the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. So that's what Dubbie is going to talk to you about.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The National Historian will be elected following the election of the National Chaplain. She was not forgotten.

At the Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee meeting, Counsel General appeared and made some clarifying remarks and made an announcement to those who were present stating that the National organization has withdrawn its support for Ride 2 Recovery.

In explaining that or in making that statement, Counsel General -- beg your pardon -- then went on to and was explaining the importance of distancing yourselves from organizations that could embarrass the American Legion Auxiliary.

The example he cited was an organization called Help Hospitalized Veterans. Help Hospitalized Veterans up until very recently had been a long-standing co-sponsor, co-presenting sponsor of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

The confusion that many of you have stopped me in the hall or approached other people is that some people thought his remarks meant that the American Legion Auxiliary no longer was supporting the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. That is not true.

So I want to be very clear about what he was trying -- what he was trying to explain. Help Hospitalized Veterans has been sued by the state of California's Department of Justice for information that is publicly available on its Form 990 and inconsistencies found with other information that is publicly available.

And after an investigation, the state of California has brought fraud charges against that organization. Fraud charges, there's been no trial, but fraud charges in and of themselves are not a very appealing sound.

The National -- the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs immediately took action once that information broke, that news story broke, and they withdrew its -- its recognition of Help Hospitalized Veterans.

HHV, just to make it simpler to finish this out, HHV is no longer on any of the material or on the Website for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

By defacto or by default, that means that at this National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, the American Legion Auxiliary will be the sole co-presenting sponsor with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

There will be no acknowledgment of HHV in the National Veterans Creative Festival program, materials, or announcements. There will be no presence by that organization at that event.

So I just wanted to answer many of the questions that I've been asked. What he said -- what -- the statement, I think, that caused the confusion, he said you don't want to have guilt by association, so we've withdrawn our support.

You don't want to be guilty -- have guilt by association, so the Legion has officially withdrawn its support for HHV. They had a more -- they had other workings with them from time to time.

The American Legion Auxiliary has no formal relationship with HHV other than being on a stage with them. And so what we were trying to demonstrate at the -- those who attended the NEC 101 orientation, there are times when you want to stand shoulder to shoulder with somebody and times when you want to --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The election for National Chaplain, the number of votes cast 663, number of votes to elect, more than half of the above total, 332. Gayle Janson received 252, Rosemarie W. Hauck 411. Rosemarie W. Hauck has been elected your National Chaplain.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Angela Kilcrease of Mississippi is the only nominee for the Office of National Historian.

All those in favor of Angela Kilcrease as the -- for the Office of National Historian, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Angela Kilcrease has been duly elected as National Vice President for the -- as -- I said National Vice President. Whoa. Angela Kilcrease has been duly elected as National Historian for the 2012-'13 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you your 2012-2013 American Legion Auxiliary National Officers.

Please stand, all of you who were elected this morning.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, ladies.

This is a great team and I know they will be great representatives and ambassadors of the Auxiliary as we soar to new heights.

We will now continue with the Constitution & Bylaws.

Sharon Conatser, can you join me on the stage.

When I asked Sharon to serve as Constitution & Bylaws, she was a little disappointed. She said there was nothing to that job.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: I didn't say that. I asked her if she thought I could do the job is really what I said.

PRESIDENT NELSON: She didn't think she'd have to work as hard as --

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: That's right. That's right.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And I appreciate everything she's done.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Thank you, Kris.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Thanks.

Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment number three to amend the National Bylaws, Article 5, Section 5 submitted by the National Audit Committee. This amendment provides for clarification on the composition of the Audit Committee.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment not be adopted.

If the amend -- if amended, the section will read Article 5, Section 5, there shall be an Audit Committee under the Administrative Committees that shall consist of five members confirmed by the NEC, three appointed members annually appointed by the National President, one designated member from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation and one designated member from the National Finance Committee. One appointed member shall be appointed annually by the National President to serve a term of three years or until her successor is appointed.

On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment number three.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment number

three to amend the National Bylaws, Article 5, Section 5. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment not be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

MS. HOBBS: Madam President, microphone three.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone three.

MS. HOBBS: Madam President, Virginia Hobbs, Department of Kentucky.

I move to amend the proposed reading by sub -- by substituting the following language:

There shall be an Audit Committee under Administrative Committees that shall consist of five members appointed by the National President and confirmed by the NEC.

Three members shall be -- shall serve staggered three-year terms, one each to be appointed annually or until her successor is appointed. The remaining two members shall be appointed for a term of one year with one recommendation provided by each the National Finance Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.

No more than two Past National Presidents may serve on this committee at the same time.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I didn't hear that. Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. It is moved -- been moved and seconded that there's an amendment that reads there shall be an Audit Committee under the Administrative Committees that shall consist of five members appointed by the National President and confirmed by the NEC.

Three members shall serve staggered three-year terms one each to be appointed annually or until her successor is appointed. The remaining two members shall be appointed for a term of one year with one recommendation provided by each the National Finance Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. No more than two Past National Presidents may serve on this committee at the same time.

Is there any discussion?

MS. HOBBS: Madam President, microphone three.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone three.

MS. HOBBS: Virginia Hobbs, Department of Kentucky.

Madam President, the wording of the proposed amendment is to allow for the appointment of a five-member committee selected by the National President.

While recommendations would be made from the National Finance Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation, these are recommendations only.

And as many of us know, a recommendation, whether it be from a Department or from current National Chairmen, is only a recommendation. It does not mandate the National President to use or select the individual named.

Additionally, over the course of the weekend, we heard the term conflict of interest used. Using a recommendation would not in -- constitute a conflict of interest because the function of the Audit Committee is to review and set the scope of the audit of our National Headquarters.

It is not an audit of the volunteers. Volunteers comprise the composition of the National Finance Committee and the Auxiliary Foundation Board of Directors. And, therefore, those individuals are not being audited.

The audit is of the proprietary and compliance with the policies approved by our membership and the committees thereof and it is a function of the efficiency and the propriety of our National Headquarters in following the policies that have been adopted.

I speak in favor of the amendment.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Is there any further discussion?

MS. CRAIG: Madam President, microphone one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone one.

MS. CRAIG: Flora Jean Craig, Department of North Carolina.

I understand a recommendation. What I don't understand is why we would give the Finance Committee and the Foundation Board the right to make a recommendation to the National President for appointments when nobody else recommends to the National President how she should make her appointments.

I think -- I just don't understand why either of those committees should have the opportunity to recommend to the National President "We want Sally on this committee."

I think the National President -- I support the five-member committee. I do not support the rec -- that those two Boards have the right to recommend to the National President. I -- I'd vote no to this.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I just want to give some clarifying information and that is that all of the committees are asked to give recommendations to the National President for appointments. They all recommend whether the people on that committee should move forward or not.

So I just wanted to clarify that there are people who do give recommendations. The Past National Presidents also give recommendations for committee appointments.

MS. CRAIG: Madam President, I understand that, but that is not in writing anywhere. And this becomes in writing.

MS. DUTTON: Madam President, microphone one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone one.

MS. DUTTON: Sandi Dutton, Department of Maryland.

The proposed amendment still does not take care of the fact that the National President could, in fact, appoint a member of the Foundation and a member of the Finance Committee. That is what we don't think is a good idea. We think it's a conflict of interest and this amendment does not help that at all.

We don't want a member of the Finance Committee or a member of the Foundation on the Audit Committee with voting rights. So I'm opposed to the entire amendment and resolution.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any further discussion?

MS. IMBURGIA: Madam President, Priscilla Imburgia, Department of New York.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone number one.

MS. IMBURGIA: Thank you. Priscilla Imburgia, Department of New York.

I'd like to call into question that I'm afraid, and we would need a ruling on this, that this changes the intent of the original motion because the original motion was that they were appointed annually by the National President and now you are dividing that.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I've asked for a ruling and I've been told the amendment is in order.

Is there any further discussion?

PRESIDENT BOONE: Madam President, microphone three.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone three.

PRESIDENT BOONE: Hi. Linda Boone from the Department of Oregon.

I'm confused because we have a national rec -- a nationally recognized auditing firm that does our audit who has recommended this change and we have our Counsel General who has recommended this change.

We pay thousands of dollars every year to both and to give us professional advice. It is not a power grab from -- that seems to be the concern that there's some power grab or nefarious things going on. I don't know what it would gain by sending me to another meeting.

But I'm really concerned that we're not taking the professional advice we've been given and this auditing firm that we use and has given us good information about other things is a nationally recognized leader in nonprofit audits. And they don't -- wouldn't even consider working with us until we agree to have an Auditing Committee.

I am really tired of the negative things that thinks there's some kind of power grab going on.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I have another piece of clarifying information I was just handed. The Audit Committee is not auditing the finances of the Finance Committee or the finances of the Foundation. The Audit Committee is a risk management committee. So there is not a legal conflict.

Is there any further discussion?

MS. IMBURGIA: Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone number one.

MS. IMBURGIA: Priscilla Imburgia, Department of New York.

I'll take my second opportunity to speak to say that my objection --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Just a minute, Priscilla.

Is there someone else at a microphone who's going to speak because you have to be the last one?

MS. IMBURGIA: Yes. I'm at microphone one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: And I didn't -- that's my fault. I didn't see you. The Chair recognizes microphone four.

MS. VAN KIRK: Madam President, Carol Van Kirk, Department of Nebraska.

I do not think it's a matter of a power -- attempt for a power grab. I am very pleased that the members of this Delegation are willing to stand up and voice their opinions. And I personally feel that it's better to hear all opinions than to not.

And it's -- I'm not saying I do not support the Counsel General and the auditors' opinions, but I am pleased to see that the membership is standing up and speaking.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone number one.  
(Applause.)

MS. IMBURGIA: Priscilla Imburgia, Department of New York.

I don't believe it's a power grab that everyone is concerned with either. It is that on the face of it, it lacks independence. And the Audit Committee should always have complete independence over what they are auditing. If they're auditing the risk of those two committees of what their decisions are, then those doing that need to have complete independence from them. And that is what the question is.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any further discussion?  
(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, are you ready for the question? We're voting on the amendment. Are you ready for the question? Please stand.

Okay. We are now voting on the substitute amendment that reads there shall be an Audit Committee under Administrative Committees that shall consist of five members appointed by the National President and confirmed by the NEC.

Three members shall serve staggered three-year terms one each to be appointed annually or until her successor is appointed. The remaining two members -- excuse me -- shall be appointed for a term of one year with one recommendation provided by each the National Finance Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.

No more than two Past National Presidents may serve on this committee at the same time.

It takes a majority vote to amend this. All of those in favor, press one, opposed press two. And then -- okay.

We're ready for the results. We're ready for the results, please. Will the technicians please show the results. The amendment has failed. There were 284 in favor, 363 opposed. They are going to fix this so that we can see the results. Six hundred and forty-seven votes were cast.

Now we're back to the original proposed amendment. Is there any discussion?  
(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing no discussion, we will -- I will ask you to stand to vote, please.

Is someone at the microphone? No. Okay.

So now we are voting on the adoption of this amendment which requires a two-thirds vote. All those in favor of the amendment -- do you want me to read it?

VOICE: Yes.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. There shall be an Audit Committee under Administrative Committees that shall consist of five members confirmed by the NEC, three appointed members annually appointed by the National President, one designated member from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation and one designated member from the National Finance Committee. One appointed member shall be appointed annually by the National President to serve a term of three years or until her successor is appointed.

Are you ready for the question? All those in favor, press one, opposed press two. Okay. We have the results. Eight hundred and thirty votes were cast, 499

opposed, 331 in favor. The amendment has failed.

Sharon, please continue.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment number four to amend the National Constitution, Article 7, Section 1 and National Bylaws, Article 13, Section 1 submitted by the National Governing Documents Review Committee.

This amendment proposes a change to the required notice for amendments to the National Constitution & Bylaws from 30 days to 20 days.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted.

If amended, Article 7, Section 1 of the Constitution will read this Constitution may be amended at any National Convention by a two-thirds vote of the total authorized representation thereat provided the proposed amendment shall have been submitted through the National Secretary to several -- sorry -- to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by mailing same to them at least 20 days prior to the convening of the next National Convention and provided further that all proposed amendments shall be read at a regular meeting of the Convention.

Article 13, Section 1 of the Bylaws will read Section 1 of the Bylaws may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat provided the proposed amendment shall have been submitted through the National Secretary to all Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by distributing same to them at least 20 days prior to the convening of the next National Convention.

On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment number four.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment number four to amend the National Constitution, Article 7, Sections 1 and National Bylaws, Article 13, Sections 1.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

MS. LEE: Madam President, Susan Lee.

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm looking for you. What microphone?

MS. LEE: Speaker number one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone number one.

MS. LEE: This amendment affects the amendments to our Constitution & Bylaws, a document which governs the world's largest women's veteran's organization.

Yesterday, proposed Amendment number six was withdrawn with its replacement to be sent to Departments by June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. All amendments should be sent to Departments by June 1.

We as Delegates need time to speak with the members in our Department before voting their wishes. Thirty days allows little time and 20 allows even less. Therefore, I speak against this amendment.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any further discussion?

The Chair recognizes microphone number four.

MS. DORAN: Sharon Doran, Department of Arizona.

While it seems like 20 days is less, 20 days is actually more. If for -- a lot of Departments do not have their Conventions until extremely late, this -- therefore, this -- by having it to the National 20 days prior to National Convention gives you 10 more days. Is that not correct?

Therefore, I recommend that this be passed.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are you ready for the question?

The question is on the adoption of Amendment number four to amend National Constitution, Article 7, Section 1 and the National Bylaws, Article 13, Section 1.

Please stand. All those in favor of the amendment, please press number one on your electronic voting pad. Opposed, please press number two.

Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed. Four hundred and ninety in favor, 158 opposed. The amendment has been approved.

Sharon.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment five to amend the National Constitution, Article 5, Sections 1 through 3 and National Bylaws, Article 4, Section 1 through 5 submitted by the National Governing Documents Review Committee.

This amendment provides for clarification on the role, responsibility, and authority of the National Executive Committee.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the adoption (sic) be adopted.

If the proposed amendment is passed, Article 5 of the Constitution will read between National Conventions, the National Executive Committee shall serve as the governing body of the organization with fiduciary policy and strategic responsibility for the organization.

Section 2, the National Executive Committee shall be comprised of the National President, National Vice President, the five Division National Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, National Historian, and one Executive Committeewoman or alternate from each Department to be elected as such Departments shall be determined and such other members as provided in Section 3.

Section 3, all Past National Presidents in good standing in the local Units shall be members for the life of the National Executive Committee with all rights except the right to vote.

Section 4, the term of the office of a National Executive Committeewoman shall commence immediately following the adjournment of the National Convention next ensuing and shall end at the adjournment of the next succeeding National Convention. The alternate National Executive Committeewoman shall serve only in the absence of the National Executive Committeewoman.

If the proposed amendment is passed, the section of Bylaws will read, Section 1, role. The National Executive Committee shall serve as the governing body of the

organization with fiduciary policy and strategic responsibility for the organization between National Conventions.

It shall be the duty of the National Executive Committee to ensure that the organization has adequate resources to fulfill its mission. The National Executive Committee is responsible for the organization's adherence to legal standards and ethical norms.

Section 2, duty. It shall be the duty of each National Executive Committeewoman to fulfill the responsibilities of the National Executive Committee and to articulate the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and to her Department.

Section 3, meetings. The National Executive Committee shall meet at least three times a year as described in the standing rules. Special meetings may be held upon reasonable notice at the call of the National President. The National President shall call a meeting of the National Executive Committee upon written request of not less than 15 members.

Section 4, quorum. A majority of the voting National Executive Committee members shall constitute a quorum of the National Executive Committee.

Section 5, authority. All questions affecting the election, eligibility, conduct, and capacity of the National Officers shall refer -- be referred to and determined by the National Executive Committee.

The National Executive Committee shall be responsible for establishing the process and procedure for making the determination that a National Officer or a National Committee member serving a multiple-year term is incompetent, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to discharge the duties of the National Office.

All questions affecting the election, eligibility, conduct, and capacity of a National Executive Committeewoman from any Department or of the Department Officers or members of the Department Executive Committees shall be referred to and determined by the Executive Committee or governing board of the Department involved which shall be the final authority thereon.

The rules governing the fulfillment of this section shall be as provided in standing rules.

On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment number five.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment number five to amend the National Constitution, Article 5, Sections 1 through 4 and National Bylaws, Article 4, Sections 1 through 5.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, are you ready for the question? Please stand.

And let me just explain to you the reason that the voting didn't work was because we asked them not to show the election results and I went too fast and didn't

give them time to reprogram. So they will now show on the screen.

So those in favor, press number one, opposed number two.

They're not working. I know. Could you have the technicians check because I don't think any of them are working right now. So when they reprogram -- Terry, could you ask them. They're not working.

Have a seat. We'll call you to stand up again in a moment. Oh, standing back up. They're working now.

VOICE: Still not working.

PRESIDENT NELSON: We have 700 votes showing, I guess. Mine just went through, so keep looking and see.

MS. COLLINS: Madam President, microphone two.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone two. Where is microphone two? Okay.

MS. COLLINS: Brenda Collins, Department of South Carolina.

May we request that this vote be --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes. I just --

MS. COLLINS: -- done away with and a whole new vote taken before any totals are given?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yeah. I just did that.

MS. COLLINS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: We need to reset. Ready? Okay. Open the vote, please.

Please stand. All in favor of Amendment number five, please press number one, opposed number two.

Voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen. Five hundred sixty-five votes cast in favor, 53 opposed. The affirmative has it. The National Constitution, Article 5, Sections 1 to 3 and National Bylaws, Article 4, Sections 1 to 5 are amended.

Sharon, please continue.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: This is Amendment number seven.

Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee submits Amendment number seven to amend the National Constitution, Article 4 and Article 5 and the National Bylaws, Article 3. This is submitted by the Department of Arizona.

This amendment provides for the establishment of the National Officer positions of American Legion Auxiliary National Second Vice President who will serve as Chairman of the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee and Third Vice President who will serve as Chairman of the National Children & Youth Committee.

The job descriptions for these two officers are added to the National Bylaws in Article 3 along with provisions for the absence of the presiding officer and vacancies for the new officers being added.

This amendment also includes the following consequential amendments to the Bylaws:

Number one, the new National Second Vice President and National Third Vice President will be added to Bylaws, Articles 2, Section 1 and 6.

The term Vice President or National Vice President will become National First

Vice President in the following:

A, National Bylaws, Article 2, election of officers, Section 1 and 6; B, National standing rules by duties of the National Officers.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment be adopted.

If amended, the section will read Constitution, Article 4, National Officers, Section 1, the National Convention shall elect annually a National Vice President, a National First Vice President, a National Second Vice President, a National Third Vice President, five Division National Vice Presidents, a National Chaplain, and a National Historian.

The five National Vice Presidents shall serve without seniority and one shall be elected from each Division.

The National President, National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, and National Third Vice President shall be Delegates to the National Convention and members of the National Executive Committee and shall serve as Chairmen and Vice Chairmen respectively of both bodies.

The five Division National Vice Presidents, the National Chaplain, and the National Historian shall be Delegates to the National Convention and members of the National Executive Committee.

Constitution, Article 5, National Executive Committee, Section 1, between National Conventions, the administrative powers shall be vested in a National Executive Committee which shall be composed of a National President, National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, National Third Vice President, the five Division National Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, National Historian, and one Executive Committeewoman or alternate from each Department to be elected as such Departments shall determine and such other members as provided in Section hereof.

The National Executive Committeewoman from each Department by virtue of her office shall be a member of the Executive Committee of the Department which she represents and her alternate shall act in her behalf in the absence of such committeewoman.

If the proposed amendment is adopted, the new section of the Bylaws will read Bylaws, Article 3, duties of officers, Section 2, National First Vice President in the absence of the National President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the National First Vice President to be the presiding officer. The National First Vice President shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.

In the event of a vacancy in the Office of the National President, the National First Vice President shall become National President and shall assume the duties and authority of the office. She shall assume such other duties as assigned to her by the National President.

Should illness or accident permanently incapacitate the National President or if for any reason she shall be unable to discharge the duties of National President, the National Secretary shall apprise the National Executive Committee, submit to its members medical confirmation from three doctors of this incapacitation and call for a referendum vote to declare the Office of the National President vacant and to authorize

the National First Vice President to assume the duties and authority of the office.

If the unexpired term of office for National President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the Office of National President.

In the event the National First Vice President thus assumes the Office of National President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the Office of National First President. If this term is less than six months, the person so named is eligible to election by regular process to the Office of National First Vice President.

Section 3, National Second Vice President. The National Second Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee.

In the absence of the National President and the National First Vice President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the National Second Vice President to be the presiding officer. The National Second Vice President shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.

In the event of a vacancy in the Office of the National Second Vice President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the Office of the National Second Vice President.

If the unexpired term for the National Second Vice President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the Office of National Second Vice President.

Section 4, National Third Vice President. The National Third Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the Children & Youth Committee.

In the absence of the National President, the National First Vice President, and the National Second Vice President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the National Third Vice President to be the presiding officer.

In the absence of the National President and all three National Vice Presidents, a Chairman pro tem shall be elected. The National Third Vice President shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.

In the event of a vacancy in the Office of National Third Vice President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the Office of the National Third Vice President.

If the unexpired term of the Office for National Third Vice President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the Office of National Third Vice President.

The current Bylaws, Article 3, Sections 3 through 7 will be renumbered as Article 3, Sections 5 to 9 as appropriate.

On behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment seven with the following provision:

In the event that the proposed amendments are adopted, the Second Vice President and Third Vice President will not go into effect until election process of National Convention 2013.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of Amendment seven to amend the National Constitution's Article 4 and Article 5 and the National Bylaws, Article 3, Section 2 with the following proviso:

In the event that the proposed amendments are adopted, the Office of Second

Vice President and Third Vice President will not go into effect until election process at the National Convention in 2013.

This amendment also includes consequential amendments to the Bylaws and standing rules. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that this amendment be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

MS. GROUT: Madam President, microphone four.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone four.

MS. GROUT: Coral May Grout, Department of Massachusetts.

I'm really concerned about this proposed amendment because the planning process for the next year begins in April and in some cases before that.

All of your National Chairmen come together at a meeting in April and begin the planning process to work and begin these programs for preparation of the coming year.

If we sit down and elect a Third Vice President for Children & Youth and a Second Vice President for VA&R, you're going to put off the preparation for those two most important programs of the Auxiliary for about six months. And I think it's going to hurt our organization as a whole by doing this.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone two.

MS. WARD: Thank you, Madam National President. Trish Ward, Delegate from Kansas.

I have great concern over this Constitutional change. I do not endorse its adoption. We've had many great leaders come out of all of our Divisions, even the smaller Western and Northwestern Divisions.

This year, our leading candidate for National Vice President comes from the west, our smallest Division, with only 109 Delegates.

I am very proud of my membership within the Central Division, but I have great concern with a Delegate double that of our smaller Divisions, that this will upset the balance we have enjoyed, leaving the Central Division to fully control the election of our most senior leadership.

This will turn into a political divisional minefield. Think about that.

Currently the American Legion Auxiliary provides financial support to our National Vice President. So if we add two additional Vice Presidents, do we have to pay them too? I trust someone has thoroughly researched --

(Applause.)

MS. WARD: -- Indiana corporate law and this topic. As a Chairman having served her first year, I can testify as to the importance of the many months of planning, dialogue, and meetings prior to the actual appointment.

I have great concern over leaving leadership of two of our most recognized programs to the last minute at Convention, thereby negatively impacting a timely execution of a Plan of Action for these core programs.

A stack Division that would control the election, a financial cost to our organization, and late planning and execution of two of our premier programs makes this

Constitutional amendment a scary and bad proposition for our organization and its members.

I strongly oppose this Constitutional change and do not endorse its passage.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone three.

MS. MUNCHBACH: Madam Chairman, Deborah Munchbach, Department of Arizona.

I would like to read the rationale for the amendment in its defense. This amendment is being proposed to safeguard the right of National Delegates to elect the organization's National leaders.

Currently the National VA&R Chairman and Children & Youth Chairman are appointed by the new National President every year. The practice has developed that these women will automatically go on to run for National Vice President and National President.

Delegates feel they are being given only one choice when they vote and other members are being discouraged for running for National Vice President or National President if they have not held these two named Chairmanships. In essence, members feel that the National Presidents are choosing their own successors.

It is understood that the Office of National President requires experience and skill. By adding the two new offices, the elected officers will have sufficient time to gain this experience and skill and the Delegates will be electing the four highest offices in the organization.

The aim is to encourage women when they feel they are prepared to run for National office with no specific National appointments implicitly required.

And I speak in favor of the resolution or the amendment. I'm sorry. I have great faith in the ability and integrity of the Delegates to choose the most qualified leader and in more personal reasons that they might vote for somebody.

And I thank everyone for their attention and -- and studying of this amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

MS. SICKMOND: Phyllis Sickmond, Department of New York.

The Delegate at microphone three took the words right out of my mouth. I think it's time that the Delegates at the Convention had a voice in their leadership and the -- there's no extra expense as Children & Youth Chairmen and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairmen are already called in to all things. Time has come.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four.

MS. DORAN: Sharon Doran, Department of Arizona.

First of all, I want to thank Sharon Conatser for reading it thoroughly. She needs to have a drink of water now.

And what I would like to explain is I know that this is an exceptionally controversial issue with a lot of ramifications. I would like to kind of clarify something.

Let's take a hypothesis. We already know that we're going to have a Children & Youth Chairman who is already in place. Therefore, that Children & Youth Chairman next year, yes, she would have to run for the VA&R, the Second Vice President position.

We always looked at our candidates as they're coming up and they step into those positions and we evaluate what they have done through the year. These women that you do have are extremely qualified and we all know that.

We feel that we are capable of looking at the qualifications of everyone that comes up and that I would see nothing that would say that she wouldn't get that position unless she just did an absolutely horrible job which we know is not going to happen.

I would also like to say that in our Department, and I don't know how it is at National, so I don't have all the answers, our Second Vice President receives no money. Our -- anybody in that receives no money until they get to become a Department President and then they have somewhat of a stipend.

I don't see that just because you've given them the name of Second Vice President, Third Vice President that you have to pay them. So I don't see that as much of a financial problem.

This was done with the good intentions of giving the Delegates the right to choose their leaders the same way we choose the President of the United States of America which sometimes doesn't have any experience at all.

(Applause.)

MS. DORAN: So with that said, I want you to know that we are aware of the problems and we just did not --

PRESIDENT NELSON: Time.

MS. DORAN: -- do this willy nilly. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Time.

VOICE: Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: What? Where are you? The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

VOICE: Madam President, with all respect, the people who are elected to be our National Vice President and our National President have been Chairmen for the National organization for many years. They are the ones who work together with the other Chairmen and can actually know who would be the best person to come into the position of leadership, to become a National Vice President and National President.

I fully have faith that every National Vice President has the knowledge to make the best decision for the next person to come in line. We elected them. We support them. We have confidence in their knowledge and we should allow them to do their job.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four.

MS. WELTON: Yes. Alcyne Welton, Department of Connecticut.

I am opposed to this amendment. I believe that these ladies are watched for

many years to see what their qualifications are and when the choices are made to give them the appointment, the special appointment, they are more than ready for that appointment.

If you're concerned that you want to elect somebody else by virtue of your membership, you can always run off the floor if you dare. And that's my opinion.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four -- one, I mean. To me, this is four, three, two, one. It's just the opposite.

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: Madam President, Nancy Brown-Park from the Department of California.

I can only speak on my own experience. I've spent the last 10 years to be elected today as your National Vice President. It's taken me that many years to understand better the organization and the responsibility that I have when I become National President.

I served 10 years on committees. I've served on special committees. I've served on the Foundation. I've served on the long-range strategic planning. I built a relationship with The American Legion. I built a relationship with the staff. I've had 10 years to get my family prepared for what I have to do.

In my own Department, I have to raise \$60-70,000 and I don't think that's possible if you come in as a National Children & Youth Chairman. I speak against the amendment.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four.

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz from Alaska.

I call for the question.

PRESIDENT NELSON: That will take a two-thirds vote, so please stand and we'll vote if we're going to call for the question. This is the vote to end debate.

If you agree that you want to end debate, press number one. If you want to continue debate, press number two.

The voting has been closed for the -- would you please show the results. The debate has ended. Are you ready for the question? Please stand.

All those in favor of Amendment number seven, please press the number one key on your electronic voting keypad. By pressing the number one button, you're in favor of adopting Amendment number seven. All those opposed to the Amendment number seven, please press the number two on your electronic voting keypad. By pressing number two, you are opposed to adopting the amendment.

The voting is closed. The results will now be displayed on the screen. This takes a two-third vo -- two-thirds vote. The negative has it. The National Constitution & Bylaws are not amended.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm sorry. In favor 376, opposed 266.

VOICE: The other way around.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Oh, oh. It's been a long morning. I'm sorry. In favor 266, opposed 376. The amendment has failed. It takes a two-thirds vote.

Okay, Sharon. I might have to dial 3309 for my mind after all, right?

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Both of us. Both of us.

Madam President Kris, that concludes the amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws. However, there is resolution, a -- one resolution.

And I want to say thank you. It's been very challenging and it has been a great learning experience.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Will Terry Porter, the Chairman of the Resolutions Committee, please present the resolution.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam National President, the resolution regarding the Divisional National Vice President's travel was submitted by the Department of Nebraska. It read as follows:

Whereas, the American Legion Auxiliary Constitution, Article 4, Section 1 states the National Convention shall elect annually five Division National Vice Presidents one from each Division;

And, whereas, when members declare their candidacy to represent their Division as a National Vice President, they do so with the expectation that they will travel through the Departments within their Division as has been established by a long-standing tradition and precedent;

And, whereas, standing rule five, National Division Vice Presidents Number Two give specific instruction as to the required process for authorization of said visits by the National President;

And, whereas, the National -- the American Legion Auxiliary guidelines for National Officers' book is still being used by upcoming leadership;

And, whereas, the section covering guidelines for Division Vice Presidents, paragraph number nine states requests for National visits to Departments must be made through the National President's Office. The National President will authorize the Division Vice President's visit so as not to conflict with her own schedule;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that standing rule five, Division Vice President, paragraph two have the following sentence added:

As soon as possible after receipt of the request, the National President will authorize the official visit so as not to conflict with her own travel plans allowing the National Vice President to finalize her travel plans in a timely manner;

And be it finally resolved that this change will be hereby adopted by the American Legion Auxiliary Convention body during the 2012 National Convention and become effective during the 2012-2013 administrative year.

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution not be adopted.

Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of the resolution concerning the Divisional National Vice President's travel as just read.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of the resolution as read. The Constitution & Bylaws Committee recommends the resolution not be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

Madam President, microphone four.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone number four.

MS. HATFIELD: Donna Hatfield, the Department of Nebraska.

I request that the proposed resolution which was submitted by the Department of Nebraska be withdrawn.

PRESIDENT NELSON: You mean the second? Nebraska has requested that the resolution be withdrawn. Is there any objection to the resolution being withdrawn?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, the resolution is withdrawn.

MS. HATFIELD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Sharon, are there any other resolutions?

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: No, Madam President. That concludes the National Constitution & Bylaws Report.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. Thank you, Sharon. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I think the audience agrees. You did a great job.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Now it tells me we're going to adjourn because this is from yesterday.

Our first part of this morn -- our first part this morning is the Family Support Pod. This pod represents all aspects of a military family's life, faith, patriotism, service, and ongoing education.

Please welcome the Family Support Pod.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Madam President, I need to put my glasses on. The members of the Family Support Pod were really excited to begin working with our adopted Unit following last year's National Convention. But after three months of attempts to begin the process, we decided it was not to be.

So in December, we advertised for a Unit who would be interested in working with us. When the preliminary ad didn't produce any results, the members of our Pod began making contacts with people and asking them to help us locate a Unit.

At the Washington Conference, we were pleased to announce that two units had come forward and agreed to work with us. Once again, it was not to be and these relationships dissolved in the spring.

However, we are happy to report that each of the members of our pod received many exciting reports from units who embraced the pod approach. So today we will be telling you about some of them. We'll begin with Americanism.

Melanie.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: The Department of Florida did an outstanding job promoting Americanism in their Department. Military families were not left behind as Florida's units went into the classrooms promoting flag etiquette and the Americanism Essay Contest. They volunteered over 1,705 hours, spending \$5,288, helping 1,065 family members.

A total of 221 essays were submitted and Unit 273, Madeira Beach enlisted an entire fifth grade class to participate in the essay contest, submitting a total of 86 essays from that one school.

Another outstanding project was accomplished by Unit 14 where they presented braille flags inscribed with the Pledge of Allegiance to visually impaired students at two St. Petersburg schools. Way to go, Florida. What an outstanding report.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: The Harold Gregory Memorial Unit Number 626 from the Department of Texas combined Americanism and community service into their Education Program to truly achieve the pod approach.

This Unit is only three miles from a military base, so they were able to really work through the theme identified by our National President Kris Nelson. They adopted the Burton Hill Elementary School. The members donated 400 composition books to the school instead of a variety of supplies.

The school also requested felt furniture pads to go under the legs of student desks in order to reduce noise and provide a calm atmosphere. Students wrote thank you notes to the Auxiliary and post and these were pasted on to a huge roll of construction paper and displayed at the post.

The Americanism component included the promotion of flag etiquette, patriotism, and respect for the flag. Each student received a lapel pin and Pledge of Allegiance along with a flag etiquette book.

The community service component of the Unit's program this year involved a chicken kabob and rice dinner with summer side dishes and dessert. Yummy.

The community was invited to participate. They had a raffle for several items. The proceeds were used to purchase composition books for the Burton Elementary School as well as another elementary school, the AV Kato Elementary School.

Now Nini Lynch will talk about the Chaplain's component.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: The Chaplain's report for the pod included information about Dr. Doyle Williams who placed a wreath at the Haleyville War Memorial which has names of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom in Haleyville, Alabama.

American Legion member Dr. Doyle Williams is 92 years of age. This activity was accomplished as a community service activity as well as for that of the Chaplain.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: The Family Support Pod asked that the Unit select one of our targeted groups of people and adopt them for the year providing anything and everything they could think of to assist them. Many Units did exactly this and didn't even realize they were following the instructions to a T.

Here's Martha Corriher with the Community Service component.

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: The Palmer-Roberts American Legion Auxiliary Unit 214 from Willoughby, Ohio took the operation impact challenge and adopted more than one of the target groups The American Legion helps.

I want to share some of the work they did for the homeless veteran population. This Unit began in August with a barbecue lunch and an outdoor activity.

In September, they participated in the salute to the military event sharing with all veterans what the Auxiliary had to offer them.

In November, they assembled baskets for the homeless and other military families.

December finds them hosting a dessert party and gifts for the homeless veterans. January produced more buddy bags for the homeless vets.

Then in February, they prepared Valentine treat bags and presented them to the homeless vets.

So, you see, this Unit selected a group of veterans, made it a priority during the year. The Unit did not only remember our homeless vets, but they also reported projects that covered local veterans, the active duty military, and all their families also to be remembered every month during the year.

On average, they participated -- the number they had participate were 35 members out of a membership goal of 269.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you for all your work with the Family Support team this year. You made a huge difference.

Madam President, that concludes our pod report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you very much.

For God and country is a value that our organization is proud of. And National Chaplain Nini Lynch has helped us remember that throughout this year. She joins us now to present her report.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Madam President Kris, it has been an absolute joy to serve as your National Chaplain for year 2011-2012. I've had the pleasure of working with Department and Unit Chaplains across the nation. We've maintained contact by e-mail and the Chaplain's Facebook page first established by Past National Chaplain Vickie Thrower.

I received formal reports from 15 Department Chaplains and a few Unit Chaplains. The Department with the most outstanding report was California.

(Applause.)

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Chaplain Alzora Carter sent a detailed report of the many activities throughout her state. She included a CD with the coverage of a memorial service honoring the Past National President Josie Melgard.

She reported cards of encouragement, sympathy, and get well sentiments from Units in her state alone of over 8,000. Combined with those of other states reporting, the number soared to more than 25,000.

I received a report from Haleyville Unit 33 in Alabama, the members of which have performed many activities honoring the military service of those in their community.

Of their many outstanding activities, they placed vases of red, white, and blue flowers and American flags on either side of a memorial area they created at their City Hall honoring casualties from their locality of all wars.

They made donations to churches. They placed books in church libraries, school libraries, and public libraries in honor of deceased members, spiritual assistance to the family of a child whose life was lost in a fire.

Like countless other Units nationally, Unit 33 made donations to Children of Warriors Fund, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, National Veterans Creative Arts Festival,

Spirit of Youth, and American Legion Auxiliary Foundation in honor of deceased members in their respective Units.

They set up a memorial shelf for Mark Forester from their town whose life was lost in Afghanistan. His picture in uniform is displayed alongside flags and an Air Force plaque engraved and placed in his honor. They presented his family with the United States Air Force prayer.

They attended a memorial service for Korean War veterans in their area, adopted two families of the 115<sup>th</sup> in Afghanistan. They provided additional assistance to other families of the 115<sup>th</sup>.

They've observed diversity and they honor people of varying nationalities in their community. This Unit exemplifies the activities of Units throughout the United States in service to the spiritual and physical needs of their members, veterans, active military, and their families.

The American Legion Auxiliary has reported 12,328 members deceased this administrative year. These members have been memorialized through services, the draping of their charters, and memorial donation. The ill and bereaved have been encouraged and uplifted through cards, letters, visits, and prayers.

Madam President, the Unit Chaplains of the American Legion Auxiliary have honored the service of veterans of all wars, assisted their families and those of active service military as well as the dependents of those lost in service to their country. They've upheld the priorities of the American Legion Auxiliary through spiritual counsel, prayer, and loving gifts.

Last but not least, they have provided me with beautiful thoughts and prayers for your prayer book.

And now, Madam President Kris, it is an honor to present to you your own personal book of prayers and devotional thoughts to peruse at your leisure. Included are submissions from across the nation and it has been my pleasure to compile them with illustrations for your reading pleasure.

I hope you'll find time now to relax and enjoy them and may your spirit soar in the knowledge that you are highly regarded in the American Legion Auxiliary throughout the entire nation.

Madam President, this concludes my report.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: You are so welcome.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you all who submitted prayers. This is beautiful and I look forward to reading it. It's a book of prayers of American Legion Auxiliary.

I felt your prayers all year, Nini. I got through the year without ever even one time being sick. And thank you all. We serve for God first and I saw that across our nation. Thank you.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: You're most welcome.

(Applause.)

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Madam President, Delegates, I present Past National

President Ms. Virginia Hobbs to memorialize and celebrate the life of Past National President Josie Melgard of California.

MS. HOBBS: Today we celebrate the life of Past National President Josie Melgard. Josie was elected National President for 1985-1986 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Josie was a 64-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary and served California as its Department President in 1970-1971.

One of Josie's proud coincidences for both those years of service was the service of Ronald Reagan who served as Governor of California when she was Department President and who was named the President of the United States when she was National President.

Josie and her husband, Bob, were married on December the 7<sup>th</sup>, 1947. Josie and Bob's union lasted a wonderful 64 years before her death on December the 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Although Josie was an Arkansan by birth, she spent most of her life in California.

Josie carried a calm demeanor and wonderful sense of humor. Once at a President and Secretary's Conference, she dressed in a shirt representing California which denoted California as the land of fruit and nuts. That was a pretty appropriate shirt for someone hailing from Raisin Unit.

Bob and Josie had three daughters, Diane, Debbie, and Doreen. Bob never stood a chance at winning a discussion. Their cat was even female.

As the Melgard family grew with eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren, Bob's odds stayed just about the same as they only had one grandson.

Josie's greatest joy was spending time with her family. Walt Disney World was a favorite destination and the entire family traveled there three separate times. She also loved Hawaii where she and Bob spent as much time and visited as often as possible.

Josie and Bob were part of a close-knit family of friends whose cookie parties and Fourth of July picnics were highly anticipated for nearly 50 years.

I can imagine Josie as a mother like June Cleaver except with three daughters. Josie's daughters shared stories with me about Josie's efficiency in sewing replicas of dresses she saw at the store and in creating outfits using her knitting machine.

Josie created and perpetuated traditions. Within the Melgard family, one tradition was the Swarovski Christmas ornaments. Each summer, Josie ordered the upcoming Christmas ornament for her tree and for each of the girls. For 2011, Josie had ordered the ornaments prior to her stroke in September.

Josie was a tremendous friend, mentor, confidant, and mother. From the year I served as one of Josie's roses, the Department Presidents of 1985-86, Josie was a beloved friend and fitting within the age ranges of her family, I was accepted as part of that family.

Josie was a mentor not only within the Department of California but across the country as she encouraged members from coast to coast to participate in our programs and to aspire to greater achievements.

Josie was a tremendous advocate of our youth. Josie first served the National organization as the National Junior Activities Chairman. She was repeatedly a member of the staff of Girls Nation and chose her special project relating to youth.

Many of you may remember the Center for Missing and Abused Children started

after the abduction of young Adam Walsh. Well, Josie chose working to remedy the growing tragedy of missing and abused children as a special project for her year.

She asked that the Auxiliary join The American Legion in a nationwide campaign to educate parents and children about the dangers that existed. To augment the importance of that special effort, the Center's founder, John Walsh, was a special guest at the Awareness Assembly and the Auxiliary's Public Spirit Award was presented to Kenneth Wooden, founder and director of the National Coalition for Children's Justice.

Josie was a career woman serving as Parlier Court clerk for several years and she subsequently became office manager at Rigley (phonetic) Medical Center, a position she held for over 30 years.

Josie was innovative and forward thinking. Each of you is probably aware of the direct member solicitation, direct mail solicitation for fund raising and the Direct Renewal Program. All three of those programs were tested in 1985-86 and constitute several important current practices.

Josie was a tremendous Auxiliary member and friend. Her counsel, guidance, and friendship is sorely missed by those who knew her.

(Applause.)

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: And now may I present Past National President Ms. Carol Van Kirk to memorialize and celebrate the life of Past National President Ms. Elsie Bailey-Comer of New Jersey.

MS. VAN KIRK: On August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Past National President Elsie Bailey-Comer of Whiting, New Jersey passed away leaving a loving husband, Jake, a wonderful family, and a multitude of friends.

Elsie had two children and four grandchildren. Daughter Deb Murphy and her husband, Rich, have three sons, Ryan, Craig, and Thomas. Son Jim and his wife, Barbara, have one son, Michael. Elsie also leaves two stepdaughters, a stepson, and eight step grandchildren.

After 23 years of dedication to Somerset Medical Center, she retired as personnel director in 1990. Elsie was eligible for membership in our organization through her late husband, John, who died in 1998.

She joined Stevenson D'Alessio Unit 12 in 1961. Elsie was the only member ever honored jointly by her Unit and Post as Unit Woman of the Year. She was President of the Department of New Jersey from 1988 to '89.

Elsie was installed as the 2002-2003 National President in Charlotte, North Carolina. Her theme for the year was America pure gold. Patriotism and love of country were at the heart of her inaugural address as she declared her intent to continue the surge of patriotism that began with the attack upon our country September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

She firmly believed that America is not only the land of golden opportunity, but it is pure solid gold. Elsie also believed that The American Legion Family and its programs, our veterans and military service personnel and our children are pure solid gold to America.

She developed a warm, close friendship with her American Legion National Commander, Ronald Connolly and The Sons of The American Legion Commander Steve Laws which they nurtured until her death.

Her generosity was evident when she shared her Far East trip with Past National President Sherry McLaughlin who did not have the opportunity for the experience during her year of service due to her husband's illness.

Donations of \$50,000 were contributed for her special project, Veterans Pot of Gold which was used solely to provide benefits to veterans.

She was a lover of country music and incorporated that into an effective membership theme county hearts in celebration. Departments enjoyed festivities centered on the theme including square dances and ho-downs.

On March 19, 2003, President George W. Bush declared war on Iraq and Operation Iraqi Freedom began. The Auxiliary could not have had a better leader than Elsie in the days ahead. She urged all members, and I quote, to pray and then stand together proud and strong in encouragement and support for the President of these United States, for our troops and for our America pure gold.

During her administrative year, a new Youth Hero Award was introduced into the Children & Youth Program to recognize and honor Children & Youth under the age of 18 who performed heroic deeds.

On a more personal note, Elsie shared with me one embarrassing moment she had as a National President and she told the story frequently. She visited Secretary of State Colin Powell. He was interesting and informative, but he was also very charming and handsome. She froze and was speechless, but he graciously led her through the awkward moment. As she left his office, Secretary Powell turned to his secretary, winked and remarked I've still got it.

Elsie had a passion for playing cards and thoroughly enjoyed beating her opponent. I know because I rarely won when we played Concentration. She could keep score on the tiniest scrap of paper.

The time arrived in 2009 when Past National Commander Jake Comer invited Elsie, Sherry McLaughlin, and me to dinner. It was a lovely evening. But it became obvious that neither Sherry nor I were the focus of the Commander's attention. Elsie kept insisting his attention was only as a friend. Sherry and I felt the lady dost protest too much. It was no surprise to us when she announced they were to be married August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Elsie was completely unknown to me when she called after I received my first National appointment and invited me to room with her at the Chairmen's meeting. That was the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Elsie will always be remembered for her Queen Elizabeth way, her fun spirit, her dedication and commitment to any responsibility she accepted, her love of people, for always taking the time to share herself and her world. She was loved by many both within our American Legion family and beyond.

Some believe she's overseeing our activities even today, but I believe she has set up permanent unknown residency over Atlantic City, New Jersey where she is beating the odds. Farewell, my friend.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: With us this morning is Elsie's husband, Jake Comer, who'd like to give us a few moments.

(Applause.)

MR. COMER: I'll try to get through it.

Madam President Kris and Secretary Dubbie, Past National President Carol, all distinguished officers and members of the Auxiliary, Delegates and alternates, my fellow Auxiliary members from Massachusetts and my adopted New Jersey, ladies and gentlemen, Elsie and I appreciated a very short visit together, but what a wonderful ride.

We spent our three months in Florida for three years in a row enjoying the hospitality of those wonderful members of the Legion and Auxiliary of Florida traveling to many of their Posts and banquets, probably five or six cruises.

Elsie being a hundred percent Italian which most people didn't realize that, she didn't look Italian, she'd never been to Italy and that was one of her pleasures. I said then we'll do it. We flew to Barcelona, Spain, picked up a cruise ship and visited Sicily and Naples and Rome and Florence and flew back.

And we did other trips, two cruises up the Rhine River in Germany during the Christmas week.

But we arrived home from Florida around April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Prior to that, we had been to the Washington Conference and everyone said, Jake, how could this happen, we just -- we were just in her company.

She wasn't feeling well, so on April 5<sup>th</sup>, I said you're going to the hospital and she did. Found out she had two blood clots on the lung. The next day, the 6<sup>th</sup>, she received a massive stroke which is -- which would be one of four strokes while she was in the hospital. Completely paralyzed on the left side from head to toe and she spent four months in a terrible way, that you would -- you would not want to see her in that light.

She never knew she had a -- she never knew she was paralyzed. She never knew she had a stroke. She knew me in and out for four months. But I was there 10 to 12 hours every day for four months by her side.

But the thanks that I have to give to all of you, to Dubbie especially who called me every week and we went over her condition so that she could inform each and every one of you, I thank you Dubbie, to Kris and the organization for the flowers sent to us at her funeral as a representative of your great organization.

So what did you do? While her illness, she received 800 cards. On the final day before she died, I received the 800<sup>th</sup> card and over 200 e-mails. There's a woman receiving 1,000 hits because of her love, devotion, and affection.

Everyone I talked to here when they come up to me, they said, Jake, when she walked into a room, the room lit up. And she mentored so many of you and that will always be a reminder for me.

For the National -- for the Department Presidents during her year that sent me so many, so many cards headed up by one of her own that's now the First Vice President, Nancy.

So, ladies and gentlemen, again, my adopted Department of New Jersey was so great. When I took her up to Massachusetts, they fought with New Jersey from that day on claiming her as their own. They truly, truly did.

And I thank you, ladies, the way you accepted her and loved her. At the final commitment, there were 15 states represented at her funeral, over 175 at the final mass.

And then she was cremated and three, four days later, two weeks ago tomorrow, she was buried at the National Cemetery in New Jersey named after Past National Commander William Doyle.

So, ladies, this is the final moment for me as I've tried to get through this week and I've done it because when we're here, we forget. And when we see, we remember. It's when we do, we understand. God bless you all.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Nini, for that moving ceremony.

Josie and Elsie were dedicated to our mission of honoring the service of our veterans and military. We were lucky to call them friends and they will be greatly missed.

The Americanism Committee provides learning opportunities and instructional resources for important things every good citizen should know such as learning about the Constitution, flying the flags on patriotic holidays, and sending pocket flags to our troops overseas.

Here to tell you more is National Chairman Melanie Taylor.  
Melanie.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Madam National President, American Legion Auxiliary members all across this country have shared your National President's theme. In the spirit of God and country, we serve our veterans, military, and their families by showing their true patriotic spirit and Americanism in their day-to-day routine and lives.

Members throughout this nation have stepped up and worked the Americanism Plan of Action objectives. Everyone shows their patriotism in their own way whether it is wearing the flag pin on the lapel of your coat, flying Old Glory on a flag pole in their front yard, or standing and covering their heart when the flag of the United States passes by at a country fair parade.

Objective number one was to be a patriot through Unit involvement in community events. Promoting the ALA's value of Americanism through community education about flag etiquette, Units presented flag disposal ceremonies showing the proper way to retire worn and torn flags. Homes and businesses flying tattered flags were given new flags and let's be right on flag etiquette brochures were handed out.

Certificates of appreciation were distributed to businesses thanking them for flying the American flag and promoting the Auxiliary Americanism Program. Thousands of flags were donated not only to other organizations but were given to children in classrooms as the history of our American flag was discussed and questions were answered. Bookmarks, comic books, and coloring books were also handed out.

Pocket flags were made by young and old. School children sat in their classroom and folded the pocket flags knowing they would be going to the men and women serving overseas.

Unit members, some with arthritic fingers, sat and made a day of folding flags, sharing a meal, and having a great time trying to tuck in that final flap.

In New York, members involved themselves in local and state elections by working in the polls and assisted those unable to transport themselves to polling stations to ensure that they were able to cast their vote.

Members throughout this nation sat down and wrote letters to their

Congressmen and Senators asking for their support on the flag protection amendment, Senate Joint Resolution 19 and House Joint Resolution 13 prohibiting the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.

California has one member who was active in history through the eyes of women with costume first person presentation and features Betsy Ross at the Ronald Reagan Library showing visitors how to cut a paper five point star.

She also developed and presents a museum lecture titled Women's Contributions During World War I and World War II inspired by poster art celebrating women who gave so much to the war effort.

Objective number two was to increase awareness and participation in youth activities that support proper respect for our flag and loyalty to our country.

Units were encouraged to participate in the Americanism Essay Contest by increasing awareness and promoting the essays in their schools, 4H, YMCA, Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization, and FFA, Future Farmers of America.

This year's theme how can I show my patriotism in my community raised awareness and presented a theme for the students to really think about.

In Illinois, 58 Units sponsored 2,500 students in the essay contest from 160 schools within the state. Over 300 awards were given out totaling \$5,500. The essay winners in each Division were announced in the Americanism Pre-Convention meeting. The winners in each Division received a certificate and \$50.00 and \$50.00 will be sent in their name to the National President's Scholarship Fund.

Objective number three promoted the Auxiliary's participation in The American Legion Americanism Programs. Members participated in The American Legion Baseball Program by sponsoring teams, buying uniforms, keeping score, working the concession stands, and driving the teams to games.

They also volunteered as escorts, time keepers, and judges at the oratorical contests.

And the Junior Shooting Sports Program had Auxiliary members not only serving as score keepers, drivers, and coaches, but some ladies were actually marksmen in this sport and taught the Junior participants how to shoot a firearm.

Special thanks to the Americanism Committee for their hard work in judging the essays and the other year-end awards.

Madam National President, I think you can tell by these remarks that the Units across America have demonstrated every day that they truly are patriots.

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1961, in his inaugural speech, President John F. Kennedy once said ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.

Madam President, I believe we have shown just that and this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Melanie.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: No, Madam President, there are not.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Excellent report. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Investing time and money to educate our youth is literally an investment in America's future. We know the sacrifices of our veterans are the reason we live in freedom and our easing the burden of the cost of children's education is one way that we can express our gratitude.

Please welcome National Chairman Coral May Grout with the Education report. Coral.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Madam President, this report is based upon reports submitted from all 52 Departments of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you.

The amount of involvement with the Education Program ran the spectrum of no activity to extensive involvement in all areas of the program. There were many outstanding activities conducted during the past year.

In the Department of Georgia, Unit 77 conducted five educational area activities. They purchased \$350 worth of supplies for their local schools. The supplies included magazine subscriptions, classroom flags, rulers, paper products, pens, pencils, and markers.

The Unit handed out two \$2,000 scholarships and made a financial contribution to the National President's Scholarship educating the children of warriors. But the Unit wasn't done with the program yet.

They worked with their local schools to have veterans in the classroom. They helped with classroom reading programs by donating 47 hours to assist 150 students.

The quality of applications for scholarships was very high. The awards will go far to help students reach their educational goals.

Many winners sent thank you notes. One such note came from Michaela Garringer from the Department of Iowa. She wrote thank you so very much for selecting me to receive the Spirit of Youth Scholarship. It means so much to me because it will ease the cost of college for me and my family.

Give 10 was successful once again throughout the country. Winter Park Unit 112 from the Department of Florida reported their activities. They involved their community in gathering items for the program. The members of the Unit placed a dozen collection baskets in various storefronts within their community. The donations included 25 backpacks and more than \$700 in supplies. Supplies included folders, pencils, crayons, markers, notebook paper, erasers, scissors, and rulers.

The Unit purchased additional items for their project and stuffed the backpacks with supplies. Each backpack was given to children of military families at the Cheney and Eastbrook Elementary Schools.

And this Unit didn't stop there. Members produced reading rocket packets that were delivered to first grade classes. Members volunteered their time to shop for books, download and print parent resource information, and assembled the packets to deliver to the school. The Unit is already planning for packets for next year's second grade class.

The Unit donated fruit and pastry for each of the elementary schools during American Education Week. More than 100 teachers and staff received the food gifts at each school.

The Unit has worked collaboratively with their elementary schools to support student achievement. The first annual Unit 112 Scholastic Achievement Award was presented to outstanding fifth graders in May. The award consists of a medal and certificate. The Unit spent nearly \$1,000 on educational activities and many man hours.

The Veterans in the Classroom Program reached students from elementary through secondary school in nearly every Department.

Banner Unit 109 from Benson, North Carolina, reached 1,330 students from three schools.

Seven veterans stationed themselves at locations around the Meadow School gymnasium. There were two World War II veterans including one who jumped on D-Day into Normandy, two Korean War veterans, and three Vietnam War veterans.

Groups of children rotated from veteran to veteran. Each discussed their lives during the wars. They brought uniforms, small equipment, helmets, foreign money, postcards, and pictures. At the end, the Auxiliary handed each child a gift, either veteran dog tags or a proud to be an American bookmark.

Some veterans were interviewed in history classes. The Unit provided educational materials to the teachers of those classes.

A different group of veterans visited the Benson Elementary School. Skits were done at this school. And at the middle school, two veterans told about their experiences. They brought items to show and students looked these over. There was a question and answer. Finally, each student received a set of dog tags.

Many Units were able to promote the Education Program to military children often in the same environment as non-military children as was done in North Carolina.

Thank you to all the units and Departments who honored the service of our military through the Education Program this year.

Madam President, that concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Coral.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: There are none.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for an informative report.

Community service projects focus on enhancing the quality of life for our veterans and their families. Auxiliary members are continuously at work in their communities demonstrating the compassion and heart we have for those who served our country and gave so much.

Here to report the accomplishments of Community Service Committee is National Chairman Martha Corriher.

Martha.

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Madam National President, American Legion Auxiliary members across our great country took your theme of serving veterans, military, and their families to heart all year. They hit the streets in search of those American patriots from past wars to the current one.

The activities I'm about to share didn't occur in just one Unit across our country, but they occurred in many throughout our nation. Auxiliary members are in tune

with what activities need to be held and made wonderful music honoring those we serve.

Units held dinners in their communities inviting all veterans and their families and other servicemembers to attend during the holidays.

At one such dinner in Pennsylvania, they paid special tribute to the oldest veteran in attendance. What a surprise to find out that the oldest veteran there was also the chauffeur for President Richard Nixon.

Military families are adopted by Units providing such needed help to the families. Units cooked meals and delivered them. They baby sat for parents that needed some well-deserved couple time out, provided toys for families during the holidays when money was short, provided transportation for mothers when children need to go somewhere when their car was broken.

And when it comes to raising money, no one does it better than this Auxiliary when it comes to providing funds for a sick child of our active duty servicemembers or a veteran.

The Auxiliary knows how to have fun and how to share it with their communities. Units hosted Easter egg hunts, providing refreshments, games, candy, and, of course, the Easter bunny herself.

Units planned events in their communities in conjunction with other community events so they could make their presence known in their communities to let others know what the American Legion Auxiliary has to offer our veterans, active duty servicemembers, and the youth in the communities.

Units also took the time to encourage and invite citizens to assist them in their projects directed toward the veterans in their area. Citizens of all ages took the challenge and provided items, time, and companionship to make the day brighter of a local veteran, much brighter.

Units got creative with activities. One Unit provided an all expense paid day of fishing for veterans of all ages and some with very obvious disabilities.

This was not only great therapy for the veterans but a time for the Auxiliary to share their love and to thank those veterans who had served to keep us safe and free.

When returning soldiers came back to their community, the Auxiliary was there to assess their needs and get 'er done.

One Unit held a fund raiser for a young man seriously injured in Afghanistan to help with his immediate needs. Some Units even held pep rallies to boost energy and to show how to spread the excitement about community service projects.

Units asked their communities to help provide items at Christmastime to make the holidays brighter for veterans and this was a merry one. The request was answered and the Unit loaded cars, vans, and, yes, even a bus to make their rounds to deliver the Christmas cheer to their veterans. Santa Claus was helping to lead the way.

Units assisted with Veterans Day programs at the Veterans Memorial parks, nursing homes, State veterans homes, and Veterans Affairs rehabilitation hospitals.

These events I've just described reflect special circumstances. However, the mission didn't stop for special events and it impacts what the Auxiliary does all through the year. So I'm going to share some things they did that weren't special events.

Units answered the call to perform a service each month in their community to

help our veterans and their families. Some Units adopted an active duty servicemember's family or a veteran and made sure they were remembered by the Unit in some way every month.

Some Units took it a step further and did a different activity opened up to the entire community inviting them to assist making the lives of our veterans and the active duty members a part of their own families.

They set up tables whenever and wherever a happening in their area was going on to make the Auxiliary's vision and mission aware.

Many Units reported that this not only introduced them to veterans within their area, but they found new members willing and wanting to join the Auxiliary because they have finally found out what our programs offer.

What makes this report even sweeter is that what I've described didn't happen in the large Units, but these were events produced and provided by the small Units in the rural communities. So this goes to show if they can do it, anybody can do it.

This was also a fire that they got started and this one needs to connect and keep growing and a fire we don't want to put out like the blazes in the west this fall. We want them to take this and run with it so that we keep this fire and this spark going.

Some comments from veterans and active duty members reported to this Chairman from Units doing its projects work. We thought nobody cared about our needs and would not be willing to help us. You were sent to us by God because you showed us and provided just what we had prayed for during our prayer time that morning. I know what it means to be a servant to others. Your loving actions and generosity has renewed my faith in humanity.

Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Martha.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: No, Madam President, there are none.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for an informative report.

Our next pod to present is the Membership Development Pod. This pod looks forward to a reinvigorating Auxiliary through strategic planning, leadership, compassion, and telling the story of mission delivery.

Please help me welcome the Membership Development Pod.

CHAIRMAN DAVIS: Madam National President, honoring their values, honoring their sacrifice, honoring their service, the Membership Pod worked with two Departments in the creation of their membership project, making the American Legion Auxiliary an organization that recognizes the great sacrifice and service and veterans and Auxiliary and entices the public to join the Auxiliary.

The creation of the wall of honor by Bonnette Harrison Unit 505, Department of Louisiana and by Chattahoochee Valley's Unit 67 in the Department of Alabama did just that.

You will notice that the walls of honor create -- created in Louisiana and Alabama show great versatility in order to conform to the time frames and space constraints in each Department.

In the Department of Louisiana, Bonnette Harrison Unit 505, a Wall of Honor Contest was held at their midwinter Conference for the most creative honoring their service poster. The contest brought in many impressive posters, each one a salute to outstanding veterans and military.

The wonderful posters were on display for the entire weekend bringing many comments that began with, wow. The poster contest allowed many Auxiliary members to create honoring their service posters and display them for attendees at the midwinter.

In the Chattahoochee Valley Unit, members jumped into the project. Nineteen of 22 members provided information and photos for the display and at the same time made a donation to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund for the privilege of showing the photo of their important servicemember.

Unit members contacted local businessmen -- businesses for locations to display the walls of honor. City Halls, the county library, and restaurants were glad to post the displays in their buildings.

The format of their walls of honor was whiteboards set on easels. Every honoree had a five-by-seven area with their photo, name, branch of service, dates of active duty, and the name or relationship -- and relationship of the Auxiliary member.

By posting the walls of honor on whiteboards and easels, the displays could be rotated to different locations on a weekly basis.

The Chattahoochee Valley Unit used a variety of public relations methods to get the word out regarding their walls of honor. Local television, radio stations, and newspapers provide the advertising for the project.

Information about the Auxiliary, the Wall of Honor Project, and how the public could get involved was also available on each site.

Community members were invited to provide information on their special veterans or active duty servicemembers for the walls of honor and to donate to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.

Unit Vice President Barbara reported we think the program is successful and, yes, you can tie various aspects of the POD together. We raised funds for the AEF, acquired a new member, made some good contacts, and really worked the public relations aspect.

Congratulations to Chattahoochee Valley Unit 67, Department of Alabama for their wall of honor and to Bonnette Harrison Unit 505, Department of Louisiana for their honoring their service posters.

Note how each Department used the same project concept, honored their special military and veterans, and informed the public about the work of the American Legion Auxiliary while adopting the project to their own Department's situation.

The Wall of Honor Project as found in the Plan of Action can be expanded or condensed to meet your Unit's needs or your Department's needs.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

Long-range strategic planning helps an organization prepare for the future, anticipate and manage change, improve decision making processes, and identify existing

strengths.

Here to tell us how all of this gets accomplished is Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, Past National President and National Chairman of the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee.

Jan.

CHAIRMAN PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Madam President, strategic planning is a disciplined approach to deciding what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it with a focus on the future.

Strategic planning produces a framework that enables the organization to focus its energy, coordinate the efforts of individuals so that they are working toward the same goals, and assesses the organization's response to changing factors and adjust accordingly.

It is really a document of agreements about the future of the organization and the steps to get there.

Our missions statement tells us why we exist. This statement makes it clear about who we serve in our communities.

The vision statement tells us what we want the organization to be in the future, the premier service organization for people to join to help us fulfill our mission, vision, and to support the purposes of our organization.

These clarifying documents are meant to show to the public the reason for our existence as an organization, summarizing our purpose and direction. They describe why the organization was created and its ultimate dream for the future.

Strategic planning initiatives completed include our American Legion Auxiliary gateway to services, a resource for veterans and military families. It's on the National Website directing viewers to helpful information including family, community, and social services, health and wellness, career training and education, and financial and legal support providing a one-stop shopping option to help them find the help they need for a variety of concerns.

Technology including a newly designed Website and the membership system iMIS, the ALA character initiative, membership, leadership, and minimum standards developed for Units and Departments by the Unit and Department standards team, plans are in place to include these findings in a guide for Departments and in the Unit handbook from these initiatives.

The team also developed a new governance model that was discussed at this National Convention. Future initiatives will be developed and brought to the NEC for approval at the Washington, D.C. Conference.

The strategic plan is the backbone that supports the rest of the body. Operational, departmental, and individual plans are drafted by staff for staff. Business plans and budgets are drafted by your financial officers and committees. Fund raising plans are created by development staff and our ALA Foundation Board. All must relate to the strategic plan.

Madam President, that concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Jan.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN PULVERMACHER-RYAN: No, Madam President, there are not.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for your great report.

Our organization depends upon ever emerging stream of competent new leaders trained and guided by experienced leaders to assume leadership within the Auxiliary and advance its mission long into the future.

Here to tell us how the Auxiliary offers a variety of opportunities for our members to serve in leadership roles is National Chairman Mary Davis.

Mary.

CHAIRMAN DAVIS: Madam National President Kris, Dwight Eisenhower once said leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because she wants you to do it -- because she wants to do it.

Leadership is an art -- as an art is an interesting concept. It is the art of moving forward, getting things done, inclusion, encouraging, mentoring, helping, and achieving success, all this and more because others consider you as someone who is worth working alongside, learning from, or following.

Department Chairman Sue Heil creatively defined the art of leadership to Oklahoma members in her fall leadership presentation as to lead is a verb meaning to go before or with to show the way, to conduct by holding and guiding, to influence or induce, to guide in direction, course, action, opinion, et cetera, to conduct or bring in a particular course.

Leadership as a noun, it is the position or function of a leader, a person who guides or directs a group, the ability to lead.

Many other Department Chairmen within our organization have succeeded in giving their Units the tools necessary to accomplish our programs, conduct effective meetings, and learn more about our organization.

Nearly all the Department Chairmen reported the successes they had within their Department and many also shared success stories of Units.

Department of New Mexico Chairman Theresa Montoya began the year by preparing a basic Department Plan of Action with specific purposes and action steps. These intermediate action steps facilitated easy reporting of what Units had accomplished.

Chairman Montoya also reported that the history of the American Legion Auxiliary from 1921 to 1999 as presented in the leadership correspondence course was requested and studied by several Units.

Many new members did not know how or why the organization had been originally founded and found this very -- this information very interesting and useful.

It is our part that we will mold our future and it is up to us to teach the future members what and where we want our organization to be in the next 90 plus years.

Many Departments provided leadership booklets to their District and Unit leadership.

Wisconsin shared a copy of their booklet. It is very comprehensive and inviting to read. This material helped inspire Brookfield Unit 449 to develop a Unit leadership manual for their members.

And LaCrosse Unit 53 took an additional step in leadership by challenging the entire Executive Committee to successfully complete the National leadership course.

Chairman Joyce Endres said the Unit may not have met the National's 50 percent completion by Units before the deadline, but Unit 53 is committed to teaching new members and engaging all of our seasoned members to revisit the great history of the ALA.

Taking advantage of new technology, Texas Chairman Kim Palasota created a DVD to share great leadership tools more quickly and easily. The DVD included the Department's ABCs leadership book, the National leadership correspondence course, Junior leadership correspondence course, parliamentary procedures, and flag etiquette. It also covered such topics as membership, duties of officers, effective committees, great guest etiquette, veterans' services and volunteers, IRS tax information, and Auxiliary song and much more.

Among Departments that conducted formal leadership training was the Department of Georgia. Chairman Sue Nash reported that 11 of their 12 Districts held leadership workshops. They polled the membership to determine their members' interests, then tailored the workshops to focus on these areas.

Because of this initiative, they had 283 members attending from 69 different Units. The agenda included parliamentary procedure, financial practices, protocol, District and Unit Constitution & Bylaws, and the National leadership correspondence course.

Now, the updated and enhanced National leadership correspondence course has been completed and posted on the National website. This Power Point presentation will bring to life the course for our members. Remember each National President as you learn about our history. Discover program highlights and learn about Auxiliary protocol.

Also, new on the Web is the enhanced Junior course. Again, it is presented in a Power Point format allowing Junior members to follow the Auxiliary as she leads them through the course. Both presentations can be completed individually or in a group setting.

Madam National President, this completes my remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Mary.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN DAVIS: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for a great report.

Make sure you go and check out that leadership course. It's easy to take and it would be a great thing to do at one of your Unit meetings.

The Public Relations Program works collaboratively at all levels, Unit, Department, and National, to positively promote and advance the objectives and programs of the Auxiliary beyond our membership.

Here to tell us how we've increased public's awareness at the Auxiliary's good works, please welcome National Chairman Diane Duscheck.

Diane.

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: Madam National President, Units and Departments

throughout the country have been creative in their use of public relations to inform both members and the public of the great work of the American Legion Auxiliary coming to the aid of veterans, military, and their families.

Remember the days of mimeograph bulletins and typed newsletters? Well, no more. Members of the American Legion Auxiliary have taken hold of the reins of any type of technology that's available and they've used it to their advantage.

Before selection of the Girls State Delegate is made, it's helpful for the young ladies in the high school junior class to know a little about Girls State and the opportunity it presents.

At Anoka High School in Minnesota, both The Legion and Auxiliary are included in the closed circuit television program called Feature Friday which is televised throughout the school.

Girls State and Boys State Delegates from previous years were interviewed and explained what The Legion and Auxiliary programs entailed. What a great way for all high school students to begin hearing of the opportunities The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary can offer.

YouTube has found many homes with the American Legion Auxiliary. In the Department of Virginia, for instance, YouTube was used to reach members who were unable to attend meetings and conferences. Videos of Chairmen's reports were uploaded to their Department YouTube account and were available for viewing at a later date by both members and new viewers.

In order to make their spring conference more accessible to members who are unable to attend, live streaming video of the spring conference was produced and shared including leadership training, the Chairmen's reports, and the address of the National Commander.

For many Units, the community newspaper is the conduit used to reach both public -- to reach the public both to give out information about upcoming activities and to report the results of the program.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 153 in New Jersey has used the local paper for showcasing Youth Essay Contest winners and highlighting the Girls State Delegates.

In a letter to the editor, they've also used the paper for educating the public on the activities of their American Legion Auxiliary Unit as well as giving a public thank you to the newspaper and the community for their support. What a great way to promote a positive image.

Webpages continue to be sources of great information and most Departments have their own website. But here's a new take on a Web page. The community of Cullom, Illinois, has a webpage that lists the service organizations available to its citizens. Community members can visit this webpage to shop for organizations that fit their needs. Note that on this site, you can also go to the Juniors webpage.

Public relations isn't just a way for Senior members to get the word out to the public, but also a way for Juniors to locate other young girls and share their projects and ideas.

Let's visit a Junior member of the Auxiliary and see why she used public relations. Six-year-old Raegan Junge of Unit 107, Keystone, Iowa, she was moved by the

tornadoes in Alabama and Missouri. She was particularly touched by an 80-year-old veteran and his wife who lost everything in the Joplin, Missouri tornado.

Raegan adopted the Missouri couple and began making bead bracelets to sell to raise money for the Missouri tornado victims. The 6-year-old contacted news media. She set up her Facebook and promoted the project by talking to everyone she could.

Raegan reached out to her family, her classmates, and children in 4H for additional help making bead bracelets. She has sent \$450 to tornado victims in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and she personally delivered \$1,600 to the Missouri couple.

Wanting to raise more funds --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: Isn't that outstanding? But she wasn't done.

Wanting to raise more funds, she even auctioned off her three-year-old horse and donated half of those proceeds to the same couple.

This little dynamo has put in approximately 700 hours in the last year working on her charities. She's an entire Unit all by herself.

Public relations can be used by all Units, by Junior members and Senior members to get the word out about activities and to invite the community to participate in helping others.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Diane.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: Yes, Madam President. We have one resolution.

PRESIDENT NELSON: You're going to defer it?

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: I'd like to defer the action on that resolution until after a brief presentation.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Diane, thank you for your report on an outstanding year.

Over the past year, representing the American Legion Auxiliary as your National President, I encountered a common message from our military servicemembers: "We've never heard of your organization, but we really appreciate what your members do for people like us."

Men and women from all branches of the military have said this to me. I've also heard it from the general media during my 43 department visits. It stung me every single time. But instead of getting angry over it, I accepted it as the truth.

Members I meet are committed to the Auxiliary's mission, but they've all asked for help in getting the word out and growing their capacity. We've been working hard to serve veterans, military, and their families for more than nine decades and, yet, people still don't know about what -- who we are and what we do.

Our members tell me they don't have enough resources to go the next step. They say I've heard from many of you that we need help, we need a national campaign. The work we've been doing throughout our history is working well. We're just not telling anyone about it.

We need more people to help us and explain that what we do is great. Our faces

of freedom deserve better.

Today we are going to hear from representatives from Publicis, the third largest and fastest growing communications company in the world, on how we can make the American Legion Auxiliary a household name, how we can show the world our legacy of service, not self, and how more importantly we can become the first place that veterans, the military, and their families go for support.

While you continue your awareness efforts at the local level, we need a concentrated, deliberate effort nationwide. Both ends need each other. I hope we can take that action together. Let's increase our members' time, talent, and treasure in serving our veterans, military, and their families.

Publicis is going to help us do just that. They aren't going to take the top-down approach, meaning National issues the orders. They're going to work directly with you, the Departments, to build awareness and membership.

I love this organization and I'm scared for its future, especially considering our membership slide. I know how hard every one of you work for your money. I know with a little assistance from our experts at Publicis the PR awareness campaign will be wildly successful.

Please listen carefully as Nancy Brennan, Senior Vice President and Director of Corporate Branding, from their Chicago office, and Tom Hirschauer explain these things to you.

Nancy and Tom.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you so much, Kris.

Tom and I are honored to be here today with people who understand that freedom comes at a price and that we must serve those who have sacrificed to preserve it.

As Kris mentioned, Tom and I represent Publicis Groupe. We are a world-class communications agency with expertise in advertising, public relations, digital communications, and social media and with experts around the world and across the country.

We represent many of the biggest and well-known brands that you interact with every day including Proctor and Gamble, General Motors, and Eli Lilly.

We also have experience that is highly relevant to the Auxiliary's needs. For years, we supported the U.S. Army Recruiting Command in communications to prospects and for more than five years, we worked for Lions Clubs International, one of the largest fraternal organizations in the world, on reputation and membership building. And I worked on both of those accounts.

But honestly, as I stand here today and think more about your theme, the faces of freedom, I have a more personal connection to the Auxiliary's cause. My father served in World War II, the Korean War, and in the Air Force Reserve in Louisiana for a total of more than 30 years of service.

Through him, I came to understand the sacrifice that our military make and the importance of advocating for them. It is this appreciation that we are obligated to pass on to a younger generation. This is your charge.

And I believe we are the right agency to help you get a new generation of supporters engaged and involved in your mission, for as Ronald Reagan said freedom is

never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.

The communications program we present today is focused on helping you deliver on your mission to honor the sacrifice of those who serve, to advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism for God and country.

Our role as an agency is to work with you to help bring your vision to life by building communications and a reputation that support your efforts and engage a new generation of members.

But make no mistake. Bringing this vision to life is not simply a nice to have. It will be a life line for an organization whose future is in jeopardy. This is a mission you must tackle with purpose and resolve and we are prepared to be your partner.

Why are we so concerned about the future? Why is it so important to engage a new generation of members? Because as an organization, the Auxiliary is rapidly aging. Seventy-two percent of members are over 50 and more than a third are over 70 years of age.

Now, that wouldn't be so terrible if the pipeline of members was strong and retention was solid. But after many years of relative stability, in the last ten years, we have seen a decline in membership of 16 percent. That's nearly 130,000 members. At that rate, by 2031, the Auxiliary could be permanently gone.

Now, let's break this down a bit. It's important to understand. If conflicts were to end today, veterans would still need our service or the Auxiliary's service for another 60 years. But if the rate of decline in membership simply holds steady, we only have 20 years of service left in the Auxiliary ranks. That leaves a 40-year gap.

After 93 years of service, don't let the day -- today be the day when you walk away from the heritage, from your legacy, and from dedication to service. The truth is the Auxiliary has already given up more than 1.6 million hours of service to those who have sacrificed.

Now, it is true that I painted a somewhat dark and drier picture, but there is a light that we can reach for. I'd like you to listen to Alauna Sessoms-Hall, an 18-year-old woman from Modesto, California, and what she has to say.

**MS. SESSOMS-HALL:** During Girls Nation, we took a visit to Walter Reed Hospital. It was overwhelming. The oldest veteran I met was 25 years old. I learned that to truly make an impact and a difference, it takes hands-on effort. We need to sit with our veterans, hold out our hands, and be there face to face. My experience at Walter Reed changed me.

I tell my friends about the Auxiliary because a lot of them want to join the military or would like to give back, but they don't know anything about what you do. Like most Americans, they need to discover how you're making a difference in the lives of our veterans.

I do my small part by telling others, but it's up to you to tell the country and to show people how service to something greater than self can make the lives of our veterans better while also making our lives better spiritually.

Please let the younger generations know that they can be a part of making this

country great by simply reaching out to us so that we can then reach out to those who need us. We want to help. Just include us and tell us how.

MS. BRENNAN: What you just saw was the next generation just waiting to be asked for service. So I ask you if you don't ask now, when will you? And if not you, then who, because we are running out of time?

The effort that we are talking about today is not simply an Auxiliary leadership initiative or an agency advertising campaign. We can only provide the tools and the framework. This effort must be personal. It must be real and you must live the goal of engaging a new generation or it simply will not happen.

MR. HIRSCHAUER: So you may ask the question who else has done something like this? Can we at the Auxiliary succeed at increasing our membership? And the answer is, there are two very well-known organizations in your wheelhouse that do much of what you do, the USO and Wounded Warriors.

So a lot has been talked about Wounded Warriors. In fact, in talking to Kris over the last couple of months, she's heard from a number of you about, well, why don't we just do what Wounded Warriors does? You know, they put things on PSAs and get Bill O'Reilly to talk about it. Can't we do that?

Well, I think the answer to that is yes, but they do it in a very refined and strategic way. They do it with public relations. They do it with television and they do it with fund raising, direct mail. And so will we.

But guess what? Wounded Warriors is spending \$9.5 million every year in order to put their message out and to serve the veterans, the wounded soldiers that they serve.

Now, we're not here today to tell you that you need to spend or must spend \$9.5 million. Quite frankly, you don't have that kind of money and we would never ask you to consider spending that kind of money. That's not smart. It's not prudent and it's not within the stewardship of the way this organization works.

So then the question is, what is the plan for the American Legion Auxiliary to build awareness? Well, essentially we have to ask you to do two things in conjunction with our help. This has to be a local grass roots oriented campaign.

Many of you are doing wonderful things today. Quite frankly, we need more people to do more of it as we've lost 1.6 million hours over the last couple of years. So we're going to ask for your help at the local level, but on the other hand we're going to provide you national support to build awareness and get recruitment.

Now, there are three channels, if you will, in which we want to attack this issue to build awareness and attract members.

First, public relations. And you just heard a few minutes ago the good work that you're all doing in that area, but we need to do more of it and we need to do it together at the same time.

The other thing that we're not currently doing from a public relations standpoint is doing a national campaign. You're doing local markets, but we have an idea on how to put this all together nationally.

The second thing that we have to do is to add direct response television. We will do that across the United States via cable, advertising on channels like the History Channel or Fox News, and we're going to specifically ask individuals to come join us,

not just to look at a commercial and we all feel good about it, but ask people to pick up the phone, go to a Website, go to a Facebook page and say, yes, I want to support this organization and, yes, I'm willing to volunteer and, in fact, I would love to become a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

As you're also doing those two things, you will continue to do fund raising that you've done over the last two or three years.

So let's break this down so you clearly understand what this plan is. Local PR as Diane, I think, had just talked to you and we were at a session yesterday and we're really quite impressed with all the work that you're doing, we're going to help train you at the Unit and chapter level via Webinars.

And we'll give a calendar of opportunities so you won't have to guess what to do. We'll help you decide what to do via press releases, op-ed letters, letters to the editor, and even more importantly in today's age via social media.

But then we want to add a component to this in a national day of mission outreach. Can you imagine at 1,100 VA hospitals across this country on a single day thousands and thousands of volunteers helping veterans come together to make their lives better? That's something that we believe the national news will be very interested in and it will galvanize your organization together.

So what are the objectives of our plan? Well, we need to build awareness of who we are, what we do, but most importantly why it really matters. We're going to ask others to join us in our noble purpose and our noble service.

So what's the plan? Really three things. We're going to test, learn, and then proceed on to the next phase over the next 30 months.

So the question is, why test? Why would we want to test? Let's find it and just go get it done. Well, you want to test because, number one, it's smart. It's smart because it will help us understand what the right messages are, how we fine tune those messages so we get people to act.

The second reason why we want to do this in phases is because of stewardship. In no way would we ever come to you and ask you to spend a large amount of money without doing it in phases, doing it so we can get better every time we do it for the maximum value that can be brought to bear.

We're going to start with a test and the test will be done in three to five markets. And we think there are some criteria that we would like to impose on this test and it's the old adage of fish where the fish are biting.

So we want to go to large military bases or installation markets. We want to go where there's a market that has a VA hospital presence. We may want to go to a market that has an ALA national award winner group or a high percentage of young men and women who are enlisting.

These will be military towns, if you will, that already understand and value the service that these veterans have given and appreciate the work that you can do. Believe me, there are women in those cities that you don't know that are willing to serve. We're going to find them and help you engage with them to move forward in this test.

So the first phase is to create and test messages. Why is that important? Well, if I said to you the American Cancer Society, you would immediately know what that

organization does. If I said to you the American Heart Association, you would know immediately what that organization does. If I said to you Wounded Warriors, you would know immediately what that organization does.

If I said to you the American Legion Auxiliary, what is it that you do and why does it matter to me? Those are the messages we need to determine and to test in the marketplace. We'll do it in three to five markets at the Unit level across the United States, and we're here to build awareness and generate leads.

What's a lead? Somebody going to a Website, picking up a telephone, or going to a Facebook and saying I have an interest in talking to a Unit level to help serve. Then it's up to you because you're going to have to engage with that lady that lives in that city or the city next door to get them involved.

And in so doing, we're going to also determine what the metrics are. How many leads can we generate? How many of those leads can we bring in to actually membership and to volunteers because that's what the success will be built on and that's extremely important?

Now, we also think there are some secondary benefits and those are that as we learn more how better to speak to not only our own group but to others, we'll be -- do a better job of communicating at the Auxiliary level.

But we also think that we'll help increase the fund raising because if I get an envelope in the mail and I don't know who the Auxiliary is and what it does, I'm not going to open it. But if I just saw a television spot or read an op-ed piece in the newspaper, oh, sure, I know who those people are, let me open that letter and see what we can do.

We expect this first phase to take four to six months. We're hoping today that you'll vote in the affirmative for this plan. It will conclude around the 13<sup>th</sup> of February and that cost will be approximately \$750,000.

What is phase two? Well, based on the intelligence we gained out of these three to five market tests, we think there are two options that exist. And, again, this is where we're being prudent, smart, and we look at stewardship.

We can stop the program if all agreed it was not effective and could not be sufficiently changed to make it successful or we can make changes as appropriate and proceed into phase two. And with these changes made, we proceed to launch the program nationally.

Every Unit, every chapter in the United States will have the opportunity to get the value of this program.

That program, the second phase will take three to six months, will end somewhere around August of 2013. The cost is approximately \$600,000.

Then we move on to phase three. Quite frankly, it's very similar to what we just learned in phase two. After phase two has been completed, we'll all determine if the program was working sufficiently to continue on.

If the program has real value, then the third phase would begin. If not, we can either stop the program and/or move forward without spending the additional dollars. And the cost of this phase, the third phase is approximately \$900,000.

So what are the desired outcomes of this program? To increase the awareness

and reputation of who we are, what we do, and most importantly why it matters. Most certainly it is to honor those who have served, most definitely to reverse the decline in membership that Nancy talked to you about. And it is our fervent hope that it will help increase fund raising.

So the membership, your membership today will vote whether to engage in this three-phased approach and to allocate funds from reserves to conduct this plan. And here again are the costs of the three phases.

So, finally, we say to you again if not now, when? If not you, then who? The facts are clear. The needs are great and they will not end in our lifetime. Your uniquely American heritage and legacy for service for over 90 years is calling each of you to action today.

And let me end by introducing you to Dennis Donahue, a Vietnam veteran, and let him remind you of all that what you do and why it matters so much.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DONAHUE: I was one of the lucky ones. I was in the VA hospital and my family came to visit me every day. But many, many patients in that hospital don't have that luxury. They don't have family come to visit them every day. And so their only link to the world is the vet -- is the Auxiliary and the volunteers that come into those rooms every day and let them know how important they are.

I'd like to thank the American Legion Auxiliary for all of the care and the help and all of the things that you do behind the scenes that make being a patient in the VA hospital system or just a member of a Post that much easier. Thank you. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart.

(Whereupon, music is played.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much, Nancy and Tom.

Terry Porter, National Chairman of the Resolutions Committee, will now present the resolution.

Terry.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam National President, the resolution on the National Awareness Campaign was submitted by the National President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, National PR Committee. The subject is the National Awareness Campaign and it reads as follows:

Whereas, in recent years, National Presidents have observed and remarked that public awareness and understanding about the American Legion Auxiliary is sorely lacking;

And, whereas, when meeting domestically and internationally with military servicemembers, veterans, and their families, National President Kris Nelson has further observed that the American Legion Auxiliary is not known by the very people for whom the Auxiliary is set up;

And, whereas, the American Legion Auxiliary membership and revenue has steadily declined and members have often cited in surveys and focus sessions that a factor is lacking of awareness about the organization among those unknowingly eligible to

belong;

And, whereas, the National President Nelson at every Department visit has remarked about the lack of public awareness and consistently recommended the need for a professional national public relations initiative;

And, whereas, a professional public awareness campaign will provide new opportunities to increase membership and donations to offset the cost for a professional awareness campaign;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the American Legion Auxiliary embark on a professionally developed and conducted National Awareness Campaign to raise public awareness about the organization's existence, mission, and service outreach;

And be it further resolved that upon the adoption of this resolution by the 2012 National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary, the National Executive Committee take action at its first 2012-2013 meeting to appropriate funds not to exceed \$750,000 for the initial phase of a professional American Legion Auxiliary public awareness campaign;

And be it further resolved that the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee be apprised of the results of the initial phase of the campaign and proceed with further allocation of funds for two subsequent phases of a National Public Awareness Campaign upon successful implementation of the prior phase;

And be it finally resolved that the National organization proceed with retaining the services of a reputable professional national public relations firm to develop and initiate a public awareness campaign for the American Legion Auxiliary upon the adoption of this initiative by the National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary held August 28, 29, 2012 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Madam President, the Public Relations Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution be adopted and the Finance Pre-Convention Committee meeting recommends the resolution be adopted with amendment.

Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of the resolution concerning the Awareness Campaign.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of the resolutions as just read. The Public Relations Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution be adopted and the Finance Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution be adopted with amendment.

Is there any discussion?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Madam Chairman, microphone one.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes microphone number one.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Nicole Clapp, Department of Iowa.

On behalf of the Finance Pre-Con Committee, we would like you to consider removing Section 3 resolved and inserting this amendment.

Resolved that the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee be apprised of the results of the initial phase of the campaign not to exceed one year and by approval of the Delegation of the Convention proceed with future allocation of funds for two subsequent phases of a National Public Relations Campaign upon successful implementation of the prior phase.

I would move for this amendment.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and second that the third resolve clause be replaced with the following:

Resolve that the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee be apprised of the results of the initial phase of the campaign not to exceed one year and by approval of the Delegation to the Convention proceed with -- with future allocation of funds for two subsequent phases of a National Public Awareness Campaign upon successful implementation of the prior phase.

Is there any discussion on the amendment?

MS. KRANIG: Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone three.

MS. KRANIG: Barbara Kranig, Department of Wisconsin.

The third resolve clause was the one that had given me some concern. Based on what has been now amended, are we to understand then that only the first phase would take effect until next Convention and the next Convention body would act on the two subsequent --

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's what I believe is stated in this. So, yes.

Is that your intent, Finance Committee?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: That was the intent of the Pre-Con Committee obviously not having seen the final presentation till this morning, but that was the intent felt -- feeling from the committee that they wanted the Convention body to have the authority to authorize future phases.

PRESIDENT NELSON: So this phase -- this amendment you vote on will complete the first phase by next year's Convention and then at next year's Convention, you'll vote on if you want to go on to phase two. Is that clear to everyone?

Is there any further discussion on the amendment?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are you ready for the question?

MS. ROBERTS: No, no. Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Where are you? The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

MS. ROBERTS: Yes. I'm from Rapid City, South Dakota. My name is Janet.

I wanted to clarify the financial obligations of this plan. There was a \$750,000 figure. There was a \$900,000 figure and there was a third one. Is phase one a cost of 750 and then phase two an additional cost?

PRESIDENT NELSON: Yes. Yes. Phase one is 750,000. This amendment would -- would allow you to see if you believe that was successful at next year's Convention and then vote at next year's Convention whether you want to move on to phase two. That's what this amendment is stating.

MS. ROBERTS: So when voting for this amendment, we still need to vote on whether or not we're going to pass the resolution with that amendment?

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's right. That's right. The amendment just stops the pro -- it allows them to do -- complete phase one during this next administrative year.

Is there any further discussion on the amendment?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are you ready for the question? Please stand.

With your voting keypads, if you're in favor of passing the amendment, press number one. If you're opposed, press number two. Because it's an amendment, it takes a simple majority.

I can't tell. Are you all standing in line to speak or are you standing in line because your voting hasn't --

VOICE: (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. Polling is closed. Please show the results of the vote. The amendment has passed and now we'll open discussion for the resolution.

MS. RENNER: Madam Chairman, microphone two.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number two.

MS. RENNER: Janet Renner from the Department of Virginia.

In a time when we are all seeing our membership decline, and I know that many Units and Departments have significant resources within the Units to do public relations, we also see that many of these public relations efforts are not in harmony with each other or have the same presence.

If I was not a member of this Auxiliary and I saw a PSA come up on my television that we just witnessed, I would immediately pick up the phone and want to join this organization.

I believe representing the Department of Virginia that we thoroughly endorse this resolution and support this going forward.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

MS. IMBURGIA: Madam President, Priscilla Imburgia, Department of New York.

I rise in very, very strong support of this resolution. This is something I think we should have engaged ten years ago. I believe that there are thoughts amongst our members about issues, about how this will relate back to our membership at a communication level.

Please understand that a professional organization such as what we are proposing to hire wants us to succeed. It is also their reputation that is on the line when you hire them.

Therefore, they are going to make sure and through their testing and their first initial year that they can establish those things that are concerning us and being able to relate back.

The American public is generous. They are supportive of our veterans and they are out there waiting to be tapped to be both members and to be also financial supporters of our organization. Give them an opportunity by participating in this type of campaign.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four.

MS. MOORE: Lisa Moore, Department of Nebraska.

As a small business owner, I will be the first one to tell you you have to spend money to make money. However, you just increased our dues \$4.00. The \$750,000 initial campaign, I don't know if anybody -- you noticed on the slide that it says the cost will not be recouped.

So with \$750,000, if you want to spend that money on public relations, give it to our Department Public Relation Chairmen because we know our programs better than they do.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number three.

MS. MUNCHBACH: Madam President, Deborah Munchbach, Arizona.

While I also agree that you have to spend money to make money and a national advertising campaign is probably exactly what we need, I am concerned about where those three to five test markets might be because in this first year, the National organization is essentially asking for \$750,000 to grow five membership spots. It's not going to benefit the whole nation immediately.

Do they have any idea where those initial test markets might be?

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number two.

MS. MEYERES: Yes. Ida Meyeres from the Department of Kansas.

We are talking a large amount of money here and, yes, a business owner, you have to spend to make. But I want every lady in this room to look in their heart and say when you get these new members in your Unit, are you going to wait six months to find out, oh, she's good at this and she's good at this and by then, they're gone.

When they come into your Unit, make them welcome. Find out what their abilities are to help us all grow. But if you ignore them, they're going to go away. So every person in this room has to take the personal responsibility to make them welcome or don't spend the money.

(Applause.)

MS. CABOT: Madam Chairman.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

MS. CABOT: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Dianne Cabot from the Department of Virginia.

I -- in my day job, I am a professional public information officer in Northern Virginia in the government. We have 827,000 veterans that reside in the Commonwealth of Virginia and six of the largest military installations in the country. And I am only at 98.1 percent membership.

I totally believe in this. The entire Delegation totally believes in this. And, Madam Chairman, I absolutely offer up the Department of Virginia as the number one test site for this project.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four.

MS. ROBINSON: Madam President, Ann Robinson, Alaska.

I do not intend on seeing -- being one of the test markets. Let's face it. We don't have that many people in our state as some of you have in your local communities.

But the backtalk that we will get is I serve your military today. Those men do not come from Alaska. They come from the United States. They do have no -- no known that we are the American Legion Auxiliary.

I was called USO which I work with them. I was called Chamber of Commerce which I work beside them. I was called Armed Services, YMCCA. And you know what? I work in all of them, but I never work as hard as I do in this organization.

It is time that wake up America and let them know who we are and that they are out there, too, and come join us.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone three.

MS. THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam President. Pamela Thompson, Department of Connecticut.

I'd just like to echo some of the comments that have already been made today. As a member of the younger generation and growing up in this organization, if I did not grow up in this organization, I can guarantee you that I would have absolutely no idea who you were.

I live in Boston which is a huge college town and I can guarantee you that 75 percent of the people that live in Boston have no idea what the American Legion Auxiliary does and that they're even eligible.

I am in strong support of this resolution.

I'd also like to point out that the National PR firm has been doing this for many years. They have the expertise and immense knowledge to pick the test sites that will be chosen to really put out our message. And then as a Convention body, we will be able to decide to move forward.

I understand that it's a lot of money, ladies, but we are declining so fast that by 2031, I believe it was, that we will no longer exist. That will sadden me to no end. I am here to serve and I want my friends to be there to serve. If they don't know who we are, I'm only one person and can only tell so many.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number two.

MS. BRIERE: Robin Briere, Department of Florida.

The Department of Florida knows very well how difficult it is to get your image out. We tried a campaign a couple years ago that was a total failure. It wasn't for lack of money spent.

However, we've never had a problem attracting new members. I totally support

this effort and I have complete faith in our National leadership team to select the right advertising firm and to pick the right sites to implement it.

But if we don't fix what's wrong with us internally, we -- all the people in the world we draw to us will not stay. We haven't learned how to treat each other well. And until we fix that, all the money in the world isn't going to fix our organization.

(Applause.)

MS. BRIERE: That is where we're really lacking, though I do believe, seriously believe that we need this. We need to look to our individual Departments to develop a message within our Departments and teach our members how to treat each other with courtesy and respect and in a welcoming nature.

You can do the best advertising campaign on a food product, but when you buy it and eat it, if it tastes like crap, you'll never buy it again.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

MS. ROBERTS: Janet from Rapid City, South Dakota.

I appreciate the presentation today, but I believe that it doesn't really address the period of time that these financial obligations would cover.

Does it include the cost to air the promotion and to implement the plan?

As far as what we promote nationally, I think we have to promote membership because if all you do is pay your dues, it goes to Washington to pay for lobbyists to protect veterans' rights. That's the start of things and then your local Units come in after that.

I believe that a national promotion every year for 10 years one week out of the year just inundating with film coverage and hitting up your local churches, same week every year. Right before 9/11 when everyone is feeling patriotic, get people involved.

I just don't believe that the presentation covered where those costs will go and how long they will last.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

I just have one clarifying statement. And the American Legion Auxiliary does not send any money to Washington, D.C. for lobbying.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the Delegate --

MS. ROBERTS: Thank you for that correction.

PRESIDENT NELSON: -- at microphone number four.

MS. REEL: I'm Fran Reel (phonetic), Department of West Virginia.

I just want to say a few things. One is that I'm President of a very small Unit. We had only 53 members last year. As of the date that I came to this Convention, we had gotten 12 new paid members and there were two more that were being sent to our State Secretary.

I myself got five new members. Of my five new members who have heard me for years talk about the Auxiliary, they all still ask me what does the Auxiliary do.

So I work as an accountant. Numbers are my game. And I will tell you ladies

this, that to spend a quarter million dollars for one year of PR is not a lot of money to be spent. And anybody who knows me knows that I look for the biggest bang for our buck and this will get us the biggest bang for our buck.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair --

MS. REEL: I have --

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm sorry.

MS. REEL: I have one last thing to say and that is that it is my understanding that there is approximately 800 Delegates here if I am correct or more and I have been watching the numbers of those who have voted.

You ladies were elected by your State Departments to come here to cast a vote. It has disturbed me that we are not seeing 100 percent voter participation for these votes whether you agree or disagree.

(Applause.)

MS. REEL: I would kindly ask you to all vote on the next motion.

Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number one.

MS. NEAL: Judy Neal (phonetic), Department of Iowa.

And I would like to bring up the point that even though this is only going to maybe five marketplaces, those soldiers that are at those five marketplaces and their families come from all over the United States. So all of us will be affected even though there's only five markets.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HEARLSON: Madam Chairman.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number two.

MS. HEARLSON: Peggy Hearlson, Department of Florida.

I can attest to what Kris says. I spent 25 years as an active duty military wife. I never heard of the American Legion Auxiliary or The American Legion during that 25 years.

And I can also attest to the fact that active duty military and their families will join. We have a Post and Unit in Panama City where over 50 percent of their membership is active duty.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number three.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Thank you, Madam President. Melanie Taylor from the Department of California.

I call for the question.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. I just want to remind you this will take a two-

thirds vote.

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Oh, I -- did I hear a second?

Okay. It's moved and seconded. This will take a two-thirds vote, so please stand. We are voting on ending debate. Those who wish to end debate, press number one. Those who wish to continue with debate, press number two. We're only voting on ending the debate.

Voting is now closed. Please show us the results.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The debate is ended. Are you ready for the question?

Please stand. All in favor of the resolution, please press the number one key on your electronic voting keypad. All those opposed to the resolution, please press the number two key.

Polling is now closed. Could we -- could we please see the results.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

The affirmative has it and the resolution is adopted.

When a sudden financial crisis befalls an Auxiliary member, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund may be able to provide temporary assistance when no other source of help is available.

Established in 1969, the Fund has continued to help members more than 40 years later.

Here with her report is our Auxiliary Emergency Fund National Chairman Marie Goede.

Marie.

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: Madam National President Kris, disaster has no boundaries as ice storms, snowstorms, tornadoes, wildfires, and floods ravaged across the country. With the economy, hardship falls on many.

Members were affected and the Auxiliary Emergency Fund applications began to filter in. However, funds were needed to help our members out. At that time, honor their service was an inspiration to donate to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund as those who would benefit were eligible through the service of their loved ones.

We started out the year to labor our energies by setting our goals high. We challenged all to give 10 percent more than last year. Members, Units, Districts, and Departments accepted the challenge, rolled up their sleeves, and put their working gloves on and took the task to hand.

A Unit in Colorado held "I'm sick of winter already luau" raising \$1,100.

The Department of Minnesota held a silent auction at their fall conference raising \$2,922.47.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: A Unit in Missouri sent in 25 cents per member present at each meeting.

One Unit increased their donation by 90 percent.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: Connecticut had an AEF mascot, a Boston Terrier who wore special saddlebags with the Auxiliary logo and AEF motto on them who would then go around to events collecting money. She even got to meet National President Kris at her meet and greet where \$150 was raised.

Rhode Island held an American Legion Auxiliary Has Talent Night with dinner where over \$1,100 was raised.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: The Department of Florida Chairman followed her Department President's theme, leaping for success, and had frogs leaping all over her state as she collected donations.

North Carolina's Department Chairman knows firsthand what she's talking about because she was a recipient. The AEF came to my rescue with temporary help in education. It turned my life around. I want to make sure the funds will be there for other members in crisis.

The Department of Idaho reported they have 72 Units all of which made contributions.

In the Department of Texas, the Juniors of the 9<sup>th</sup> District donated \$500 which was their Department President's project.

AEF grants were given to 110 members from 33 Departments in the amount of \$126,097.88.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: And 44 members from nine Departments received disaster grants for \$62,000. The grand total given \$188,097.88. A total of \$154,210.98 was donated from 50 of the 52 Departments and other sources. That is a shortfall of \$33,886.88.

Members who received grants expressed their heartfelt appreciation and felt compelled to write thank-yous.

One wrote, "I am very grateful and feel so blessed that I have been taken care of in my situation. I truly believe God blesses those who give blessings to others. And I know you will be very blessed in return. I can't thank you enough and my situation is improving. I just take it one day at a time."

Madam National President, that concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Marie.

Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you for an excellent report.

As more young veterans join the ranks of America's war heroes, the American Legion Auxiliary is needed more than ever. The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation provides a way to secure our legacy and our heritage of Service Not Self, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for future generations of veterans, our military, and their families.

Here with us, Foundation -- to give us the Foundation report is Foundation President Linda Boone.

Linda.

PRESIDENT BOONE: Good morning. The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation is a subsidiary organization of the American Legion Auxiliary. This means it is controlled by the governing body of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The Foundation Board has designated and appointed Directors based on their positions held in the American Legion Auxiliary to ensure the Foundation's mission remains focused on the financial support of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The elected Director positions are required to be ratified by the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee to reinforce that subsidiary role. The Auxiliary provides a part-time staff to support the Foundation and marketing and promotional projects are supported by several staff members.

The Foundation was created in 2007 to be used as a fund raising tool to access grants from government agencies and foundations to enhance our ability to meet our mission. It is also a tool for our membership to support Auxiliary priority programs by making a donation to the Foundation.

The IRS designations to the nonprofit sector under the 501(c) category. 501(c)(19) has been designated for veteran organizations. 501(c)(3) designates charitable nonprofits and is the most well-known and understood by donors and foundations.

Donations to a 501(c)(3) are understood to be tax deductible while for a 501(c)(19), it takes a specific ruling from the IRS for donations to be tax deductible and then potential investors need to be educated which is a challenge.

In fact, many government grants and even foundations often specifically state that veteran organizations cannot apply.

It has also been a long-held belief that membership organizations like most veteran organizations would be financially supported by -- through membership fees and donations from their members.

Our dues income has not kept pace to support increased cost of programs and declining membership has decreased income to support programs.

Additionally, the competition from the increasing number of nonprofits soliciting our members has decreased the donations to our programs.

It is our belief that with support from our members, this Foundation will enable our members to build revenue through alternative methods that we have not pursued in the past but can now.

Following the money helps us understand the purpose of the Foundation. Not all donations will come to the Foundation. Funds that will be used for individuals such as scholarships and the Emergency Fund will continue to go to the Auxiliary.

Corporations most often through their marketing departments do not necessarily require their recipients to be a 501(c)(3) organizations. Relationships with corporations are most likely to develop through the Auxiliary staff and not through the Foundation.

It is expected that we will transition our donors to directing their donations through the Foundation and we are pursuing grants to fund specific programs. Donations to the Foundation will become part of endowed or non-endowed funds.

Endowed means that funds are placed in investments and only the interest is used to pay for the programs each year. When an endowment is large enough, it can keep

pace with the annual cost of the programs and the basic fund stays intact for the future.

Non-endowed funds are used for shorter-term priorities. Grant funds are used for specific deliverables of the grant agreement.

The current development plan for the Foundation sets goals to grow the Foundation through grants and donations from targeted sectors.

The reality for the success of the Foundation will be in the actual dollars.

How can you as one person help? Focus your philanthropy on priority issues which we hope, of course, is the American Legion Auxiliary. Decide on how much you plan to give to your Unit, Department, and the National levels each year. Make the American Legion Auxiliary and its Foundation a priority commitment and send checks or make donations online.

For the future of the American Legion Auxiliary to complete its mission, we need members to make an annual donation beyond dues to the Unit, Department, and National organization. And don't forget. You can continue to give through the bequests in your will.

Investing in ourselves through the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.

Madam President, this completes our platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been a tradition that when you're a Past National President that you give something to the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters as a gift. And the Department of Minnesota to honor the service of honoring -- our year of honoring their service this year, instead of giving a material thing to National Headquarters, is donating \$2,500 to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. Excellent report, Linda.

As the nation's largest women's patriotic service organization, strength and implements of our Auxiliary is derived from our members.

Here to tell us how membership -- the Membership Committee works to retain current members, recruit new ones, and engage members in mission-related activities is National Chairman Trish Ward with her report.

Trish.

CHAIRMAN WARD: The perfect team, an assembled group of women representing experience, diversity, and depth, who brought a deep commitment and passion to the task at hand.

The perfect theme, a theme that would resonate with every member, young or old, active or not.

The perfect dream, to stop the more than 40-year negative member -- membership slide and make our organization a synchronous, powerful force with a powerful cause and a power voice.

A team, a theme, a dream, together with a plan that was reasonable, believable, and achievable.

As Departments begin to realize that our milestones and numeric objectives

were within reach, they got innovative, creative, and determined in their methods to excite our members.

Challenges were issued, promises were made, and teams were assembled to make achieving each numeric objective a reality for all.

Speaking of challenges, Sonny and Cher made a guest appearance. We had green hair, red, white, and blue hair, and I understand there are a few new real tattoos out there.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Whether it be the pride of Mississippi where two can make a difference and Miss I want a lot of membership, that is, the Dalmatians in Delaware with spot a member wherever you go, or stopping the membership slide in Louisiana, our members were committed, driven, and determined to make 2012 a year to remember.

With pride, passion, and purpose, we encouraged our members to make their eligibility visual and to connect with members in their community who shared a common commitment to supporting our veterans, active military, and their families. And as communication developed, membership resulted.

Our members proudly wore their commemorative buttons as a means to visually express the love we hold for our most valued commodity, our veterans themselves. Buttons were spotted on persons, backpacks, hats, lapels, and in the case of our Juniors on their fronts and on their backs.

Nancy Brotherton, President of Boone Unit 4 in Kentucky reported, "I wore my button into Walmart and after a man inquired about my veteran button, I walked out with two new members, a Legionnaire for our Post and his wife for our Auxiliary."

The team of Edwin T. Stiles Unit 153 of St. Johns, Michigan created a hand crafted flag where the veteran buttons took center stage as the stars among their stripes.

The memorial flag itself became a centerpiece to their Unit's membership activities and as President Marcy Jo Rae (phonetic) commented, the project has brought us a closeness as well as a way of showing our veterans how much they mean to us.

The making eligibility visible to drive membership campaign took many forms. From coffee cups to honor boards to holiday poppy trees, our veterans were the main attraction and took front and center in our membership efforts.

Once again, grass roots members across the country stepped up to lead the charge toward milestone four.

As a difficult economy has left its mark on many of our communities, leaders stepped up to save struggling Units and refocused the attention to healing, helping, and harnessing the strength within.

With only 202 citizens, the small logging community of Elk City, Idaho has certainly seen its share of difficult times. Step-in President Carolyn Howe and a team with a not under my watch mentality, this small Unit revitalized itself and now stands at 200 percent.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Or as President Rhonda Akers of Qualate-Pritchard Unit Number 178 in Grove, Oklahoma commented, we made sure to make every member feel

welcome and valued. Thanks to this philosophy, they proudly report in at over 109 percent.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: If we heard it once, we heard it a thousand times. It's all about the way you treat people.

Success takes many forms and although our dream is yet to be fully realized, we stand together in solidarity to celebrate every small success story, every special moment, every renewal retained, every member signed up, and every new Unit chartered, for it is these small success stories that will serve to blaze the trail for a brighter and bigger future for our organization.

The Service Not Self Award is given to those Units that have documented how promoting harmony, demonstrating zero tolerance for discrimination, accepting and adapting to change, engaging members, and warmly welcoming all has helped them to maintain or grow their membership.

This year, we recognize two outstanding Units with a 2012 Service Not Self Award. As Elie Wiesel once said the opposite of love is not hate. It's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness. It's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy. It's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death. It's indifference.

This Unit has shared that they believe the opposite of service, not self is not self-absorption and selfishness, but simply indifference.

They shared an observation that when they look at our organization's declining membership and ask why is this happening, it's their opinion that it is indifference.

Hey, indifference, meet Wink-Sparks Unit 303 of Merville, Iowa --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: -- setting a standard of excellence in all they do. President Pam Clark and her team have focused on exhibiting and promoting a culture of success.

Focusing on actively keeping all members engaged, this Unit has made sure to weave a membership component into every activity. Whether it be making patriotic chili for the Merville Centennial or inviting newly returned servicemembers to their Post for Thanksgiving dinner, they made sure to exhibit a positive and welcoming attitude for all to see.

At meetings, they minimize disharmony, gossip, cliques, criticism, and discrimination by focusing on maintaining a positive, upbeat attitude.

As President Clark commented we just don't allow any negativity. Our members are not only kind to each other but to everyone.

In addition to actively participating in Girls State, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, among others, they are proud to have eclipsed their December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 membership by more than 36 members by year end 2011.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Take that, indifference.

Our second recipient utilizes the Auxiliary's outreach programs to attract new members by letting people know what they do and why they do it. Congratulations to

Boone Unit 4 of Florence, Kentucky.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: The team of Unit 4 are experts at keeping their members informed and aware of everything that's going on and are champions in PR. Whether it be supplying new members with welcome packs, both electronically and in print, or keeping their local newspaper informed, they are fanatic about making sure their good work is known by all.

As President Nancy Brotherton shared, Unit 4 promotes harmony by seeking first to understand and then to be understood. We emphasize and look for the good in all we do and celebrate rather than focus on anything that wasn't perfect.

They have instituted their own think tank to encourage and cultivate new ideas and the merits of each are debated by everyone. No idea is viewed as not worthy.

Assuring that all members feel valued, Boone Unit 4 instituted the Balcony Award Program. This award is given monthly to deserving individuals who have been supportive of others in their Unit.

Rather than being a negative force, these members have uplifted other members and dispelled gossip and negativity. Whether it be supporting the community in the Coats for Kids Program or helping out one of their own, this Unit has made the concept of service, not self their guiding principle.

Having grown their membership from the prior year by more than 37 members as of the December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 benchmark, Boone Unit 4 is especially proud of their revitalized Junior team and cites their innocence and energy as a major component to their overall growth.

Congratulations again to these two outstanding Units.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Last year, the Department of Rhode Island was a 100 percent lone beacon shining the way for others to follow and follow they have.

Today we celebrate 15 Departments that achieved the fourth numeric objective of 100 percent in membership year 2012.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Please welcome our Divisional Chairmen who will present the 100 percent numeric achievement plaque to their Departments that achieved 100 percent as of July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Eastern Division Membership Chairman from the Department of Maine Jeri Brooks Greenwell, Southern Division Membership Chairman from the Department of Mississippi Angela Kilcrease --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: -- Central Division Membership Chairman from the Department of Michigan Suzanne Knapp --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: -- Northwestern Division Membership Chairman from the Department of Minnesota Carol Holmgren --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: -- Western Division Membership Chairman from the Department of Idaho Toni Gimpel.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Suzanne Knapp, Central Division Membership Chairman, will present the 100 percent numeric achievement plaques to the recipients in the Eastern Division on behalf of Jeri Brooks Greenwell who had to depart due to a family emergency.

Before we begin with our 100 percent Departments, we would like to recognize the Department of Kentucky and the entire Eastern Division who went over a hundred percent on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Congratulations, Eastern Division.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Okay. Here we go. Starting us off at 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation with 100.15 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Idaho, President and Membership Chairman Barbara Gehring, Secretary Mary Sue Chase with a membership theme of increased membership one pedal at a time.

Number 14 in the nation at 100.34 percent of the numeric objective, the Aloha state, the Department of Hawaii, President Frances Au, Secretary Liz Lee, and Membership Chairman Hilma Chang with a membership theme of honoring their service.

Our 2011 100 percent lone beacon state joins us once again at number 13 in the nation at 100.32 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Rhode Island, President Lorraine Boucher, Secretary Beverly Burns, and Membership Chairman Diane Winston with a membership theme of be a star for our veterans.

Number 12 in the nation squeaking through on milestone day was the Department of Arizona with 100.44 percent of their numeric objective, President Sharon Doran, Secretary Barbara Matteson, and Membership Chairman Kathleen Medalen with a membership theme of CAMEO, caring Auxiliary members engaging others.

No photographs at the stage, please. No photographs at the stage. Thank you.

Number 11, the cowboy state at 100.45 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Wyoming, President Linda Lenker-Orr, Secretary Sonja Wright, and Membership Chairman Joyce Menke with a membership theme of thanks to all veterans, military, and ALA members.

I know we're excited, but no photos at the stage, please. Thank you. We will have photo opportunities later, so I know you're excited, but no photos at the stage, please. Thank you.

Okay. We're headed into the top 10. At number 10 in the nation with 101.08 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Alabama, President Brenda Smith, Secretary JoAnn McCord, and Membership Chairman Vickie Thrower with a membership theme of don't give up, honor those who have served.

It's the pine tree state at number nine with 101.21 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Maine, President Margaret Johnson, Secretary Dora Michaud, and Membership Chairman Mary Jane McLoon with a membership theme of with purpose, passion, and pride, we honor those who served.

Someone let the Dalmatians out up in Delaware. At 101.87 percent of their numeric objective, number eight in the nation is the Department of Delaware, President Beth McGinn, Secretary and Membership Chairman Tina Washington with a

membership theme of spot a member wherever you go.

Pictures can be taken at the break and we encourage that.

Back down to the Southern Division we go for number seven in the nation. At 102.06 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of South Carolina, President and Secretary Louise Winesett, Membership Chairman Barbara Stoffer with a membership theme of to the top, South Carolina are the shooting stars.

The lady bugs were definitely out in force this year. Rounding out our number six spot with 102.18 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Pennsylvania, President Barbara Miller, Secretary Colleen Watson, and Membership Chairman Debbie Taylor with a membership theme of bugging Pennsylvania for membership.

The only Department to achieve all four milestones is number five in the nation with 102.31 percent of their numeric objective, it's the magnolia state otherwise known as the Department of Mississippi, President Mary Smith-Ried, Secretary Nancy Sanders, and Membership Chairman Angela Kilcrease with a membership theme of two can make a difference.

The frogs were really jumping down in Florida this year. Number four in the nation with 102.58 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Florida, President Diane Rousseau, Secretary Robin Briere, and Membership Chairman Sandra Beasley with a membership theme of leave it to success.

Number three in the nation with 104.31 percent of their numeric objective, the Department of Puerto Rico, President Hilda Soto, Secretary Noemi Brugos de Paneto, and Membership Chairman Margarita Crus Torres with a membership theme of (speaking Spanish), one team, one goal, no limits in membership.

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, this Department started climbing from number 52 to number 16 and today we celebrate them as number two in the nation with 109.90 percent of their numeric objective, the silver state, the Department of Nevada, President Anita Paquette, Secretary Daela Gibson, and Membership Chairman Hazel Lockhart-Breeding with a membership theme of honoring their service.

They surprised us all when on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, they surged from number 52 in the nation all the way to number one where they have remained until this day. Please join us in congratulating the District of Columbia, President Jeneal Ball, here today representatives Mary Louise Cothy (phonetic), Corrine Robinson, and Rebecca Nucar (phonetic) for an incredible 122.97 percent of their numeric objective. Their membership theme was honoring their service.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Let's give all our 100 percent Departments one more round of applause.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: We would like to invite all of our Departments back on to the stage at this time for a photo opportunity with National President Kris Nelson.

VOICE: Back stage. Back stage.

CHAIRMAN WARD: Back stage. Back stage. Back stage.

Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

PRESIDENT NELSON: We are so excited. Fifteen Departments. Wow.

And we hate to the curb the enthusiasm, but we have to get into the Legion to see Mr. Romney this afternoon, so we're going to take pictures behind stage.

I don't know about any of you, but I need a 10-minute break. So we're going to go have a 10-minute break.

Thank you, Trish.

(Whereupon, there was a brief recess taken.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Ladies, please be seated. Faces of freedom begins again right now.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

I am pleased to present our National Secretary Dubbie Buckler for her report.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President.

As I begin my remarks, the first thing I'd like to do -- generally you give a report, you talk about all the things you've done. I'd like to share what we have not done.

Your National Headquarters has not overspent the operations budget.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: We've underspent it every year. We have not gotten a bad mark from any rating agency.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: We've received an A plus in every audit for years plus all the new ways we are now audited.

The magazine is audited by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. Our last audit received the highest praise you can be given. This impacted ad sales which are at historic lows everywhere in the country for every publication, yet we are faring better than many publications.

Our 401k is now audited and we came through with flying colors on the first time for that audit.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Our Foundation and National Headquarters' financial and business operations are all audited. All clean, all the equivalent of A plus.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: That is no small accomplishment. The 990s, those infamous 990s, our tax returns and annual reports to the IRS and the public, they now encompass over 200 pages. They are accurate. We are doing a good job, a reputable job. And I'm very proud of that and I'm proud on your behalf.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And the final thing that we have not done, we have not been on television or in the newspapers for doing things wrong or unethically.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you.

Other nonprofits have. You can and should be proud of the commitment and professionalism of your National Headquarters staff and the integrity and soundness of your National Headquarters operations.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You have an outstanding professional, dedicated Headquarters staff by all the accounts I hear, the best in recent history with more professional certifications in their fields of responsibility than every -- than ever.

Everyone at your National Headquarters staff also does volunteer service. The past 11 months, we have reported over 150 hours for ALA volunteer service.

And since National Kris -- National President Kris trained and certified us in home and field service -- volunteer service nearly two years ago, your National Headquarters have volunteered almost 400 hours. And we know there are more to be reported.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And I am proudly standing here wearing my 100 hour pin.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Plus, your National Headquarters staff have demonstrated their support for the Auxiliary and our Foundation with personal donations. Organizations are judged on the level of support from within its leadership and 100 percent is expected from the governing body and leadership. We believe in being a good 100 percent example.

Some of the staff introduced to you on Monday were our volunteers in service to America. The six that we have had this year have just been terrific. So here's a big deal. In three years, the American Legion Auxiliary Call to Service Corps, our AmeriCorps VISTA consortium has eclipsed the \$3 million mark in grant funds.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: That's a lot of value that the American Legion Auxiliary delivers to help American Legion Auxiliary and consortium members grow their collective capacity to serve veterans, active duty military, and their families. This outcome exceeds all expectations.

Along with your National Headquarters and participating Departments, the American Legion Auxiliary Call to Service Corps consortium has not received an assignment of nearly 60 federally funded AmeriCorps National and AmeriCorps VISTA members to help The American Legion participating Departments and some 27 other organizations provide services that advance the American Legion Auxiliary's mission.

As a Corporation for National Community Service grantee, we've been wildly successful in enhancing our national image. We've placed the American Legion Auxiliary in a prominent, positive spotlight with both Congress and the White House.

Therefore, we're doing what that consortium is supposed to do. And I urge you to read pages 82 through 85 of the Convention guide for the full report.

And while you're on those pages, check out the donations report. In a time when national donations are down, the American Legion Auxiliary is growing its donor base and raising more money than ever. Over 30,000 small donations are now coming from non-members who have learned about us and want to support us. Pretty remarkable.

And our direct mail provider, Quadriga, was a \$20,000 sponsor of this event.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And speaking about learning about us, this past

year, the number of visitors at the [alaforveterans.org](http://alaforveterans.org) National website grew by 60 percent and by more than 200 percent since we launched the new website almost two years ago. That's over -- thank you for the one fan. Thank you. That's over 170,000 people looking at our website.

The online Auxiliary membership application has been downloaded almost 10,000 times.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The scholarship forms have been downloaded more than 3,000 times. And the Unit handbook has been downloaded over 2,000 times.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And our number of Facebook page followers has nearly doubled just this year with over 4,000 global fans representing over 1.4 million friends who potentially learn about us through the Facebook.

And I hope you will remember that during this Convention, we have been live blogging. And during the debate on all of the amendments and resolutions, we've received many, many text messages for people who are following the Convention including one from Past National President Rita Navarreté who said thank you for all that you are doing. She has enjoyed staying connected with this Convention via our live blog.

And we believe based on your feedback that we've also created some pretty great resources and posters. You got a glimpse of one of the newest ones in the Foundation report. I can't wait for you to see the full poster for the Foundation, the little baby inside the helmet with the boots. It's really a pretty compelling poster.

Member benefits are now poised to be better than ever. A lot of work has gone into taking member benefits to a dramatic new level.

We want to thank again Gallagher Member Benefits for the flashlights and USAA again for the poppy bags.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Gallagher is a \$15,000 sponsor of this Convention.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And USAA advertised in the Convention guide which brought in over \$11,000 in advertising revenue just for the Convention guide this year. That's over \$37,000 in sponsorships, \$11,000 in ad sale.

So the external support for this Conviction -- conviction, well, that's a good Freudian slip, wasn't it -- for this Convention is over \$48,000. It's taken sponsorship of this event to a new level and we're very proud of that.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The bigger deal is what Gallagher Member Benefits will be doing and bringing to the table to benefit our members. You heard the presentation. I'll just remind you that it's a full menu. It will be launching in phases over the next 18 months. You can apply for a terrific credit card now and stay tuned for the new rollout of member benefits like the ALA has never seen before.

This is my fourth National Convention as the National Secretary and Executive Director at National Headquarters. Listening to the tributes this morning, I was thinking how unpredictable life is. We've all probably lost someone close to us this year. None of

us know what tomorrow will bring.

I could get hit by a Mack truck or something could happen and I would not be here next year. So I'd like to look ahead and share some observations.

I've heard it said in this organization that if you've always done what you've always -- if you keep doing what you've always done, you're always going to get what you've always gotten. That's true.

And this organization in my observation would move ahead by leaps and bounds by getting its bylaws, the bones fixed once and for all. Move your rules to standing rules and policies that can easily be maintained and accurately accessible to all members.

But if you keep distrusting, you're always going to get distrust. If you keep feeling jealous, you're always going to get jealousy. If you keep squabbling, you're always going to get squabbles.

But if you look for the best, you'll see the best. And if you practice best practices, you'll be the best organization and people everywhere will want to join in.

You are an awesome organization with a critically needed mission. The mission statement is just two sentences. It's inside the back cover of your Convention guide. It is your elevator speech. It can be memorized. It says to anyone who you are, what you do, and why you matter.

The ALA is a big corporation and too many people look at it and the only thing they recognize is not your good works but the deep pockets that it might have.

So in this era of the revolutionary 990, it is all about good governance and good management. It's not just numbers anymore. The 990 asks about governance including Bylaws changes. I've heard it said at this Convention that change in our Bylaws is no big deal. It's just a box that's checked on the 990 form. Well, it is a big deal. It may be a little box, but it is a big deal.

The IRS goal, I will remind you, is to eliminate, their stated goal, to eliminate one-third of the more than one million nonprofits in existence. I will remind you again that the budgets of all the nonprofits in the United States combined, and that excludes churches, is the equivalent of the seventh largest world economy.

The IRS has noted that. That's a lot of nonprofit corporations not paying taxes. The IRS is looking at all those little checked boxes and frequently Bylaws changes is indeed a red flag not just to the IRS but to donors and rating agencies such as the Better Business Bureau and Dun & Bradstreet.

If a donor sees that an organization changes its fundamental structure every year, the message they see is the organization is not a stable candidate for funding. If the IRS determines an organization is not stable, it can and has said it will start retracting the exempt status.

I will tell you that the IRS has already visited some Posts and Units and it's not pretty. Those additional 1,000 IRS agents for the nonprofit sector are looking to nail some nonprofits. Remember their publicly stated goal is to eliminate a third of them.

So the Constitution of your organization is the reason you incorporated. It should never change unless your corporation purpose changes. The Bylaws are your bone structure. Occasionally you might need to replace a hip or fix a broken leg, but not often. Your Bylaws should only change when absolutely necessary like when a broken bone

needs to be set or a knee needs to be replaced.

Standing rules are where you do your cosmetic surgery or change wardrobes. You can do it when you want, but you can't afford to do it every day. And as you all know, too much plastic surgery and you do start to look weird.

So working with National President Kris this year, we focused on helping organizations understand the difference between governance and management. It really is critical to know the difference.

One of the things that we rolled out earlier was the new Girls State Program and operations guide. We've had a lot of discussion about this. And most people, the feedback is they very much appreciate that.

The next thing we're going to be rolling out is a new Department operations guide. It's a really big project. And the first few chapters will be presented at the Presidents & Secretaries Conference.

So in my reflection, I'd like to end with a reminder and major kudos to you. Why do people pay to belong to an organization? They pay to belong because it's fulfilling to them or they are so proud of what they see the organization doing that they want their name attached to it.

People support what they like and what they respect, yet with all the celebrations, this organization is losing -- loses 10 percent of its new members every year. This year, over 280 Units went away.

I hope the focus will shift from process and minutia to changing this picture. Dying Units could be reborn as eUnits or special group Units like an Army wives Unit, a Girls State alumni Unit, a Girls Nation alumnae Unit, a working moms Unit.

And now a big wow to all of you. The 2011 estimated value of one volunteer hour of service is now evaluated at over \$21 an hour according to the independent sector which is a coalition of charities, foundations, and corporations that publishes important research about the nonprofit sector.

American Legion Auxiliary members have reported and volunteered over six million hours for a collective value of service to our veterans, servicemembers, and their families of more than \$1.4 billion.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: That's quite a global impact and it's a powerful number that accentuates who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

I want to take a moment of personal privilege and say how much I have appreciated working with the leadership team this year and your National President Kris Nelson. It has been --

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It's been -- take two. It's been an absolute pleasure and honor to work with Kris. She has reminded us that it's all about honoring their service. And if we shift the focus on why we're here, the who we are, what we do, and why we matter will shine through. And, ladies, let's please get there.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Dubbie.

Your leadership at National Headquarters keeps our organization continually moving forward. And you have brought together a magnificent staff.

Thank you.

Would Rosie Blakesley from the Department of Minnesota please come to the Podium and present the National President's scrapbook.

MS. BLAKESLEY: President Kris, I feel like I've traveled with you. And I'm going to present you volume one out of ten.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Wow. It is beautiful. Oh, look at that. Thank you.

Rosie got 26,000 pictures this year, plus Doug Malin's 15,000.

So thank you, thank you, thank you. I can't wait to get home and go through this and relive the year.

And I know I've made friends all across the country and because of what Rosie has done, I'll be able to always remember what we did together to honor the service of our veterans.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Excuse me. I am pleased to introduce the members of the very hardworking Resolutions Committee: Terry Porter, Chairman; Georgine Butman, Vice Chairman; and Sue Britton, member.

Thank you, ladies.

Are there any resolutions? Are there any resolutions?

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Yes, ma'am, there are.

Madam President, before we consider the 42 housekeeping resolutions, I would like to make note of two typos that need to be corrected.

In housekeeping resolution number one, in the fourth whereas clause, we need to strike the last word "and" and in its place insert the words "now, therefore, be it." It doesn't change anything but how we read it.

The second typo is in housekeeping resolution number 25. In the resolve clause, please strike the words "repealed and." It will then read that the following resolutions be removed.

PRESIDENT NELSON: If there's no object -- is there any objection to correcting these typos?

VOICES: No.

PRESIDENT NELSON: If there's no objection, the typos will be corrected.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam National President, the Resolutions Committee proposes that all housekeeping resolutions that have received a recommendation to be adopted in their Pre-Convention Committee meeting be bundled and considered in one vote.

Ladies, that would include all housekeeping resolutions except for number two, number six, and number 21.

PRESIDENT NELSON: If there is no objection, all housekeeping resolutions except for resolution number two, number six, and 21 will be con -- will be bundled and considered for one vote.

Is there any objection?

VOICES: No.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of all housekeeping resolutions except for numbers two, six, and 21.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and adopted -- it has been moved to adopt all housekeeping resolutions except for two, six, and 21.

Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, please stand. Are you ready for the question? All in favor of -- all in -- all those in favor of all housekeeping resolutions except for number two, six, and 21, please press number one on your electronic voting keypad. All opposed, please press number two on your electronic voting keypad.

Please -- voting is now closed. Please show the results.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The affirmative has it and all housekeeping resolutions except for two, six, and 21 are adopted.

Terry, please continue.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Housekeeping resolution number two was submitted by the Special Committee on Documents. The subject is policies and procedures revision, National President. It reads as follows:

Whereas, it is necessary to update the policies and procedures book of the policies and mandates of the organization;

And, whereas, many of those mandates and policies are no longer relevant and should be extracted from the document;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the American Legion Auxiliary assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana August 27<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012 that the following resolution be repealed and removed from the policies and procedures document.

Under the heading of National President, National President briefing number five, resolve that each year, the candidate or candidates for National President for the ensuing year shall meet with the National Secretary, National Treasurer, and the Finance Committee for a briefing not to exceed two days at a time agreed upon by those named in the resolution;

And be it further resolved that the Finance Committee shall budget funds for travel expense for this briefing and the National Secretary shall be authorized to take care of the necessary correspondence pertaining to this meeting. That was done by the Resolutions Committee National Convention 1978 New Orleans.

Also resolved that the candidate or candidates for National President for the ensuing year be consulted as to their preference of accommodations and also other details pertaining to the Conference if elected National President. That was also Resolutions Committee National Convention 1978 New Orleans, Louisiana.

The Pre-Convention Committee on Resolutions recommends that this resolution not be adopted.

Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of housekeeping resolution number two as just read.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is now on the adoption of the housekeeping resolution number two as just read. The Pre-Convention Committee on Resolutions recommends the resolution not be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number four.

MS. VAN KIRK: Carol Van Kirk, Department of Nebraska.

I rise in opposition to removal of this policy. The policy was established to give the National Vice President two days to go into National Headquarters for the purposes of planning with staff for her upcoming year. This should be adequate time if their thoughts and ideas are prepared in advance.

The process was successful from 1978 until at least 2007. In the last few years, three and four upcoming leaders have been authorized into Indianapolis to do long-term planning. It creates an unnecessary expense and I believe that is when we lost some individual personality in our organization.

With today's technology, it is easier than ever for candidates and staff to confer on any issue. Rather than remove this policy established by our predecessors to conform to how some candidates or staff may desire, I feel this policy should be retained and followed in the future.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Is there any further discussion?

I'd like to give a clarifying statement. As it currently is, the National Vice President comes in for five days during the week of Veterans Day. She meets with staff and she represents the National President at the Indianapolis Veterans Day activities.

Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Hearing none, are you ready for the vote? Please stand. All those in favor of housekeeping resolution -- of housekeeping resolution number two, please press the number one key on your electronic voting keypad. All those opposed, please press the number two on your electronic voting keypad.

Please close the voting. Please show the results. Those in favor is 234, opposed 373. The opposed has it and the resolution has -- is not adopted.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam President National -- Madam National President, housekeeping resolution number six was submitted by the Special Committee on Documents. The subject is policies and procedures revision, Energy Committee. It reads as follows:

Whereas, it is necessary to update the policies and procedures book of polices and mandates of the organization;

And, whereas, many of those mandates and policies are no longer relevant and should be extracted from the document;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the American Legion Auxiliary assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana August 27 through 30, 2012 that the following resolution be repealed and removed from the policies and procedures document.

Energy Committee pages -- page 63. At the 1978 National Convention in New

Orleans, The American Legion passed a resolution calling for the creation of a committee to study the problems of energy crisis in the nation.

Shortly after the National Convention, the National Commander called the National President, at that time Mrs. Alvin Moltzen, asking for the establishment of a similar committee in the Auxiliary. The Committee was first appointed in 1978-'79 administration.

The Delegates to the 1980 National Convention in Boston passed an amendment to the Bylaws, Article 5, Section 2, Committees, which amendment added the Energy Committee to the list of standing committees in the Auxiliary.

Note, at the February 1981 National Executive Committee meeting in Washington, D.C., the following recommendation was passed and referred to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee and the change was subsequently made.

One recommended that the Energy Committee become a Subcommittee of the Standing Committee on National Security and the Standing Committee on National Security be increased with one additional member appointed.

The Pre-Convention Resolution Committee recommends it be adopted with an amendment.

Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of resolution number six as just read.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of resolution number six as just read. The Pre-Convention Resolutions Committee recommends the resolution be adopted with amendment.

Is there any discussion?

VOICE: Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Where are you?

VOICE: Number three.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number three.

VOICE: On behalf of the Pre-Convention Resolute -- Resolutions Committee, I move that housekeeping resolution number six be amended with the addition of the following:

It's an additional reserved clause. And be it -- resolved clause -- and be it further resolved that the removal of the Energy Committee from Bylaws, Article 5, Section 2 in 1981 is affirmed.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The amendment reads on behalf of the Pre-Convention Resolutions Committee, housekeeping resolution number six be amended with the addition of the following:

And be it further resolved that the removal of the Energy Committee from Bylaws, Article 5, Section 2 in 1981 is affirmed.

Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It has been moved and seconded. Are you ready for the question?

Please stand. Those in favor of the amendment that the removal of the Energy

Committee from Bylaws, Article 5, Section 2 in 1981 is affirmed, please press one, opposed, please press two.

Voting is closed. Please show the results. The amendment passed with 553 in favor, 46 opposed.

Now we'll vote on the question. Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of resolution number six as just read. The Pre-Convention Resolution Committee recommends the resolution be adopted with amendment. All in favor -- please stand. All in favor, please press number one, opposed number two.

Please close the voting and show the results. The affirmative has it, 614, 33 opposed, and the amendment (sic) has been adopted.

Terry, please continue.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam President, the resolution number 21 was submitted again by the Special Committee on Documents. The subject is policies and procedures revision, National Convention. It reads as follows:

Whereas, it is necessary to update the policies and procedures book of policies and mandates of the organization;

And, whereas, many of those resolutions directed amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws or standing rules which have been done and should be extracted from the document;

Now -- now, therefore, be it resolved by the American Legion Auxiliary assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, August 27 through 30, 2012, that the attached permanent organization section and the resolution on date and place be removed from the policies and procedures document;

And be it further resolved the National Convention section will be updated with the 2012 approved Convention rules, election rules, and resolution rules.

The Constitution & Bylaws Resolution Committee recommends the resolution be adopted with an amendment.

Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of resolution number 21 as just read.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The question is on the adoption of resolution number 21 as just read. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution be adopted with amendment.

Is there any discussion?

MS. CONATSER: Madam President.

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Chair recognizes the Delegate at microphone number two.

MS. CONATSER: Sharon Conatser, Department of Illinois.

On behalf of the Pre-Convention Committee on Constitution & Bylaws, I move to amend resolution number 21 by striking the last resolve and inserting the following:

Reserved -- resolved all Convention standing rules, election rules, and resolution rules will be removed from the National Convention section.

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's been moved to amend resolution number 21 by

striking the last resolve and inserting the following:

Resolved all Convention standing rules, election rules, and resolution rules will be removed from the National Convention section.

Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are you ready for the question? Please stand. All those in favor of the amendment, please press number one on your electronic voting keypad, opposed, please press number two.

The voting is closed. Please show the results. Five hundred and forty-one in favor, 35 opposed. The affirmative has it and the amendment is adopted.

The question is now on the resolution number 21 as amended as originally proposed. Is there any discussion? This is as amended.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Are you ready for the question? Please stand. The question is now on resolution number 21 as amended. If you agree, please press one, opposed, please press two.

Please close the polls -- the voting and show the results. Five hundred and forty-four in favor, 19 opposed. The affirmative has it and the resolution is adopted.

Terry, please continue.

CHAIRMAN PORTER: Madam President, I would like to take a moment to just re -- give the rest of the report from the Resolutions Committee from our meeting, kind of a synopsis.

As everyone has experienced, the Rules Committee Pre-Convention meeting was held on Saturday in the Wabash 3 Room of the Indiana Convention Center.

Rosemary Turner offered prayer and Georgine Butman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent was given to appoint Susan Britton as Secretary and Priscilla Imburgia and Judy Samuelson as Sergeant at Arms.

Honorary Past National President Miriam Junge welcomed everyone on behalf of National President Kris Nelson.

As we know this year, there were 41 housekeeping and two other resolutions for consideration. It was a busy year.

The first 12 resolutions came to the Resolutions Committee. The rest of the housekeeping resolutions were assigned to the 17 standing committees that matched the section of the policies and procedures from which they came. When the 29 came back from the other committees, they were all compiled.

We are pleased to report that of the 41 total, 38 were recommended for approval as they were. Two more were recommended with amendments and one was recommended to not be adopted. Those have all been handled now.

The resolution from Nebraska regarding the Division Vice President's travel was assigned to Constitution & Bylaws and the National Awareness Campaign was assigned to both Finance and Public Relations. The Convention considered both of those following those respective reports.

Madam President, in addition to the resolutions that we have handled,

tremendous assistance was given by members of the Resolutions Committee this year not only in the meeting but also in preparing the courtesy resolutions for this Convention.

With your permission, Madam President, I'd like them to join us to present the last resolutions.

May I have Georgine Butman from Maine speak first?

VICE CHAIRMAN BUTMAN: Madam President, whereas, dedicated Delegates, alternates, and guests traveled to the beautiful host city of Indianapolis, Indiana to attend the annual Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary and thoughtfully considered the issues placed before them;

And, whereas, National Officers, National Chairmen accepted President Kris' challenge to honor their service referencing our veterans, their shared leadership, time, talent celebrated the accomplishments of the members and promoted the programs of our organization;

And, whereas, our devoted Past National Presidents continue to offer their wisdom, support, and friendship with grace and encouragement;

And, whereas, Convention Chairman Karen Lowe and the members of the Department of Indiana have provided countless hours of selfless service to provide numerous courtesies and assistance;

And, whereas, the city, its hotels, local citizens, and Convention Center staff have warmly welcomed the American Legion Auxiliary family into their community with generosity, hospitality;

And, whereas, the National Headquarters staff of the American Legion Auxiliary have worked tirelessly to prepare for this Convention to ensure its success, have assisted members all year, and shared our mission in serving veterans, military, and families;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that by this courtesy resolution, the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled here in Indianapolis, Indiana this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August '12 -- 2012 expresses its sincere appreciation and grateful thanks to all these participants who have made this Convention an outstanding success with a thunderous applause.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN PORTER: We have a second courtesy resolution and I would appreciate it if Sue Britton could present that one.

And we would like to have, Kris, your family join us.

(Applause.)

MS. BRITTON: Madam National President, whereas, on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, Kris Nelson was installed American Legion Auxiliary National President which changed the daily lives of Kris' family;

And, whereas, her dear family has graciously shared her with this amazing National organization with loving support as she gave this past year of her life to the Auxiliary;

And, whereas, that family includes Terry, her husband, best friend, and rock for 38 years; and son, Troy; and his wife, Angie; and daughter, Sarah; and her husband, Kent; and all those wonderful grandchildren grandma has not been able to spoil, Sydney

15, Myah 8, Ty 5, and little Kruze who was born last year the same day Kris was installed;

And, whereas, every mother and grandmother in the American Legion Auxiliary understands how Kris has missed her family greatly, really appreciates them, and looks forward to spending quality time with them soon;

And, whereas, the members understand the tremendous loving sacrifice her family has made this year;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana express our sincere appreciation for this special family's sacrifice by giving them an appropriate generous applause.

(Applause.)

MR. NELSON: It's my honor to be standing up in front of all you good looking ladies that have taken care of my wife and my daughter and son's mother. It's been an extremely wonderful year, many friends, how well they've taken care of my wife.

And I just want to say thank you and we'll be seeing you around.

(Applause.)

MS. BRITTON: And there they are.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN PORTER: And the third resolution, whereas, on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Kris Nelson from the Department of Minnesota was installed American Legion Auxiliary National President;

And, whereas, President Kris' belief that in the spirit of God and country we serve veterans, military, and their families provided a focus for our mission;

And, whereas, she has represented the American Legion Auxiliary with a friendly, welcoming, opening, accepting style making many friends across the country and around the world;

And, whereas, President Kris has worked with The American Legion Commander Fang Wong and SAL Commander Jim Roberts with an exemplary commitment to advancing and promoting The American Legion Family;

And, whereas, she has willingly given a year away from her family, her dear family, who has graciously shared her with this National organization with their loving support;

And, whereas, Kris has diligently and freely shared her year with members and friends communicating with pictures and words, promoting our mission;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by this courtesy resolution the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana this 29<sup>th</sup> day of August express our heartfelt appreciation for this special, dedicated National President by giving Kris a standing ovation saying thank you and a job well done.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you.

I wasn't going to cry. I told myself this morning I'm not going to cry here today, but I want to thank you all so much. I know that anywhere I go in the country I have friends and I'd like to thank you all for that.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

We're now going to proceed with the National President's Awards for Excellence.

THE NARRATOR: The American Legion Auxiliary is proud to present the National President's Award for Excellence. This exclusive honor is awarded to the best of our best. The award epitomizes service, not self, by recognizing efforts in planning and implementation of our programs.

Here to present is your National President Kris Nelson.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Today's recipients have each gone above and beyond the call of duty transforming the words of our mission statement into powerful actions of mission delivery.

Through intense planning and precise implementation, what began as a simple goal turned into some of the most amazing, innovative, and powerful examples of the American Legion Auxiliary programs and action.

Before we get to today's winners, I would like to recognize all of the Units' and Departments' work in the Auxiliary's missions and programs every single day. The hard work that you all do day in and day out oftentimes with much deserved recognition or thanks is what keeps our organization alive and carries out its mission.

I applaud each and every one of you and I thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Here today to help present a snapshot of the award highlights are Peggy Thomas, Nancy Brown-Park, and Janet Jefford.

Peggy, would you please present the first award.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you, Madam President.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the first winner of the National President's Award for Excellence is presented to Lake Stevens Unit 181 in Oak Harbor, Washington, Karen Morea, Unit President.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: I want to start out by read -- I want to start out by reading an excerpt from a letter written by a mother to Post 181.

It reads my five and seven-year-old attended your children's Christmas carnival and had a blast. Everyone there was so friendly. What amazing volunteers. My husband is in the Navy and currently serving in Japan. My kids are dealing with his absence, but it truly is events like your carnival that makes it easier, especially during difficult holidays.

Thank you so much for recognizing my husband and our family. We truly appreciate it. The Gleason family.

Yes. That's what it's about, isn't it, ladies?

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: But the Christmas carnival was just the beginning. Unit 181 spent all year working to meet objectives established by various programs in the Youth Development Pod, the Veterans, Military Support and Advocacy Pod, and the Family Support Pod. Here are just some of their accomplishments.

Identified eight local children with parents currently serving in the military and

had a ceremony where they presented with Blue Star Service Banners, held a back to school drive where they handed out 200 backpacks to the children of the Lake Stevens community, financially sponsored a youth football team that had eight players whose parents are active Navy -- on active duty Navy.

Unit 181 donated almost \$1,000 to the team to assist with uniforms and league dues. They also donated Gatorade, Power Bars, and first-aid equipment, held their winter carnival where 186 military kids enjoyed face painting, sweet treats, card making for soldiers, of course, a surprise visit by Santa.

Nearly 300 volunteers helped with this event and Unit 181 received 4,500 in kind donations.

In March, Unit 181 teamed up with Operation Home Front and hosted a joint baby shower for expectant military mothers. Fifty-one servicemembers and their spouses had a fabulous time thanks to these ladies. Each mother received a bag of new baby items, a great lunch, and an amazing opportunity to bond with other military mothers.

Unit 181's Juniors logged over 82 hours of community service and one of their Juniors was awarded the Department of Washington Gift Scholarship as well as the Florence Limm (phonetic) Memorial Scholarship.

In total, this Unit logged over 437 hours assisting the children in their community.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: And raised over \$11,800 in donations used to meet program objectives.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Clipped over \$300,000 of coupons that were sent to commissaries overseas.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Distributed over 10,000 poppies during Veterans and Memorial Day.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Participated in a Seattle stand down where they donated 100 gift bags filled with toiletries for female veterans, a donation totaling over \$3,000. Wow.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: You ladies have accomplished so much this year. Having that kind of impact on military families, especially the children, is something I think we all aim to achieve every day.

Lake Stevens Unit 181, you are truly amazing.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And they have shared that -- and she just shared with me that that Unit is less than five years old. They were chartered less than five years ago. Isn't this a beautiful trophy? It sits on a base and it will be shipped to the Unit.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And now Nationals -- and now National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman Nancy Brown-Park will present the next award.

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: And the gold medal in women's floor exercise goes to -- just kidding.

The second Unit to receive the National President's Award for Excellence is Banner Unit 109 in Angier, North Carolina, Unit President Caroline L. Tart.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: In most circles, the phrase she rides a broom isn't very nice. But for the ladies of Unit 109, it's a compliment. It means that you are a proud member of their bucket and broom brigade.

This brigade of ladies teamed up with the Homeless Veterans Program at the Fayetteville VA and donated buckets, mops, comfort items, and furnishings all for traditional (sic) veterans.

While all veterans are the priority of Unit 109, this past year, they gave special emphasis on homeless veterans. Here's an idea of what they did.

Sponsored a homeless woman veteran's transition into temporary HUD housing for Operation Mattress Firm.

This homeless veteran was a single woman with two kids and Unit 109 provided her with transportation, home furnishings, kitchen appliances, and school supplies for her kids, donated comfort items, buddy baskets, and other needed supplies to the Homeless Veterans Programs at the Fayetteville VA, donated mattresses, beds, gas cards, grocery gift cards, holiday presents, and a computer to the OIF/OEF/OND Transition Program, sponsored a youth volunteer picnic at the Fayetteville VA, just part of their 1,243 volunteer hours served at the VA.

Donated school supplies to the Veterans in the Classroom Program dedicated to providing educational opportunities to our veterans when they return home, made over 100 yellow bows and displayed them around town, volunteered at Operation Home Front Tent at the Military Appreciation Day, held a gold star ceremony and presented 19 gold star banners to moms at the children of fallen soldiers event as well as presented eight blue star banners.

They held a pocket flag folding class for 300 and presented a flag history seminar for the attendees, cooked the celebratory meal for the Junior ROTC Military Ball.

In total, Banner Unit 109 volunteered nearly 2,000 hours and over \$32,000 to veterans and military projects. I present --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BROWN-PARK: I present to you the National President's Award for Excellence. Thank you for all you do to honor our faces of freedom.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And now Children & Youth Chairman Janet Jefford will present the next award.

Janet.

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Today I have the privilege of announcing the third Unit to receive the National President's Award for Excellence.

The third award goes to Johnson-Nicoles Kuhlman-Olson Unit 53 of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Unit President Judy Walters.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: Unit 53's motto this year was actions speak louder than words and I'm here to tell you these ladies know how to make some noise. Working to fulfill the objectives set by the various programs in the Veteran Military Support and Advocacy Pod, they set out to educate their members on the problems faced by homeless veterans.

They achieved the goal by creating a workshop they called Making Connections Women to Women. The workshop partnered the Department of Wisconsin with the VA Center and focused on issues like mental illness and substance abuse in homeless veterans.

Unit 53 also promoted and assisted with events that helped both male and female veterans. For example, they partnered with their VA and provided supplies and business suits to ready veterans for job interviews, served a Christmas meal for homeless veterans and gifted them stockings filled with toiletries and personal care items, worked with Gold Star mothers to create backpacks filled with paper, pens, envelopes, and stamps and delivered them to the VA Center, held a holiday stand down for women veterans where they collected clothing, personal items, non-perishable food, household items, and bed linens.

Not only were homeless veterans a top priority, Unit 53 also wanted to assure that homebound veterans and veterans living in nursing homes were not forgotten. On various holidays, they get together to write letters and send cards to local nursing homes for their veterans.

On Memorial Day, they provided local nursing homes with poppies to be placed on the food tray of every veteran.

Finally, Unit 53 supported the Camo Quilt Project by completing 216 Camo Quilts and volunteering almost 2,000 hours.

They also had local school children write thank you notes to veterans and included them with each quilt as a surprise for the recipient.

In honor of the work they did with the Camo Quilt Project, Unit 53 received a certificate and United States flag from the Air Force. The flag was flown over Afghanistan on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The women of Unit 53 finished the year having volunteered nearly 1,000 hours, raising \$5,000, and collecting over \$6,000 in in-kind donations.

You are shining examples of what wonderful things can be accomplished --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN JEFFORD: -- through preparation, dedication, and service to others. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The fourth Unit to receive -- oh, I'm sorry. I don't want to do this.

Here again is National Vice President Peggy Thomas to give the fourth Unit their award.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: The fourth Unit to receive the National President's Award for Excellence is Clarence L. Tinker Unit 170, Midwest, Oklahoma,

Unit President Sherree Bertolasio. I probably butchered that.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: This Unit took National President Kris Nelson's motto, service, not self, to heart and volunteered nearly 8,000 hours of their time, spent almost \$20,000 of their own money, and drove over 20,000 miles to assist veterans, military, families -- and their families.

After attending the mission training held in Mobile, Alabama, Unit 170 President Sherree refocused her ladies on the ALA mission. Together all the members of Unit 170 worked to support these veterans who were returning home, retired, or homeless.

And here is how they did it. Worked in the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Program. Unit 170 volunteered over 1,500 hours, donated \$8,000, and drove over 5,000 miles to assist veterans.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Collected and donated clothing during a stand-down in Oklahoma City, provided food, clothing, and toiletries for Oklahoma City's Friendship House, a VA funded facility for recovering veterans, created a Christmas card tour where they toured two VA hospitals and seven VA centers passing out Christmas cards and gifts to veterans serving on the Board of State, accrediting in support of GI Bills to help veterans pay for college, non-college training, and on-the-job training, held a Poppy Day to receive donations and create awareness of the meaning behind the poppy, collected and donated clothing, books, magazines, and computers to the Oklahoma City VA Hospital and Norman's Veterans Center.

During the holiday season, instead of Buddy Baskets, they created service stockings filled with sweet treats, notebooks, pens, bath towels, wash cloths, and other needed items and delivered them to the VA Friendship House, coordinated with the 45<sup>th</sup> in -- 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Family Readiness Group to host a holiday party for families of deployed reservists.

Unit members baked over 30 dozen holiday cookies and worked with Operation Military Kids to secure Nintendo games for the kids.

Well, Unit 170, I would say you definitely understand our motto. In the spirit of God and country, we serve veterans, military, and their families. You are truly amazing representatives of this great organization.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

She said I was a good secret keeper.

And now to the final Unit level recipient of the 2012 National President's Award for Excellence. The award goes to Palmer-Roberts Unit 214 in Willoughby, Ohio, Martha C. Setlock, President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: If she's here, come on up, Martha.

This Unit set their sights high this year and hit their target. To even be considered for the President's Award for Excellence, a Unit must demonstrate service activities in at least three Auxiliary programs. This Unit demonstrated activities in seven

different programs.

Unit 214 encouraged children to be patriots. Members went to local schools to present flag education programs.

In November of last year, they spoke to over 300 sixth graders and veterans joined them to share stories of life in the military with the children.

Unit 214 also took their flag education program to Lake Erie College where they gave instruction for proper flag disposal.

They helped many people including a group of adults with a dis -- with disabilities dispose of flags in an appropriate manner.

Also in November, Unit 214 hosted a dinner for over 100 attendees, 50 of whom were veterans.

Junior members of the Unit were also active. On Palm Sunday, Juniors took 75 Easter treat bags to a nursing home and visited with residents.

The Unit collected over \$450 worth of school supplies and delivered them to five different schools. They handed out scholarship applications at the local high schools.

And they participated in American Education Week and Teacher Appreciation Days by foregoing the apples and instead handing out cookies.

They assisted community groups in preparing more than 100 holiday baskets to be handed out to local military families.

Unit 214 had 22 new members join this year and attribute that to their public relations efforts. Forty-five articles, a letter to the editor, six print advertisements, and one press release were published in three different local newspapers.

And Unit 214 honored the service of a young boy, the son of a 70-year-old veteran. The veteran, a single father, has many medical conditions and requires daily assistance from his 11-year-old son.

Many times a week, the young boy makes trips to the grocery store on foot. And on four separate occasions, the boy has found his father unconscious and dialed 911. Paramedics say his actions have saved his father's life.

Unit 214 paired up with three other Legion Posts to raise funds to buy the boy a bicycle and a lock to help him carry the groceries. They went to school and presented those items to him and gave him the Youth Hero Award.

It is an honor today --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: It is an honor today to present you with this award and to celebrate all of your amazing actions and milestones this past year. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: To all of the Units on stage and to all of you who worked on our mission every day, again, I say a big thank you and ask that you please take some time to celebrate all that you've achieved this year.

And now for the final award. It's time to announce the Department recipient of the National President's Award for Excellence.

And the Department recipient is -- can I get a drum roll, please -- that's better -- and the Department recipient is the Department of Delaware, Beth McGinn, President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: The Department of Delaware accomplished so much over the past year. If I told you all that they have done, we'd be here for another whole year, but I'm going to try some of the highlights.

The Department of Delaware folded over 900 pocket flags to hand out at deployment ceremonies included in packages to troops and given to Operation Military Kids camps.

They participated in a candlelight ceremony for the tenth anniversary of 9/11 by reading poems, prayers, singing songs, and handing out refreshments.

Unit 28 planted and tended to a victory garden that supplied fresh vegetables to homeless shelters and children's lunches.

They held a healthcare -- a health fair and flu shot program at a local Post.

On Dr. Martin Luther King Day Jr., 80 volunteers helped assemble more than 305 buddy baskets to give to homeless veterans transitioning to new housing.

They participated in the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program in which Units made over 700 yellow ribbons to decorate their communities.

They participated in Heroes to Home Program through which three homeless veterans have secured permanent housing.

They distributed over 16,800 poppies and raised \$9,700.

Unit 28 mailed 38 -- 36 boxes every single month to the troops.

Thank you, Department of Delaware, for being active and enthusiastic members. You have embodied Service Not Self this past year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: I'm honored to present this award to you.

I got to go to Delaware and see them in action and participate in some of those events. Congratulations, Delaware. Stand up and give yourself a hand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: As I mentioned before, I find it hard to only share a portion of what all these Units and Departments have done over the past year. I want to share everything that you evolved on.

The American Legion Auxiliary is full of wonderful members and it was my honor to serve as your National President this year. Without all of you, none of this would be possible.

I want to encourage you all to submit your applications for next year's awards. I look forward to joining you in celebration next year.

Once again, congratulations to the Units and the Departments. Let's give them another round of applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Dubbie is going to give announcements, but please don't leave because I'd like you to see my end of the year video.

Dubbie.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam President.

In the interest of time, I'm going to speed through these. So as my late mother would say, listen up.

States Dinner tickets still available from the following states: Make noise as I

holler out.

Kansas has one. Wis -- that was lame. So that people know where you are really quickly, Kansas has one.

VOICES: Yay.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Wisconsin has three.

VOICES: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Massachusetts has one.

VOICES: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Washington State has one.

VOICES: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Pictures, announcements. Would all of the milestone four winners who were recognized on stage earlier please come backstage for photos.

Would all of the National President's Award for Excellence recipients please also come backstage for photos to be taken by National Headquarters staff. And, please, we ask only those winners, the appropriate people be back there. There's a lot of congestion going on.

Others who want to take pictures, you may stage them out here in front upon conclusion.

Remember to turn in your keypads. This meeting will not adjourn until all the voting keypads have been returned.

Reminder. Lost and found, the number is 3350 on any of the Convention phones.

The VA&R Committee wishes to share that at its Pre-Con Committee meeting, over \$6,000 was raised for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: A quick moment for a challenge. Ramona Henricks who was a dual member of Illinois has been a member for 90 years. Has anyone in attendance at this Convention been a member for more than 90 years? Please stand up and holler.

VOICES: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Holler out -- has any -- so holler -- has anyone been here long -- been a member longer than 90 years? Is there a yes? Holler out a name and a Department. Holler -- I mean, holler so we can hear you. Holler out a name and a Department.

VOICE: Ramona, Ramona.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I know. The challenge is, has anyone been a member longer than 90 years?

VOICES: No.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Ramona, you win again.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And who has attended more than 51 American Legion Auxiliary National Conventions?

VOICES: Woo.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Holler out your name.

MS. TERRELL: Olga Terrell.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Olga --

MS. TERRELL: -- Terrell.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- Terrell from Florida.

VOICES: Yay.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: All right. How many?

MS. TERRELL: Sixty-five.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Sixty-five Conventions.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Governor Romney -- a reminder to pages. Please pick up all the articles in the mailroom before it closes. Governor Romney will address the joint session at approximately 3 p.m. For general attendees, the doors will not be locked, so you will have time to get over there and get in.

Finally, please do not take, draw on, or sign your Department or State signs. We are very frugal with your money and we reuse those every year. We had to replace many of them and if you want such mementos, we will have to start charging you for them. So please leave them there.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

While we're getting ready for the close of the Convention, we will be resetting the stage. I ask the National Officers to leave the stage and at this time welcome my family, Terry, Kent, Sarah, Kruze, my brother and sister-in-law, Norman and Katie, and Herb and Darlene to join me on the stage.

I don't think you met them earlier. My brother and sister-in-laws came today, Norman, Katie Nelson, and Herb and Darlene.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: And then we have some very close friends here. You met their wives. Tom Johnson and Rory Fredstrom.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Okay. JP, we're ready.

(Whereupon, a video follows.)

VOICE: I solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me according to the regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice so help me God.

PRESIDENT NELSON: That's quite a promise those young men and women make when they join the United States Military. They honor that promise when they head out for basic training, attend the additional training to develop the knowledge and skills

needed to fulfill that promise and make the choice to call any one of our nation's 761 military bases around the world home.

They honor that promise when as civilians, they leave their homes for weekend drills, stand at the ready for the nation's defense, and leave established jobs and homes when their nation calls, not knowing if those jobs and homes will be there when they return.

They honor that promise when they deploy overseas, leaving their loved ones behind, and face the enemy that threatens our freedom and the freedoms of a vulnerable world.

They honor that promise when they return home, some to loving and waiting families that have grown or changed in their absence, some to continued fighting as they learn to walk again, adjust to prosthetic limbs, or adapt to a life without the limbs they took for granted before their deployment or battle the very real struggles of PTSD or find themselves homeless.

And far, far too many honor that promise when they make the ultimate sacrifice, coming home in a casket draped by a U.S. flag or leaving a family to try to comprehend what the letters POW and MIA could possibly mean.

And because they honored that promise they made when they enlisted to serve our country, we honor them through our membership and service in the American Legion Auxiliary.

Although it's a sacrifice I cannot fully understand and a debt I can certainly never repay, I joined the American Legion Auxiliary 29 years ago to attempt to give back to those who have given us so much.

And a year ago when I was elected to serve as your National President, I made a pledge of service once again to honor their service. Honoring their service is why I joined the American Legion Auxiliary and why you did too. So choosing that as my National President's theme seemed like the natural thing to do. And with so much going on this year and so many places to be, I thought those three words would help center me, keep me focused on what our mission is all about, and remind me at the end of many long days ahead that although I may be tired, I was honoring their service and that's the least I could do.

I hoped you would accept my theme, but I had no idea how much you would embrace it and I thank you for that.

Throughout my travels this year, I was thrilled to walk into training sessions, American Legion Auxiliary Girls State assemblies, and Unit meetings to see Auxiliary members proudly wearing their honor their service buttons, displaying a veteran who made them eligible for membership close to their heart.

I enjoyed hearing the stories of your fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and grandparents who made you eligible for the American Legion Auxiliary membership.

It seemed every time I heard someone talking about a loved one on their button, there were two or three other members standing nearby nodding their heads as though they understood you and that connection that binds us all.

You could almost see a tangible recommitment to the Auxiliary and a renewed appreciation for our fellow Auxiliary members with each and every story shared. I think

that's important for two reasons.

It's a visual reminder of why we all joined the Auxiliary, the common bond that we share. Secondly, it's a powerful way to share the importance of our mission with those outside our organization.

How many women must there be out there who have similar stories of loved ones and patriotism who don't yet belong to our organization? We need to hear their stories and let them know how they can continue to honor the service of their loved ones by becoming a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

We also need to share our stories with our legislators and local media so they can honor their service, too, with laws that protect our veterans' rights and media coverage that is honorable and respectful.

As the result of one of the POD projects, many Units took the honor theme further by creating honor walls to display images of their veterans at local Posts. I love this idea. It's hard to forget why you're there with the eyes of your loved ones staring back at you, our faces of freedom.

The honor walls seem to make each Post I visited feel like home. I know my home is filled with photos of the people who mean the most to me, my family, and family is a word that came to mind often this past year.

There are many types of families. Ultimately we are all one family serving under God, brothers and sisters with one heavenly Father who guides this organization and the work we do.

There's my own family who made many sacrifices this year, living without me, supporting me, and embracing the service I was giving as I represented our members and our organization.

The American Legion Family, the American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion, The Sons of The American Legion, and The American Legion Riders all make up this very special family of ours. And while they might not be the folks we come home to at night, they are truly family, connected by the blood and sacrifices of our relatives who gave so much so that we can all be here today.

Then there are the military families. Many of those families are missing a mother, father, brother, or sister at home because they are serving overseas. And when a soldier is activated and deployed, it is our duty to be there and meet the needs of the family left at home, the unsung heroes of this war.

And there's our American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters family who often reminds me of what family is all about. Growing up, we often don't always appreciate our family like we should. We sometimes take things for granted and, yet, when we stumble or are in need, they are always there for us. That's why I created two awards this year to recognize the efforts of our National Headquarters family, the Mission Mover and Shining Star Awards.

The service opportunities made available to all Legion family members proved once again that working together as a family is always win-win, whereby we each receive much more than we give.

Less than a month after my installation as National President, I began to learn more about our Legion family and about honoring the service of our veterans, active duty

military, and fallen heroes.

I was honored to serve alongside American Legion National Commander Fang Wong who volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1969, served more than two years in Vietnam and retired from the Army as Chief Warrant Officer, and SAL National Commander Jim Roberts who embodies Legion family. He's been an SAL member for 35 years, is married to Anita, an Auxiliary member, and has two teenage daughters in the Auxiliary Junior Unit in Pine Castle, Florida.

Commander Wong and his wife, Barbara, have both been very active in the Legion family since the 1970s. They were both instrumental in directing relief efforts after 9/11 through their Post in Chinatown.

One of my first official visits was to the World Trade Center Museum in New York City where a missing persons sign and mementos line the walls. Nancy Brown-Park and I laid a wreath to commemorate the tenth anniversary of 9/11.

On this visit, I met 9/11 survivors, family members of the fallen, and the firemen of Ladder Engine Company Number 10, the Department closest to Ground Zero. A bronze memorial sits outside their station and reads dedicated to those who fell and those who carry on. Clearly that was a day that changed the lives of many, changing the face of our military right along with it.

For most of us, it was the first time witnessing a terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Many joined the military because of what happened that day. Many more rethought what it meant to be an American and enjoy the freedoms we have taken for granted for so long.

But in the words of President George W. Bush, these acts shattered steel, but couldn't bend the steel of American resolve.

Days later, I attended the National Commander's testimony before the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs where jobless veterans and claims backlogs were among the topics of his address.

Following his testimony, the National Commander invited me to join him in meeting with Senators on Capitol Hill to further discuss veterans' issues, specifically to discuss the VA budget and ask that they not make cuts to the veterans' benefits.

As I left Washington, D.C., I was really starting to feel the true momentum of the Legion Family at work. Already from Minneapolis to New York to D.C., great works were taking place by The American Legion Family.

As the Commander remained in D.C., I headed to my next Department visit in California where I visited Naomi House, my first visit to traditional housing for homeless veterans. Naomi House specifically serves women veterans.

I visited several transitional homes throughout my year as National President including Henderson House, another transitional living center for homeless women veterans, different in that it welcomed dependent children.

Our members need to spread the word that it is a safe place to go to these facilities.

In Maine at the Junior Department meeting, the girls dressed up like homeless women even utilizing a shopping cart to raise awareness and funds for the homeless in their state.

I have been very impressed with our Junior members.

In Nevada, because of limited funds, they held a virtual slumber party where Juniors across the state could participate in the same activity.

In New Hampshire, two young Juniors taught me how to make a poppy in front of local media. The publicity generated from this event helped demonstrate how the Poppy Program goes full circle with poppies being made by veterans, purchased by Units, distributed by members, and the funds going right back to veterans.

During our President and Secretary training, we focused on generational differences and communication styles of members which offered some important reminders about appreciating those differences and learning from them.

On every Department visit, I asked each Unit to seek out service projects that would be impactful and meaningful to our younger generation so they would feel their membership is valuable.

One of our Auxiliary signature programs is the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. This year, I met some amazing and talented veterans and witnessed the healing power of the arts.

(Whereupon, a song follows:)

VOICE: Somehow tomorrow, your bottom dollar that tomorrow there'll be sun.  
Just thinking about tomorrow clears away the cobwebs and the sorrow till there's none.  
When I'm stuck with a day that's gray and lonely, I just stick out my chin and grin and say tomorrow, tomorrow --

PRESIDENT NELSON: I also attended several local competitions and heard the veterans' stories of how and why their art was created.

In November, I attended a moving Veterans Day memorial in Washington, D.C. where we placed wreaths to honor all of our veterans. The day was 11/11/11 which made the day extra memorable.

During this visit, our D.C. Director, Bob Reeg and I also met with the Corporation for National Community Service who funds our AmeriCorps and VISTA programs which this year topped the \$3 million in human resources donation.

My husband, Terry, and I then departed on a Far East tour to join Commander Wong and his wife, Barbara, on a good will and morale tour.

In South Korea, we visited Osan Air Force Base and Camp Humphreys. The Korean-American Friendship Association hosted a dinner for 300 soldiers unaccompanied by their family.

Later that week, we met with the staff of the American Embassy where we were briefed on the relationship between Korea and the United States.

On Thanksgiving Day, we visited the DMZ Zone, though the highlight of the day was serving Thanksgiving dinner to the troops stationed there.

From Korea, we flew to Okinawa where we toured Kadena Air Force Base and were briefed on the Pacific operations.

In Taiwan, we met with President Ma Ying-Jeou who discussed the relationship between our countries going back as far as World War II with the Flying Dragons.

One of the most moving moments in Taiwan was a visit to the POW memorial. I learned there were eight Japanese POW camps in Taiwan during World War II.

We visited a camp museum where the visiting school children were eager to

meet us.

The Taiwan government also flew us to Kinman Island, a 150 square kilometer island that is strategic to Taiwan's defense. As recent as 1974, the U.S. sent artillery to assist Taiwan in protecting the island from mainland China.

From there, we went to the Island of Guam where we visited the U.S. Naval Base, the Naval facility's engineering command, and the War Dog Cemetery.

In Hawaii, we visited Hickam Air Force Base and met with the Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. We visited the Punch Bowl, a beautiful cemetery and a wonderful place to honor the service of America's fallen heroes.

White wreaths were placed on the graves of more than 2,000 unknown fallen heroes by local Boy Scouts.

At the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pearl Harbor, we placed wreaths on behalf of The American Legion Family. I was honored to meet Albert Thomas, a Pearl Harbor survivor who went on to serve in countries in the 5<sup>th</sup> Army under General Patton.

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, we were humbled to take part in a repatriation ceremony where six sets of remains were returned to the U.S. for identification, three from World War II and three from Vietnam.

When visiting Puerto Rico in January, I encouraged The American Legion Family to work together to build their membership working as a family. They were the first Department to reach their hundred percent numeric objective.

Throughout the year, I visited many hospitals, clinics, transitional and community living centers including the new VA Southeast Primary Clinic in Henderson, Nevada which had opened in 2010. I enjoyed a wonderful tour and was pleased to meet a number of our VAVS volunteers.

In Virginia, National Vice President Peggy Thomas and I toured the McGuire VA Hospital in Richmond, one of the largest in the country. It's the only VA in the country that performs in-house heart transplants. And I was lucky enough to meet one of the heart recipients while I was there. He just happened to be a proud Legionnaire.

I also visited the Liver and Kidney VA Transplant Center in Washington where members of the Departments of Washington and Oregon cooked and served a picnic lunch to residents awaiting or recovering from a transplant. These Departments each donate \$400 per month to keep the kitchen stocked at these facilities.

The Arizona stand down was one of my most rewarding experiences. I enjoyed spending the day with amazing Legion family volunteers and a veteran named James who was very appreciative to learn about the services that were offered to him. He left excited knowing he would soon have a job and permanent housing.

Later in the day, we visited the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona.

Throughout my travels, I was fortunate to visit numerous cemeteries and was honored to place 14 wreaths in remembrance.

At the Washington, D.C. Conference, nearly 50 Department contingents visited a Congressional representative or a member of their staff to discuss The American Legion legislative priorities prior to the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2012.

In preparation for their visit to Capitol Hill, Conference attendees were briefed on key legislative issues.

That week, I had the honor of presenting the American Legion Auxiliary Public Spirit Award to Colonel Jill Chambers, a disabled vet, and Michael Peterson, of Tag You're It.

The work done by Colonel Chambers and Michael Peterson is perfectly aligned with our mission of serving veterans, active duty military, and their families.

In June, I had the privilege of commemorating the 68<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day along with Legion National Commander Fang Wong. We were honored to attend the annual Association Day, Ami (phonetic) Day, American Banquet in St. Mere-Eglise, the first town liberated by the U.S. allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

We attended a ceremony at the Airborne Museum where 35 U.S. D-Day veterans were honored. Cadets from the Air Force Academy spent the week as escorts for those 35 veterans, our American heroes.

One of the highlights of the trip was a reenactment of the paratroopers landing performed by U.S. military and four other countries.

Commander Wong and I were proud to raise the flag over the American cemetery prior to a wreath laying ceremony on June 6 at Normandy Beach. It was a day I will never forget. More than 9,000 American soldiers are laid to rest there. It felt like their spirits are with us.

Representing our organization in the Far East and Europe gave me a great knowledge of how very much we are respected across the globe and how much foreign citizens appreciate our veterans and military for continuing to protect the freedoms and liberate not only the United States but global communities.

I started my summer with a bang attending several Department Conventions including the Department of Kentucky. While there, I visited Kentucky's Healing Field in Lawrenceburg. The healing field honors Kentucky's fallen heroes who served and lost their lives in the War on Terror. There are now 110 flags in memory of Kentucky soldiers who lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This was especially meaningful to me as the Department received a National award for this when I was Americanism Chairman.

I have personally been involved in Girls State for more than 25 years. This year, I attended Badger Girls State in Wisconsin where Governor Scott Walker addressed the 736 girls in attendance. And I was blown away by the long-time volunteer who in her 90s can still excite the crowd.

I also attended Louisiana Girls State where I enjoyed listening to the Nats and the Feds speeches and taking in the girls' heartfelt enthusiasm. Of course, they let me also get in on the fun, participating in one of their skits. The girls also made a generous donation to Operation Military Kids.

In July, I joined our 98 Girls Nation Senators, volunteers, and staff members at Bethesda Hospital for a picnic to honor the true faces of freedom. What an unforgettable experience.

While visiting several military bases, I was proud to witness the dedication of our young men and women in uniform.

In South Carolina, I spent the day with new recruits on their third day of basic training at Fort Jackson. After witnessing their grueling schedule, I left with a true

appreciation that my husband is the veteran and not me.

While in Bangor, Maine, 148 troops came home from Iraq. It was one of the proudest and most emotional moments of my year, shaking each of their hands and welcoming them home.

Over 1.4 million soldiers have come through Bangor, Maine on their return to the United States and there have always been American Legion family members there to welcome them home no matter what time of day or night.

While visiting Wisconsin, I witnessed an amazing example of volunteerism. The Camo Quilt Project began with a simple need from a soldier headed for Iraq who asked his mother-in-law to make a quilt. This simple act of kindness of one quilt has turned into a major volunteer opportunity creating over 17,000 Camo quilts for all branches of the military.

Another visit I will never forget was to Landstuhl, Germany. When we arrived, ambulances were speeding in with wounded soldiers back from Afghanistan. Even with their devastating injuries, their biggest concern was who was taking care of their family.

I immediately gave two of them my card and said the American Legion Auxiliary will take care of your family. I will personally see to it. I have never been more proud of being part of an organization that supports these heroes. Again, our faces of freedom.

Another signature program, Children & Youth, affords members the opportunity to support these soldiers' children filling hero packs and family packs, encouraging open communication between soldiers both while deployed and returning home.

The American Legion invited me to experience Junior Student Sports Competition as well as The American Legion World Series where our youth heroes really shine.

As a family, we have accomplished some remarkable things this year to honor the service of our veterans. Our spirit of Service Not Self is alive and well and our members diligently worked our program inviting community members to join them, mentoring Junior members, supporting our veterans, serving at VA hospitals and clinics, contributing thousands of volunteer hours as field service and home service volunteers embracing the needs of our active military and their families.

To accomplish these tasks and better fulfill our mission, we conducted five mission trainings across the country encouraging our members to seek out service projects.

It truly has been an amazing year. We work hard, but we also have a lot of fun.

As I end my term, I leave inspired by the service we continue to give, humbled by the opportunity that you all gave to me, thankful to our veterans and military who continue to give back to our nation to protect our freedom, concern about the continual decrease in membership, energized that thousands of members have embraced our mission and will continue to seek service opportunities, ready to go back home with Terry, eager to spend more time with my family, waiting for the hugs and kisses of my grandchildren.

I am proud of our accomplishments. It has truly been an honor to serve as your National President and honor the service of those who have served us in preserving and

protecting our nation's freedom.

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, 2,028 men and women have died serving in Operation Enduring Freedom. In total, 16,842 were wounded in action. Four thousand four hundred and nine have died defending Operation Iraqi Freedom. 31,926 young Americans have been wounded in action.

The need for our veterans' benefits and the work of the American Legion Auxiliary has never been greater. So as I end my year as National President, I know there is much work left to do.

I am confident that this organization is in capable hands as I pass the torch to my friend and your future leader, Peggy Thomas. May she carry that torch with pride, honor, and humility and may she enjoy it as much as I have.

Our organization is in good hands with the future leadership. They are compassionate and dedicated.

Thank you all for this opportunity. God bless each of you. God bless our veterans. God bless our military and may God continue to bless America.

(Whereupon, the video concluded.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you all very much.

What an incredible year and what an honor to represent you as your National President.

Some of you may know I take a lot of photos. So as we're dismissed, feel free to watch a montage of the pictures of my visits to your Units and Departments.

In my travels on your behalf, I have been inspired by hundreds of faces of freedom and I know those faces have been an inspiration to all of us. Keep looking into their eyes. Always remember that they're people and not a statistic. Continue to remember that we're here for those faces, that those faces need us.

As I mentioned in my video, you are in good hands under the leadership of my good friend, Peggy Thomas. She'll make sure those faces are our first priority.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome your 2012-2013 National President from the Department of Virginia, Peggy Thomas.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you all for your trust.

Tomorrow morning I'm going briefly to talk about the importance of dreams and my dream for the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. I look forward to carrying on the work that Kris Nelson has done, great work, great job.

And I'm counting all of you --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT THOMAS: And I'm counting on all of you to make the American Legion Auxiliary an organization that truly serves our veterans, active military, and their families. I'm counting on you.

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, everyone. Thank you for everything you've done for our veterans, our military, and their families. God bless each of you. God bless

our veterans. God bless our military and make God continue to bless America. We'll see you tomorrow at eight for Peggy's installation ceremony.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, at 1:59 p.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

## **INSTALLATION CEREMONY THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2012**

PRESIDENT NELSON: And welcome to the 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention. The Chair will turn -- the Chair will be turned over to Past National President Anna Gear who will proceed with the Installation Ceremony.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Madam President.

Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Welcome to the installation of Peggy Thomas from the Department of Virginia as National President, also her National Officers, and the Department Presidents who will serve with her as we begin a new year.

It is with much pride and a distinct honor for me to be installing the 2012-2013 officers.

First, I would like to announce the participants in this morning's ceremony.

Serving as Sergeant at Arms and Assistant Sergeant at Arms are Virginia James and Patricia Upshaw from the Department of Virginia.

Sue Lee, Past Department President, is our stage manager and my assistant.

Honor Guards are Margaret Dellinger, Pearl Clanville (phonetic), Cheryl Shine (phonetic), Marcia Wheatley, Patricia Knight, Donna Ellis, Bonnie Cruz, Paula Campahnis (phonetic), Barbara Barnes, Cindy Coconut, and Marian Chirichella.

Janet Renner is the Chairman of Pages.

Music will be presented by Dan Roberts, a four-time Gold Medal winner in the National Creative Arts Festival.

The installing Chaplain is Past National President Kristine West of New Hampshire.

Special poems have been written for this occasion and will be presented by James Littlepage who was awarded the 2003 Poet of the Year Medallion by the famous Poet Society. James is also a winner at the Creative Arts in 2009.

At this time, members of the audience, please remain seated as the honor escorts escort the family and friends of National President Elect Peggy Thomas to the platform.

Ladies, this is not a funeral procession. Would you please walk a little faster.

Following the guests are the new National Officers escorted by the retiring officers.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Please welcome the National Vice President Elect Nancy Brown-Park of California escorted by her husband, Jim.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Will everyone please rise as the colors

of the Department of Virginia are presented.

(Colors of Virginia presented.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: And now it is with much pride that I ask you to welcome the 2012-2013 National President Elect Peggy Thomas.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Peggy is being escorted by her daughter, Lisa, and son-in-law, Kevin Chaplan.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Would everyone please be seated for a musical selection by Dan Roberts, American Soldier.

MR. ROBERTS: I'm just trying to be a father, raise a daughter and a son, be a lover to their mother, everything to everyone, up and at 'em bright and early, I'm all business in my suit. Yeah, I'm dressed up for success from my head down to my boots.

I don't do it for the money, there's bills that I can't pay. I don't do it for the glory, I just do it anyway. Providing for our futures, my responsibility. Yeah, I'm real good under pressure, being all that I can be.

I can't call in sick on Monday when the weekend's been too strong. I just work straight through the holidays, sometimes all night long. You can bet that I stand ready when the wolf growls at the door. Hey, I'm solid, hey, I'm steady, hey, I'm true down to the core.

And I will always do my duty, no matter what the price. I've counted up the cost and I know the sacrifice. Oh, and I don't want to die for you, but if dying's asked of me, I'll bear that cross with honor, 'cause freedom don't come free.

I am American Soldier, An American. Besides my brothers and my sisters, I will proudly take a stand. When liberty's in jeopardy, I'll always do what's right. I'm out here on the front lines, so sleep in peace tonight.

American Soldier, I am an American Soldier. I'm an American Soldier, an American. Besides my brothers and my sisters, I will proudly take the stand. When liberty's in jeopardy, I will always do what's right. I'm out here on the front lines, so sleep in peace tonight, American Soldier. I'm an American, an American, an American Soldier.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Dan. Beautiful.

Will the retiring officers with the exception of the National President and the National Vice President please transfer your pin and ribbons to your successor.

Ladies, this is not the way it was rehearsed, but will you take your seats. The National Commander Elect is here and he needs to get back to be elected.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Would Susan Lee please escort Jim Koutz, the Commander Elect for The American Legion -- see, they're always a little bit behind us. Would you please escort him in.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER KOUTZ: Thank you. Thank you. Be seated. Thank you very much.

That's a way to start off in trouble already. Madam President, Past National Presidents, Past National Commanders in the audience, Delegates, alternates, and guests to this 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention, welcome to Indianapolis.

This is a very special day for you and for me. If elected in three hours and 45 minutes, I hope to be your National Commander of The American Legion.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER KOUTZ: And I want to say that you're going to install a very special lady this morning in Peggy Thomas from Virginia. Her and I are going to work great together along with Chris Huntzinger, the Sons of The American Legion National Commander from Pennsylvania.

With your help, we're going to have a great year, but it's going to take all of us to do what we need to do for The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion. And that's move forward.

So with that, I want to thank you very much. I better get back because it's -- I don't want to be late today. So thank you all very much and God bless.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER KOUTZ: I want to introduce my wife before I get in trouble. Vickie is -- she'll be staying here till we get ready for the installation, but my wife, Vickie Koutz.

Thank you all very much and have a great installation.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Jim, we -- Peggy, would you join him at the Podium. Some people want to take pictures. You got a few minutes for that?

Thank you for coming.

COMMANDER KOUTZ: You're welcome.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: That's good.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Ladies, hurry quickly.

COMMANDER KOUTZ: Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Jim.

COMMANDER KOUTZ: Thank you, darling. Good to see you, baby.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Good to see you. Thank you for coming.

Beginning with the Chaplain, would you each come to the Podium and introduce your successor.

CHAPLAIN LYNCH: Good morning. It is an honor to present to you National Chaplain Rosemarie Hauck from the Department of Missouri.

(Applause.)

MS. HAUCK: Thank you. Good morning.

First honoring my God, Peggy, as your new Chaplain, I pledge my wholehearted support for the success of your year.

Again, I must thank the Department of Missouri --

(Applause.)

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: -- for your support that you have given me for many years. I will never ever forget you.

I thank each of you for the confidence that you have given me by electing me to this position. I will eternally be grateful. This truly, truly is the day that God made and I am rejoicing in it.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN HARLEY: It is my honor and privilege to introduce your new National Historian, my friend, Angela Kilcrease from the Department of Mississippi.

(Applause.)

MS. KILCREASE: Good morning, one and all, Madam President to be Peggy. It is indeed an honor for me to be elected as Historian for the incoming year. This is a dream come true.

Peggy, I pledge my all to you this year. Let's go out and make some great history.

And I thank Diane Harley for the wonderful work that she did and she will be an inspiration as we go forward.

Thank you again.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT BRIGGS: It is with much honor and pride that I present to you the newly elected Central Division National Vice President from the Department of Iowa Mary Jo Berning.

(Applause.)

MS. BERNING: Thank you very much. Thank you, Florence. Madam President, whatever I can do for you this year, you can count on me.

To the Department of Iowa, thank you for all your support.

To all Central Division, would you please stand.

(Applause.)

MS. BERNING: I hope to see you all soon. Whatever I can do for your Department, just email me or call.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT GRAY: It is my honor to present to you the 2012-2013 Eastern Division National Vice President from the Department of Pennsylvania, Joan Reinoehl.

(Applause.)

MS. REINOEHL: Thank you.

First I'd like to thank the Department of Pennsylvania for endorsing and supporting me.

And, Madam Elect President Peggy, the Eastern Division will support you in any way that we can.

Would all the Eastern Division please stand.

(Applause.)

MS. REINOEHL: Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT FEEZER: I have the honor of introducing you to your new Northwest Division National Vice President. Her name is Doris Ann Werlinger from the great State of South Dakota.

MS. WERLINGER: Thank you, Linda.

(Applause.)

MS. WERLINGER: Thank you, Linda.

And she's from the great State of the Department of Wyoming. I appreciate what all you can do for me.

Madam President Elect Peggy, the Northwest Division, we want to support you in any way, every way we can and we thank you so much.

Northwest Division, would you please stand.

(Applause.)

MS. WERLINGER: I look forward to working with you and I especially want to thank the Department of South Dakota for supporting me and getting me here with all the wonderful things you've done for me today.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT BROUSSARD: It is an honor for me to present to you our 2012-2013 Southern Division National Vice President, Ms. Shirley Fraser from the Sunshine State of Florida.

(Applause.)

MS. FRASER: Good morning, everyone.

And to my fabulous State of Florida Department, I love you and thank you for everything you've always done for me.

To the wonderful Southern Division, I thank you for electing me to this office that I am very proud to hold.

And to you, Elect National President Peggy, I can assure you that your Southern angels will reach for the stars to make it a fabulous year.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT METZER: It is my honor to introduce to you our 2012-2013 Western Division National Vice President from the Department of Washington, Barbara Rutherford.

(Applause.)

MS. RUTHERFORD: Thank you.

Peggy from Western Division also, we'll pledge your support for the whole year. It is fantastic that I finally get to work with you again.

I also would like to thank the members of Department of Washington for all their support and the confidence in putting me in this position, I think.

And also to Western Division, please stand.

(Applause.)

MS. RUTHERFORD: And we will be the best in the west.

Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: National President Kris, would you please present the pin and ribbons to the officers that served with you.

Let's show our appreciation for the outstanding leadership and dedicated services that these fine officers have given this year.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Kris, if you go out with your officers, then they can get some pictures.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Once more, let's give them a hand for the dedication and fine job they did this year.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Kris.

One of the most stimulating experiences is to witness that step across that intangible line that separates one administration from another.

Officers, you are standing at the threshold of a new exciting and challenging year. Soaring to new heights through angels in service is the theme for this installation.

The word angel has deep roots dating back to the beginning of time. History tells us that there were many different types of angels.

Angels are many and varied also. You have angels of love, angels of hope, angels of faith, and angels of dedication just to mention a few.

Madam President, you are the arc angel, our princess of light, the brightest leader of all. As you travel to the Departments visiting your Auxiliary angels, you will feel like you are traveling on the highway to heaven.

And your harmony of angels have all promised to be faithful messengers, dedicated leaders, and loyal supporters. You will know the feeling of being touched by an angel.

Would all angels please don your halos.

Do you not have a halo?

Do we have any more halos up here? We need three halos for over here. Yeah, take them over there.

Okay. Ladies, keep those halos, so if we can -- that's better.

Would the officers please rise to take your oath of office including the Department Presidents.

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary have entrusted to you with great responsibility. You have been elected to (unintelligible) the activities and (unintelligible) of our organization. You will familiarize yourself with the duties of your respective office.

Always remember that the welfare and success of this organization depends upon you. Every American Legion Auxiliary member assumes the obligation of preserving the integrity of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, contributing to the aims and purposes of our organization.

Angels, please raise your right hand and repeat after me giving your name where I give mine.

I, Anna Gear --

VOICES: I, (names of officers) --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- promise to perform faithfully --

VOICES: -- promise to perform faithfully --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- all the duties of the office --

VOICES: -- all the duties of the office --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- I am about to assume.

VOICES: -- I am about to assume.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: And I further pledge --

VOICES: And I further pledge --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- that I am now a member of --

VOICES: -- that I am now a member of --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- and do not subscribe to --

VOICES: -- and do not subscribe to --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- the principles of any group --

VOICES: -- the principles of any group --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- opposed to our form of government.

VOICES: -- opposed to our form of government.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: You may lower your hands and be seated.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Audience, as Auxiliary members, you will be known as angels of music. You have selected these new officers to lead us and I have charged them with a serious responsibility and I likewise charge you.

Since music is said to be the speech of angels, will all members of the American Legion Auxiliary please rise, raise your right hand, and sing along with me -- excuse me - - repeat after me. Raise your right hand, Auxiliary members.

I solemnly promise --

VOICES: I solemnly promise --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- to renew my pledge of service --

VOICES: -- to renew my pledge of service --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary -

VOICES: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- and to give wholehearted support --

VOICES: -- and to give wholehearted support --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: -- to these newly elected officers.

VOICES: -- to these newly elected officers.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Will the entire audience please stand.

Installing Chaplain, Past National President Kris West will offer prayer.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT WEST: Dear Lord, thank you for this beautiful and meaningful installation ceremony. You have shown your love for these new officers and showered them with pride.

Thank you, too, for installing officer, Past National President Anna Gear who

has given so much of herself to our organization and to thee. This we are truly grateful for.

And finally, Dear Lord, we ask you send the angels from above to watch over us all and keep a special angel at the side of our National President Peggy to be with her throughout her year of travels. Keep her safe and keep her in good health always.

This we ask in your holy name. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: You may be seated.

James Littlepage, a renowned poet, has written a poem especially for Peggy's installation.

Jim.

MR. LITTLEPAGE: Freedom under the wings of angels. You will note on the back of your program you have that poem. This poem is about Richard Harrison, a very dear friend of mine and many thousands of other veterans.

Walking a post-war journey, lost these many years, living in a bottle of booze, trying to forget, wanting to escape, not knowing how, afraid to lose, drugs, alcohol, any substitute to escape today, under the bridge wasting away, veterans searching for peace, peace of mind.

That's the freedom that the battles took away, scarred, mangled bodies, the mind plagued with horrid thoughts, friends lost and maimed, each crippling, traumatic event, remembering to live, we killed the enemy. Thou shalt not kill. Does God forgive when we repent?

Freezing on a cold, dark December night, a soft angelic voice spoke, come, don't be afraid. I'm with the ALA, the American Legion Auxiliary. We serve our country's veterans. We help to show them the way. We love you. We support you. We're everywhere. Our hearts and hands can salvage a soldier's peace, peace of mind. That's the freedom you lost. You paid the price. It's our mission to help our veterans bear the cost. Now learning to cope in civilian life, the burden inside. My angel, my ALA ally safeguards the door. Living under the wings of angels, living with the scars of war.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Jim.

Would National Vice President Elect Nancy Brown-Park and retiring National Vice President Peggy Thomas please come forward for the presentation of the Vice President's pin and ribbon. Go to the Podium, please.

Twenty years from now when you look back at pictures with all these people putting things on their heads, you'll have a good laugh.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Go ahead. Introduce her and present.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: I present to you the newly elected Vice President Nancy Brown-Park from California.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Madam President Peggy.

I thank each of you for giving me this opportunity to serve as your National Vice President. It truly is a dream come true.

I pledge to newly elected President Peggy my 100 percent support. Your membership plan will motivate each of us to sign up just one member and by doing that simple task, we will increase our membership and preserve our legacy.

As we celebrate angels in service this year, I know that each member will support your theme by helping veterans, active duty military, and their families around the world.

I'm committed to take on all that President Peggy needs from me and will keep Janet Jefford in the loop so that she has firsthand understanding of the tasks that may be before her.

I'd like to introduce my best supporter, and in California, we call them gophers, my husband, a Vietnam veteran, Jim.

Jim, will you stand.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Love you.

Will the Legion Family from the Golden State of California please stand to be recognized. Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Now, that's California gold. No one could get here without the help of her Department and I'm no exception, so thank you, everybody.

And, of course, thank you to the Western Division for all your support over the years. And will the Western Division please stand again.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: There are -- there are so many special women who have helped me along the way and helped to make me what I am today. But there is one very special woman who is not with us today and that's my mom, Past Department President Jean Brown. I know she is my special angel and will be with me throughout the year.

Mom, this is dedicated to you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Peggy, would you please go to the Podium.

Peggy, you have been given the highest honor that we as members of the American Legion Auxiliary can bestow upon you, that of serving as our National Vice President -- National President -- I'm not used to the President -- for serving for 2012-2013.

Would retiring President Kris please join Peggy at the Podium.

Would you please present the President's pin, ribbon, and gavel.

While Kris is transferring her badge of office, may we express to her our appreciation for your commendable year of service and your many accomplishments.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

It is a great honor to present this gavel to my friend, Peggy Thomas. She's a dedicated volunteer. She will lead you with honor and grace and love.

Peggy, here's your gavel.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Would the Past National Presidents please rise.

Standing before you, Peggy, is a dedicated group of ladies. We call them our guardian angels. They have shown their pride by pledging to you their support and best wishes for a wonderful year.

And, President Kris, at the close of your Convention, I know the ladies will welcome you with open arms.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Ladies and gentlemen, with much pride, I present our National President Peggy Thomas.

Peggy, would you like to say a few words?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Have you ever known me not to, Anna?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Please be seated.

Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you very much.

Madam National President Kris, Madam Installing Officer, Past National President Anne Gear, members of The American Legion Family, guests, and friends, welcome to the beginning of a new Auxiliary year.

Today I stand before you in total awe. To be installed as your National President is both a great honor and a tremendous responsibility. And it is a responsibility that I do not take lightly.

There are many memories in my memory bank, some good, some less good, and I will go over just a few of the good ones.

My wedding day, the day Lisa was born, when she and Kevin got married, when I was installed as Department President, when I was promoted to National Vice President, when I was also Vice President from the company which I retired, the day Lisa received her doctorate, and I assure you I will remember this day forever.

Congratulations go to President Kris for completely a marvelous year. She has led us courageously and forged new trails.

Nancy, congratulations to you on your election. Your election reflects the trust and confidence the membership has in you. Cherish that trust and know that I will rely heavily on you this next year for your help, support, and friendship.

I want to also recognize and congratulate Janet Jefford, Sharon Conatser, and all the Chairmen that have agreed to serve with me this year.

I want to thank my daughter, Lisa, and my son-in-law, Kevin, for their moral support and for all they have done for me, Lisa for feeding my pets and driving me back and forth to the airport, sometimes at 3:30 in the morning, and picking me up at midnight or later, and to Kevin for keeping my computer up and running and not complaining too much.

I would like to introduce them to you.

Lisa and Kevin, would you please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

The rest of my family could not make it due to work schedules or other reasons. My good friend, Past National President Anna Gear who needs no introduction has worked tirelessly to try to keep things running smooth and on track, and another good friend, Past National Commander Butch Miller, has always proven to be invaluable.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you to all my Virginia Legion family for being so supportive.

Would everyone in the Department of Virginia please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Would everyone in the Southern Division please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you all. I love you all. Thank you.

Thank you, Kris Nelson, for being such a good friend and mentor.

And thanks to the office staff for stepping up to the plate and steering me through unknown waters this past year.

I will always be indebted to the PT 13 Campaign Committee, the members, which are many of the Department of Virginia, American Legion, the SAL, Partners of the Eight and Forty, and to my many good friends who contributed most generously to my campaign. I promise I will not let you down.

Last year, at Kris' installation, I said we, too, have a dream. Without dreams, nothing would be accomplished. Man would never have landed on the moon. The Americans would never have been discovered nor would there have been a gold rush or the discovery of Penicillin.

In the words of Antoine de Saint Exupery, a rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it bearing with him the image of a cathedral.

My dream for the Auxiliary is to help it grow and flourish. We are members of a very noble and prestigious organization that has made a difference in the lives of many men, women, and children for decades.

Let me share some of my plans with you for the ensuing year. My plan is to continue the work that President Kris has started. We both understand the value of growing our membership for without membership, there would be no American Legion Auxiliary. But at the same time, we know we must continue tirelessly working our programs.

Why us you may ask? But my answer is who better than The American Legion Family to care for those who have borne the battle so that we can live free.

Let me quote from an article by Congressman Randy Forbes of Virginia published in the Capitol Monitor in September 2010.

In 1865, President Lincoln stood on the east portico of the Capitol to take the oath of office as President of the United States. As he stood to deliver his second inaugural address, he faced a country that had been battered by Civil War, the costliest and deadliest war on American soil. It separated families, brought domestic suffering,

and pitted brother against brother. There was hardly a family in the south that did not lose a loved one, a son, a brother, or a father.

As President Lincoln gave his address, he did not know the end of the war was only weeks away. And as he addressed a battered -- a war battered nation, he made a promise that has become one of the defining characteristics of our great nation. With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work that we are in to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan.

Today our nation's veterans who selflessly dedicated their lives in service of our nation often endured long periods of separation from loved ones and suffered physical and emotional pain. Despite the pain many of them have suffered, if you look in their eyes, you will often see a love for their country, a strength for their families, and a courage that is indefinable.

President Lincoln's promise to care for those who shall have borne the battle ought to be one of our greatest privileges as American citizens. Without the sacrifices of our veterans, our nation would certainly not be as we know it today.

Yet, when it comes to caring for our veterans, in many ways we are sadly falling short. Veterans are a part of all of our lives. If not personally, then by the freedoms we enjoy every day as Americans. Our work for them is not done.

As a country, it is our privilege to renew our commitment to care for him who shall have borne the battle with the care, services, and support they have been promised.

While the world and our governance structure brings a certain amount of change each year, American Legion Auxiliary leadership is working to be consistent in how we carry out our mission. We understand that too many changes in the Plan of Action can be cumbersome, so changes are minimal this year.

Some of my primary objectives are to encourage the spirit of patriotism, to inspire love of country, to honor our veterans and military personnel for their service and sacrifice, to ensure a safe America for all children, strengthen our bonds to The American Legion, and to have fun while we are doing it.

I have chosen for my overall theme this year Soaring to New Heights as we reach far and wide to welcome in new members and to expand our service. We strongly feel that demonstrating Service Not Self and engaging members in meaningful mission delivery, the American Legion Auxiliary will be appealing to everyone who shares our passion for veterans.

Membership will be a primary focus as we need members to work our programs and to build a more reliable network of service. By increasing membership numbers, we can ensure that our mission is carried out now and in the future.

My tagline reflects Honoring Our Veterans Past, Present, and Future. My membership theme is Angels in Service to Our Veterans, Our Military, and Their Families.

If we wish to continue the quality of service that we now give, we must grow our numbers. The greater our membership numbers, the higher we can soar in our service and spreading our message.

We are asking each Auxiliary member to recruit only one member, not only one,

but at least one. Can you imagine where that would take us in membership? We're realistic people and we know that some will not be able to do that, but some will bring in five, 10, 25, or even more.

Renewals are also a vital -- are a vital part of our organization. The personal touch is always best. Tell members that have not renewed that you miss them and encourage them to revisit and participate.

With huge numbers of troops returning to our shores, the need for help is mushrooming. Some will be maimed and some will be suffering from PTSD.

In the current economy, joblessness and hopelessness abounds. We truly have our work cut out for us.

There is the plight of the homeless female veterans, some with children. They are afraid to sleep in homeless shelters and afraid to seek help from Social Services for fear of losing their children.

A number of Departments have -- already have a plan in place to assist this segment of our society, but I ask that you do more. A woman -- a woman veteran in the street is very vulnerable and shame on us as women if we do not do more to help them.

My --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: My special project this year is Children of Warriors National President's Scholarship. I ask you to be generous when donating to this as this is the least we can do for these children. They, too, have made enormous sacrifices.

If you look at the Constitution & Bylaws of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary, it clearly states what we are supposed to do. I say again who is better equipped to handle these issues than The Legion family?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Working as a Legion family, we can accomplish most anything that we set out to do.

I have volunteered in a VA hospital for many years and I have seen firsthand the devastation that war can inflict on the human body and the spirit. I have also witnessed the hardships that deployment brings on the family.

As we soar to new heights in the Auxiliary to become angels in service to our veterans, active military, National Guard, and their families, please be mindful of the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary which is to serve veterans, their families, and their communities.

The Auxiliary is asked to strengthen its ties with The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion so that we may serve side by side in a spirit of unselfish devotion to all Americans.

We need to renew our commitment to the four founding principles of our organization, justice, freedom, democracy, and loyalty. We have a great love of tradition, God, and country. Working together as a team, we will soar to new heights in service.

Thank you all for what you do.

(Applause.)

MR. ROBERTS: It must have been cold there in the shadow to never have sunlight on your face. You were content to let me shine. You always walked a step

behind. So I was the one with all the glory and you were the one with all the strength, beautiful face without a name for so long, beautiful smile to hide the pain.

Did you ever know that you're my hero? You're everything I would like to be. I could fly higher than an eagle as you are the wind beneath my wings.

It might have appeared to go unnoticed, but I've got it all here in my heart. I want you to know I know the truth. I would be nothing without you.

Did you ever know that you're my hero? You're everything I would like to be. Oh, and I could fly higher than an eagle as you are the wind beneath my wings.

Did you ever know that you're my hero? You're everything, everything, everything I want to be. Oh, and I could fly higher than an eagle as you are the wind beneath my wings. You are the wind beneath my wings, oh, the wind beneath my wings.

Oh, you, you, you, you are the wind beneath my wings, fly, fly, fly, you let me fly so high. Oh, you, you, you, you are the wind beneath my wings. Oh, you, you, you, you are the wind beneath my wings, fly, fly, fly against the sky. You let me touch the sky. Thank you. Thank you. Thank God for you, the wind beneath my wings.

(Applause.)

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you so much. That goes to Peggy and all the ALA.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Dan. Beautiful.

Madam President Peggy, there are many attending the installation and many more back home in Virginia that are very proud of you and your accomplishments.

But there is a loved one who is not with us, your sweetheart, John. I know you feel his presence and we know he is looking down on you with a chest filled with pride and love, with a broad grin on his face, wishing you a wonderful year of happiness.

But there is someone here who also has a lot of pride and love for you. Would Peggy's daughter, Lisa, and her husband, Kevin, please come forward.

(Applause.)

MS. CHAPLAN: Thank you.

Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. CHAPLAN: Speaking for our family, Thomas, Chaplan, and the (unintelligible) families, I want to first convey to you everyone's regrets for not being able to be here for various reasons, work, travel, and whatnot to be with us for this event.

And I know if my dad was looking down today, he'd be pretty proud of her.

Anyway, I'm a 20-year member of the organization and I know as members, you'd like to know just a little bit more about what you're getting into with the President for this year. So we'll tell you a little bit.

She has a strong business background, as you know, and she runs life like a business, always doing research on something, making a list of what's coming up tomorrow or the next day. She even makes appointments with her friends or with me.

She's committed to the mission of serving our veterans, the military, and their families, as you well know. She's trustworthy and loyal to a fault. She's a little bit of a workaholic and an overachiever and failure is not in her vocabulary.

Kevin, I believe I've said enough. I'm in enough trouble already.

MR. CHAPLAN: She will not micro manage. She believes in listening to

everybody's opinion, but will not always be swayed by it.

Her family, her friends, and her pets rank high on her list right below the Auxiliary. You can count on her to give the Auxiliary the very best of her time and experience.

One piece of advice I will pass on to you. Do not call her after nine p.m. unless it's an emergency.

The family is loaning her to you for a year, then we want her back. Thank you.  
(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: At this time, I'm happy to present Susan Lee, Past Department President from the Department of Virginia, who will present our special guests.

Susan.

MS. LEE: Please help me welcome Dianne Cabot, National Executive Committeewoman from the Department of Virginia and her partner, George Lucier (phonetic), National Executive Committeeman from the Department of Virginia to share some words of wisdom with Peggy.

(Applause.)

MS. CABOT: Good morning, everyone.

I'd like to introduce Bobbi Lucier's husband, George.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam National President Peggy, distinguished American Legion Auxiliary family members and friends, I do believe I heard the angels singing this morning.

This is a very special day for our Legion family, for all Auxiliary women, but I must say for the Department of Virginia, we feel truly blessed and more than a little scared.

You see, in Virginia, we're used to being the home of Presidents, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Madison, and so forth. But when you're also the home to Dr. Kate Waller Barrett, Mrs. Anna Gear, and now President Peggy Thomas, well, let me assure you those high heels are mighty high and I know something about shoes, as you all know.

So I know and I am aware that you realize what an extraordinary woman Peggy Thomas is. She is a woman of intelligence, grace, and beauty. She is a true daughter of the south, a lady of Virginia, a southern belle in its finest sense.

But President Peggy is also what we call a steel magnolia. That, my friends, is truly a thing of beauty. She is the well spring from which we nourish our passion for this work in Virginia. She is the oak that fortifies our commitment to this mission and our active duty love -- our -- our unabashed love for our veterans and active duty military and their families.

President Peggy, it is because of you that the Department of Virginia is soaring to new heights and it will be because of you and your inspiration, Madam National President, that the American Legion Auxiliary as a National organization will soar on to new heights beyond anyone's expectations.

We will soar upon the wings of eagles, Madam President, because you definitely are the wind beneath our wings.

(Applause.)

MS. CABOT: With all our love, we wish you god speed, Ms. Peggy, and Virginia will keep the porch light on.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. LUCIER: Good morning. When I was told I was going to have the opportunity to speak, I was told I could speak as long as I want and then Past National President Anna Gear said, now, George, you can speak as long as you want, but if you're up there more than two minutes, we're going to talk.

So I have my comments in under two minutes. We don't always have the opportunity to thank those who had a positive impact on our lives, but today as I stand here to tell you how proud we are in Virginia that you have chosen Peggy Thomas to serve as National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, I must add that I'm honored to be part of this very special day for Peggy has been one of my mentors and a very good friend for many years.

I had the honor of meeting Peggy and her husband, John Thomas, 20 plus years ago. And since that time, I have come to learn that Peggy is not afraid to take on a challenge.

She is dedicated to achieving success in everything she does, always offers encouragement to others, and has helped many members in the Virginia American Legion family.

We are an organization that stands for God and country and it has been said that God created everyone with a purpose. But to get there, you need to work to your strengths.

I can assure everyone here that Peggy Thomas has made it a practice to work to her strengths. It is because of her vision, her focus, and her dedication that everyone who has worked with her has been able to achieve success while at the same time learning the right way to get things done in our organization.

Today as she takes on her new duties and responsibilities as the National President, I am confident she will do so with the same business sense that allowed her to enjoy success in the private sector. And I'm certain she will do so with that same motivation, purpose, and vision that has been her long established practice in everything she does.

Peggy, I thank you for all you have done for the members of The American Legion Family in Virginia for so many years and I want to assure you and all that are here today that this will be a very successful year because Virginia stands ready to assist you in every way possible.

Many years ago, I saw a movie, and I'm sure you've all seen it, and it's When A Bell Rings, An Angel Gets Their Wings. I heard a bell ring yesterday and I was given some wings. And I know they weren't for me. I took one of those wings and gave it to an angel who has been by my side for almost 50 years.

Peggy, I have another wing for you so that you will never forget that you have a flock of angels out here to support you all year long.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you, George.

(Applause.)

MR. LUCIER: I hope you like it.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

It's a -- it's on a chain.

MR. LUCIER: Never forget.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you. I really appreciate it.

(Applause.)

MS. LEE: Our next guests are true leaders in the Department of Virginia, our 2012-2013 Department President Ann Starr and our 2012-13 Commander Isaac Ike Kelly.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT STARR: Good morning.

National President Peggy, American Legion family, I bring you greetings from the Department of Virginia.

National President Peggy, it is with much pride and joy that everyone in Virginia wishes you congratulations and the very best wishes for the coming year.

Your mentorship has proved invaluable to those who are following in your footsteps. Your grace and dignity has shown each of us the behavior we should emulate. Your dedication to our veterans and active duty has always been a deep commitment to you and it inspires everyone around you to reach that devotion.

If we are all like angels, the world would be a heavenly place. May all your travels be safe. We will miss you as you proceed with your duties. But as you share your belief in the ideals and the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary, may God's blessings be with you. We love you.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER KELLY: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

COMMANDER KELLY: I would like to thank you for allowing me to share in this moment with President Thomas. I am truly honored.

I would like to also congratulate the ladies of the fine organization, the American Legion Auxiliary, for selecting and now electing President Thomas as your National President for 2012 and 2013.

As the old knight Templar said to Indiana Jones in the movie Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade, you have chosen wisely.

Following in the footsteps of the two National Presidents from Virginia, Dr. Kate Waller Barrett and our treasured State's woman Mrs. Anna Gear, Peggy embodies the Auxiliary's motto of service, not self.

Peggy is a sincere, loyal, capable, and I'm sorry, Peggy, I can't read your writing --

(Applause.)

COMMANDER KELLY: -- and dedicated member of the American Legion Auxiliary who is devoted to serving our veterans, our active duty personnel, their families, our communities, state, and nation.

The American Legion Virginia family of Virginia is extremely proud of Peggy

Thomas and we know she will uphold and perpetuate the tradition of service that the Auxiliary has maintained for the past 92 years.

President Thomas, we wish you and your band of angels God speed as you begin your flight. And we also pray that the good Lord will bless you, the Ladies Auxiliary, and continue to bless the United State of America.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. LEE: We are honored to have today Chris Huntzinger, National Commander of The Sons of The American Legion from the Department of Pennsylvania as our next guest.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER HUNTZINGER: Thank you. Thank you so very much and good morning --

VOICES: Good morning.

COMMANDER HUNTZINGER: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary and all. National President Peggy Thomas, congratulations. And on behalf of the 350 -- 349 -- jumping ahead of myself -- 349,000 members of The Sons of The American Legion, we pledge our support to you on our endeavors this year.

We will have a great year in support of our veterans, our troops, the children and the youth of our nation, and our communities because today we begin to forge our future together as one American Legion family.

I want to thank you very much for the time this morning. God bless you all and God bless America and let's have a good year. Thanks again.

(Applause.)

MS. LEE: Our next guests are Harold Butch Miller, Past National Commander, who had the honor of serving as Department Commander when Peggy was Department President, and our very own Dan Dellinger, Virginia's candidate for National Commander.

Let's give them a round of applause.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MILLER: Please, I often tell people I used to be distinguished, now I'm extinguished. Okay?

I wished I knew what I was getting myself into today when I came here. If I'd have known about the theme, I may have tried to stay away because, of course, you know, after this talk about angels soaring and everything, the local media is going to pick that up and I can see the newspaper tomorrow. Tomorrow morning it's going to say American Legion Auxiliary gets high in Indianapolis.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MILLER: Those of us that were here, though, we'll know what really happened. Okay?

I've had the honor of serving with a number of Presidents. The first one, of course, was my mother. The next one was an elected President, Ginny James from Kentucky, who traveled with me when she was President and I was National

Commander.

And in between there in 1994 and 1995, I had the honor of serving with Peggy. She was the Department President and I was the Department Commander.

Sometime after that as we were approaching each other at a function, she addressed me as her Commander. And I addressed her as my President.

Now, you've seen fit obviously to recognize the talent that this lady has and if it wouldn't have been for Diane stealing my line about steel magnolia -- actually, I stole that from her.

I could tell you about her qualifications, but you already know that. The worst thing you can do with Peggy Thomas is underestimate her intelligence, her spirit, and her drive.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MILLER: And I'll let you have her for one year and she can be your President. But when she's all done and for the rest of our lives, she will always be my President.

(Applause.)

MR. DELLINGER: Good morning.

Madam President, Past National Presidents, and members of The American Legion Family, it's indeed an honor to be here this morning to witness and participate in Peggy Thomas' installation.

Peggy and I have a lot in common. Not only we -- are we true Virginians, but we also have carpet baggers in our family.

I've known Peggy over 20 years and really got to know her when we served as National Membership Chairmen together.

During my travels last year, I would see more of her and other Departments and National meetings than I did back in Virginia. But it's always a pleasure to see her.

She is truly a gracious southern lady, always with a smile on her face and a place in her heart for our veterans. I know she'll do an excellent job this coming year. I congratulate her and I know that she'll be promoting the four pillars upon which our great organization was founded.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to participate today and may God bless her in her travels as she does the work of the Auxiliary this year.

(Applause.)

MS. LEE: Our next guest is a true southern belle. Madelyn Johnson comes as a representative of Post and Unit 144, Highland Springs, home of Peggy Thomas.

(Applause.)

MS. JOHNSON: Good morning.

Madam National President Peggy, doesn't it just sound wonderful?

(Applause.)

MS. JOHNSON: Congratulations, Peggy, from all of the members of Highland Springs Unit and Post 144, Department of Virginia. We are very proud of you, Peggy, and I am so honored to be here with you.

This is truly the most exciting event I have ever attended. With lots of hard work and dedication, Peggy, you have reached your goal. I received a letter from Mr.

Highland, Board of Supervisors of Chesterfield County, Virginia where Peggy resides. He stated as a United States Army veteran he personally thanks you for your tremendous number of hours you have spent in service to our veterans, their families, and communities.

Your communities here in Chesterfield County shares the excitement and pride of your accomplishments.

Randy Forbes, a member of Congress, House of Representatives, 4<sup>th</sup> District, Virginia sent a letter of congratulations on your newly elected office. He thanks you for your hard work and dedication not only to the American Legion Auxiliary but to the whole nation.

And he asked me to present her with a certification of congressional recognition and it's signed by Randy Forbes.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROBERTS: Just smile for me and let the day begin. You're like the sunshine that lights my heart within. And I'm sure that you're an angel in disguise. Come take my hand and together we will ride.

On the wings of love up and above the clouds, the only way to fly is on the wings of love. On the wings of love, only the two of us together flying high, flying high upon the wings of love.

You look at me and I begin to melt just like the snow when a ray of sun is felt. And I'm crazy about you, baby, can't you see. I'd be so delighted if you would come with me.

On the wings of love up and above the clouds, the only way to fly is on the wings of love. On the wings of love, only the two of us together flying high, flying high upon the wings of love.

Yes, you belong to me. I'm yours exclusively. Right now we live and breathe each other. Inseparable it seems, we're floating like a stream, running free, flying on the wings of love.

On the wings of love up and above the clouds, the only way to fly is on the wings of love. On the wings of love, only the two of us together flying high on the wings of love. On the wings of love up and above the clouds, the only way to fly is on the wings of love. On the wings of love, only the two of us together flying high, flying high upon the wings of love, of love.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Give Dan a big hand. He's one of our Creative Arts veterans. What a beautiful voice.

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: Dear Heavenly Father, we ask your blessings and love on the newly installed National Officers of the American Legion Auxiliary. Give them wisdom, courage, and strength they will need to carry out their duties and responsibilities for our organization. We are volunteers to our veterans, our youth, our communities, and most of all to thee.

Grant your special blessings on our new National President Peggy Thomas as she begins her travels on this wonderful journey in her life, our leader, the National

President of the American Legion Auxiliary.

This we ask in your holy name. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: You may be seated.

Would Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan please come forward for a special presentation.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Thank you,

Anna.

Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: It's my distinct pleasure today to welcome Past National President Kris to the ranks of Past National President on behalf of all of the Past National Presidents.

To recognize her accomplishments as National President this year, we will have three special presentations.

Kris' friend, Wendy Riggle, will present Kris with her Past National President's pin which originally had been worn by Past National President Sherry McLaughlin, Wendy's mother.

MS. RIGGLE: I have a few words first.

Kris, you have traveled a great journey this year and there have been many who have traveled side by side with you. However, there was one who could not be here with us, Sherry McLaughlin. She so wanted to be here at your installation, but we know that she's watching from above.

And as her final days came, she was very insistent that I understand that her Past National President's pin would go back to the National organization and if it was their pleasure that it be given to you.

It is my privilege and my honor and my pleasure to present to you my mother's Past National President's pin and I hope that as you wear it, you're reminded of her a little bit each day.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Well, I will be.

MS. RIGGLE: And, of course, I'm Sherry's daughter, so I do have a bit of advice for you.

As you go home from this Convention, in the next days and weeks and months, you have to tell your family about the experiences that you've had. I know that they've come one on top of another on top of another and sometimes you haven't had the chance to tell them. But some day there might not be time to tell them, so you have to do that for me. Congratulations.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you so much.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: It is my personal privilege to present the ribbon of Past National President to you.

Kris, you've had an exciting and busy year as you've traveled in support of the American Legion Auxiliary, carrying our message to our members as well as the community at large. You've been our ambassador on your travels overseas, always aware

of our Auxiliary image.

As I place this ribbon on your shoulder know that it is a symbol of the service that you have rendered on our behalf this year. Please know that it comes with all our thanks for a job well done.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Please stay with me and I would ask that your personal pages, your daughter, Dr. Sarah Nelson Swenson, and National Secretary Dubbie Buckler, please come forward for the presentation of your colors. And I would ask that your husband, Terry, join you between these colors.

You may be seated.

Kris and Terry, as you stand between these two beautiful flags, I know you will remember not only in your minds but in your hearts this challenging year of service to our American Legion Auxiliary and to the men and women of the Armed Forces and our veterans, their families, and the communities in which they live, that you have served as our National President.

I'm sure you will also treasure the memories of when you stood on the Podium between these flags and presided as National President.

Kris, one year ago, these beautiful flags were presented to you, entrusted to your care to guard wisely for one year. They stand as they have for years for patriotism, for an unrelenting love of country, and service to a cause greater than all of us.

May they always hold a place of honor in your hearts and in your home.

You've touched all our hearts as you spoke to veterans, to the military, and to our wounded warriors honoring their service and explaining your continuing commitment to make life better for all of them.

You and Terry represented us with dignity and pride as you journeyed beyond our shores to foreign lands as our ambassadors of good will not only for the American Legion Auxiliary but for the United States of America. You two answered our nation's call to service during this incredible year.

When you took the oath of office one year ago, the road of your presidency stretched before you with its limitless possibilities and now it has come to a close with many chapters written, with memories to be cherished, and wonderfully fulfilling moments to be treasured. You have lived your dream.

Waiting for you when you arrive home will be these beautiful flags, our glorious American flag that carries American ideas and ideals, American history, and American feelings.

Although it is only pieces of material sewn together to form a design, every color, every thread, every star and stripe means liberty and justice and stands for our unrelenting quest for fairness and equality.

We cherish in our hearts an unquenchable love and devotion to the unseen which it represents. The stars and stripes are our dreams and our labors. They are bright with cheer, brilliant with courage, firm with faith.

As a symbol of our nation, our flag is as much a thing of the spirit as it is a thing of the cloth.

And then there is our own Auxiliary scarlet and gold banner symbolizing our

organization and our members who serve with conviction for God and country. It represents mystery and purpose, our ideas for the future, and the reason, purpose of resolution.

It is not more than what we believe it to be and it is all that we believe it can be. It is what we make it, nothing more. This bright gleam of color is a symbol of the care and the giving and the devotion to our programs and our principles.

It, too, is only cloth, but woven from the fabric of dedication and devotion, a vital fragment of what we will weave into the reality of our organization's future.

So today please allow me, Past National President Kris and Terry, to express the deep appreciation of all our members to you for being a leader of vision and determination.

I thank you, Kris, for this opportunity to present to you and Terry this beautiful stand of colors knowing all that they represent not only to you but to all of us.

Cherish the memories of this year and the lasting friendships and take with you our heartfelt thank you from your Auxiliary family as you return to your own personal family. May God continue to bless you both with good health and happiness wherever life and circumstances take you.

Kris and Terry, please be seated.

And will the color bearers please re-post the color.

Thanks to Sarah and to Dubbie.

Kris, as you take your seat, you will also take your place as a Past National President of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: And now please welcome back Anna Gear.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: We will have a poem by James Littlepage.

MR. LITTLEPAGE: I am your bonded servant, I am your slave. I volunteered to serve and when you called, I gave.

With combat gear and rifle, I went to places far away and when the mission required action, I stood in harm's way.

I took one for my country, many of my friends died. I taste life each day for them and I wear my Purple Heart with pride.

Medals of valor and of honor to everyone who gave, this land is our land. America is the home of the brave.

I am an American soldier. I fought for this great land and when life and freedom is in danger, I shall take a stand.

Ladies and gentlemen, being here today with you is my privilege. I'm here because Peggy Thomas believed in me. She believes in you and I know that you guys will be just following in her footsteps, but you'll have to hurry.

I sincerely hope you enjoyed the poem that I penned and recited for you earlier. It's my way to say thank you for all of your hard work and commitment on behalf of many thousands of veterans and their families who assist on a daily basis.

I would like to share with you just some random thoughts with no direction until

you get to the end.

Grandmothers, mothers, daughters, wives, and sisters, this is your day to soar to new heights. It belongs to you. You observed in our hour of need the trauma we suffered in war and took your cue. You organized and met to serve and meet those needs.

We were withered, beaten, wounded, and in our minds, we bore the emotion scars of war. In those scars, you sewed the seeds of your compassionate care, thoughtful understanding and unrelenting love. To this day, you nurture and cultivate and tend those seeds with the determination of a wrestler, a wild boar, a bulldog, and the patience of an angel. With God's hands you succeed in giving back thousands of veterans their lives.

I am but one veteran and you are many. But you make me feel as if I am the only one. You make me feel whole, complete. You make me rich. Your compassion and your emotional support and your love is genuinely confirmed and proven by the way you exhalt, honor, and serve the veterans who served this great country.

Color me, color you red, white, and blue. God bless The American Legion and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Thank you, Jim.

Jim is also one of our Creative Arts winners and we appreciate him being here with us today.

I have several announcements. A reminder that the NEC meeting will be in Room 125, 126 immediately following the close of this Convention.

I ask that you please show courtesy by remaining in your seats until the close of the Convention and the retiring officers have left the stage.

The National President's pin will be given to each of you as you leave the Convention.

Madam President Peggy, would you and President Kris approach the mike and give her back her gavel so she may close her Convention.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: I present to you your gavel.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: Would the Sergeant at Arms please retire the Department of Virginia flags.

Honor escorts, please escort the new President, her family, friends, and new officers from the platform.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT GEAR: They forgot me. Okay. Unplug me.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Tom and Rory, could you join us on the stage.

You can be seated for a minute if you'd like.

I'd just like to take this moment to thank all of you for what you did this year for our veterans, our military, and their families.

And I'd like to challenge you when you leave here to remember to honor their service and to look into their eyes when you do and see our faces of freedom.

I'd like to thank each and every one of you again for your hospitality, your

friendship, and your support.

I'd like to thank my American Legion family from the Department of Minnesota. Where are you? Thank you for your support this year.

I'd like to thank my family if they'll stand and our son, Troy, and his wife, Angie, are teachers, so they couldn't be here this week. School started.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Last year when we began the year, we told you that it takes a village, so I'd like to thank my village, our close friends that are with us today, Tom and Lois, Jan and Rory, Shirley.

Would you please stand.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Also special thanks to Wendy, Jan, Dubbie, and Sarah for participating today.

Would you stand.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: And let's give a standing ovation to the officers who served you this year.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: And our National Headquarters staff who were the wind beneath my wings all year, please help me thank them.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: As we leave the hall, we're going to show some pictures of my visits to your Departments.

This concludes the 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual American Legion Auxiliary Convention.

(Applause.)

(Ring of the bell.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Would you please retire the colors. (Whereupon, at 9:57 a.m., the above-entitled Convention was concluded.)

**POST-CONVENTION  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 2012**

PRESIDENT THOMAS: We're going to start in about a minute to stay on schedule, so if you could take your seats.

This National Executive Committee meeting will now come to order.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Please disable all electronic devices or place them in a silent mode.

Please rise and remain standing for the opening ceremonies.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Rosemarie Hauck, National Chaplain, will lead us in the invocation and moment of silence for our fallen heroes and those serving our nation today for the protection of our freedom.

Following the prayer, Americanism Chairman Diane Duscheck will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem followed by Constitution & Bylaws Chairman Karen Lowe leading us in the Preamble of the Constitution.

Rosemarie.

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we come to you in gratitude for the opportunity to serve our veterans, active military, and their families. We recognize that it's through their great service, sacrifice that we are eligible to belong to this organization.

We ask that you would guide us through the deliberations and that the good of the American Legion Auxiliary and those that we represent be our foremost consideration.

Be with us as we conduct the business of our Auxiliary. We pray that the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts be pleasing in your sight. May we be blessed with your success in our endeavors and the glory be yours forever.

In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hail'd as the twilight's last gleaming? Whose bright stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight, o'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming? And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purpose: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the

classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: You may be seated. This meeting of the National Executive Committee is convened.

Before we begin our business, I want to take a few minutes to welcome you to your new role as the 2012-2013 National Executive Committee.

I was so pleased that we could hold the NEC 101 session again this year. By show of hands, how many of you were able to attend?

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Very good. How wonderful. It looks like just about everybody was able to attend.

Did you find the session helpful?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Don't you feel educated and ready to tackle the business of the coming year?

For those of you who were not able to attend the NEC 101 session, let's do a quick review of the role and responsibilities of the National Executive Committee.

Those present who are eligible to vote today and at the subsequent NEC meetings are the NEC members composed of the National Executive Committee -- Executive Committeewoman from each Department, the five Division National Vice Presidents, the National Chaplain, the National Historian, National Vice President, and the National President.

Those allowed to be present at the NEC meeting will have voice but no vote and these are the National President, the National Treasurer, the National Secretary.

We welcome our visitors and remind you that you may listen to the discussion but are not permitted to participate in debate nor to vote.

I would also like to impress upon the members of the National Executive Committee that you are now serving in a National role as the Board of Directors with fiduciary responsibility to the National organization.

As a member of the NEC, you no longer have the interest of your Department as your primary focus. You are serving as National representatives of the National organization and you must be making decisions and casting your votes according to what is in the best interest of the National organization.

For future meetings, you will again receive information in advance and you will be expected to have read these materials in preparation for the next meeting.

This is a very important role and we appreciate your diligence in attending to your duties thoughtfully and responsibly on behalf of the National organization.

Now to get to the business at hand. The Chair asks that those of you wishing to address the meeting make your way to the microphone in the center aisle as this is the only way your remarks can be heard for the recording by a professional court reporter for

the transcripts of the meeting.

Also, please make sure that in making any remarks you address the Chair.

Each of you is charged with the responsibility to document your attendance at the meeting. Attendance sheets are provided for your convenience, so please indicate your attendance in the appropriate spot. These sheets will be collected at the close of this meeting.

Serving as Parliamentarian for the meeting is Chris Dickey, professional, registered Parliamentarian.

Chris.

For this meeting and future NEC meetings, the minutes will be approved by a Minute Approval Committee.

The Chair appoints the NEC from Delaware, Minnesota, California as the Minutes Approval Committee responsible for approving the minutes for this year's NEC meeting.

Our next business in order is the election of a National Secretary and National Treasurer. One of the first responsibilities of the National President is to nominate the National Secretary and National Treasurer.

It gives me great pleasure to nominate Mary "Dubbie" Buckler for the Office of National Secretary for the 2012-2013 administrative year.

The question is on the nomination of Mary "Dubbie" Buckler for the Office of National Secretary. All those in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: All opposed, say no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: You have elected Mary "Dubbie" Buckler your National Secretary for the 2012-2013 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: I am very pleased to nominate Marta Hedding for the Office of National Treasurer for the 2012-2013 administrative year.

The question is on the nomination of Marta Hedding for the Office of National Treasurer. All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: You have elected Marta Hedding your National Treasurer for the 2012-2013 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Would the newly elected National Secretary and National Treasurer please join me at the Podium for the oath of office.

Will you each raise your right hand and repeat after me using your name where I use mine.

I, Peggy Thomas --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I, Mary Buckler --

TREASURER HEDDING: I, Marta Hedding --

PRESIDENT THOMAS: -- do hereby accept the responsibility of the Office of the National President.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- do hereby accept the responsibility of the Office of National Secretary.

TREASURER HEDDING: -- do hereby accept the responsibility of the Office of National Treasurer.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: And I promise to faithfully perform --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And I promise to faithfully perform --

TREASURER HEDDING: And I promise to faithfully perform --

PRESIDENT THOMAS: -- the duties of my office --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- the duties of my office --

TREASURER HEDDING: -- the duties of my office --

PRESIDENT THOMAS: -- to the best of my ability --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- to the best of my ability --

TREASURER HEDDING: -- to the best of my ability --

PRESIDENT THOMAS: -- with respect to the American Legion Auxiliary --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- with respect to the American Legion Auxiliary --

TREASURER HEDDING: -- with respect to the American Legion Auxiliary --

PRESIDENT THOMAS: -- and the allegiance to my country so help me God.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- and the allegiance to my country so help me God.

TREASURER HEDDING: -- and the allegiance to my country so help me God.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Congratulations and thank you for your service.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you.

TREASURER HEDDING: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: What a surprise.

Could I please now have all the National Officers stand and be recognized.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

Would all the Past National Presidents please stand and be recognized at this time.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you, ladies, for your committed and continued service.

The next item of business is the approval of the standing and special committees appointments for the 2012-2013 administrative year and the Foundation Board appointments.

You received a copy of the appointments list. Please take a moment to review the list. And also refer to the standing committee list documents. All of them are there. This is what it looks like.

The question is on the motion to approve the complete list of appointments to standing and special committees for the administrative year 2012-2013 and Foundation Board appointments as presented.

Is there any discussion?

MS. DUTTON: Madam President. Madam President.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The Chair recognizes Sandi Dutton.

MS. DUTTON: Madam President -- Madam President -- oh, there it is. Sandi Dutton, Past National President.

I just have a question on the Audit Committee 'cause it still -- this sheet states a member of the Finance Committee and I think the Foundation. I don't know. I can't find that part. But it states that there's a member of the Finance Committee on the Audit; is that correct?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Please just recognize they are liaison members. They do not have a vote.

MS. DUTTON: So change it to say Audit liaison?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Liaison to both of those.

MS. DUTTON: Audit Committee liaison?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Uh-huh. They have no vote 'cause that lost.

MS. DUTTON: And no vote. Okay. Thank you.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The motion to approve the complete list of appointments is adopted.

Congratulations and thank you for your service.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Please now welcome Finance Committee Chairman Nicole Clapp to report and present the prepared FY13 budget and the American Legion -- of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Nicole.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Congratulations, Peggy and Nancy. We are looking forward to a very exciting year under your leadership.

As your incoming Finance Committee Chair, I am very honored to present the 2012-2013 fiscal year budget for the American Legion Auxiliary for your NEC consideration on behalf of the entire Finance Committee.

Vice Chairman Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, Desi Stoy, JoAnn Cronin, and Paula Parker-Sawyers, thank you for your dedication and help on preparing this budget.

I need to also thank the National Headquarters staff and all the National Chairmen for your input, guidance, and ideas to make sure we were able to develop a very comprehensive, yet realistic budget.

We need to continue to meet our goals, obligations, and expectations of

providing services to our members, our veterans, and their families while balancing the governmental requirements comparing ourselves to the National benchmarks.

Tim Bresnahan in the front here, our controller, has spent I would say countless hours preparing the documents which he and I will go over with you this morning.

So you have these documents projected on the screen. They were sent out to you, NEC, in email version a few weeks ago, but so everyone will be able to review as we go forward.

So the first document, as you can see, is the National budget narrative and I'd like to start with this. The most exciting thing as after several years of aggressive budget reductions, we want to thank you for passing the National dues increase.

Because you helped pass the National dues increase, the proposed budget for 2013 reflects a balanced positive bottom line --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: -- of \$790,910. It was very refreshing to work on a budget this year where we actually saw the light at the end of the tunnel and knew that we could provide and do our mission without having to sacrifice in certain areas.

So as the FY budget was proposed, there is a \$1.7 million increase from the adopted deficit budget of one -- of \$77,000 for this past fiscal year. So, again, thank you very much.

We'd like to highlight what's new and coming in this year's budget. You've heard from the floor that the Divisional Vice Presidents will re-establish travel to the Departments, the Divisional Vice Presidents to attend P&S, and then the combined membership and P&S Conference, the new title of Department Leadership National Conference.

The one thing that was pretty exciting in our pre-con meeting was the per capita for the rehab assessments of 15 cents. We will not be requiring that be sent from the Departments to National. You may have additional assessments in your own Departments, but the 15 cents per member coming will no longer be necessary. And that's approximately \$103,000.

Whoa, yeah. So a little early Christmas present as one NEC mentioned to me a while back.

So for a couple examples, the Department of Arkansas, that's a Christmas present of about \$564. Now, these were stats at the end of last year. Okay?

Department of California, \$3,400 and one of our biggest Departments, Pennsylvania, \$9,410. So --

VOICE: (Inaudible.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Yes. So we hope you appreciate that. That was all part of our mission was to be able to start to give back to the Departments.

Obviously you heard from my platform remarks we're committed to the mission trainings as well as our \$100,000 Creative -- Veterans Creative Arts Festival sponsorship. The micro grants will continue which started this year for the Creative Arts Festival at the local level.

And then a couple other things to highlight. The new online event registration which will streamline registration processes and make things much more effective for

you as an organization as a whole.

And then as we mentioned, the new leadership conference will begin this coming year as well as the most important thing, nothing for this budget came out of reserves. For the first time, we didn't tap into our savings in many years.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: And then on to the program areas. Obviously member benefits and member program services is the largest portion of our budget, 7.7 million, as we look at where we need to be with our benchmarks. We'll look at that in just a minute as we compare ourselves on our pie charts.

The expenses this year, obviously with having two conferences for P&S and then a combined, we actually have additional expense this year because of two and then next year, we'll have for the -- excuse me -- for the '14's budget, it will just be the one conference in the springtime.

And then looking down, you've got the Foundation, the Auxiliary continues to support obviously in that process, and then the budget presentation.

And for us for the Foundation, we as a Finance Committee do not approve the Foundation's budget. We review it and support it and that is our role as the Finance Committee. So we have given that our nod of support.

And then down on the colored areas, you'll see in FY where we were five years ago when the investments bottomed out. Obviously we all remember those tough times. We had a \$9.1 million budget at that time and our expense was 7.4 million.

Then as we started to tighten our belts, especially with our deficit budget, we had a budget of only 7.6 million, spent about 7.5. And then with this year, we're still doing our conservative approach with an \$8.6 million budget.

But one of the key things to remember, and we'll see that on the next slide, is how we've been able to maintain our reserves back to a level similar to what we saw in 2008.

And so if you look down the reserves, you will see that we have increased technology from the 50 -- excuse me -- from the seven back up to the hundred thousand for the ongoing website enhancement. And then also getting ready for our hundred years, we've built that back up for anticipation of our future celebration.

So in 2008, we were at 16.7 million in reserves and now we are at 16.8. So we haven't obviously gained, but we're back to where we were before the major crisis hit in the economy. And that's very important for you to see.

I do need to make one additional note on this slide and what will be the releasing of \$750,000 for the Perception Awareness Campaign that you passed yesterday on the floor. We're excited to support that as a Finance Committee. So that number obviously would be modified by \$750,000.

But I did want to bring that to your attention that obviously we weren't anticipating, we were hopeful, but we're excited to be able to have that ability now to afford to do something like that.

Any questions on the summary so far?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Okay. We will move on then to the chart that has the

colored pies. There you go.

The most important thing to look here as we look at our National benchmarks and when you compare us to FY13 and '12, it's pretty similar, 3 percent, 3 percent, 8 percent, 6 percent, 89 percent, and 91 percent.

So we're staying the course of action that obviously is our mission. But I do want to point out to you that when you compare us to National benchmarks, governance and general management, that's typically about 5 to 10 percent and we're in the 8 percent category. So we're right where, quote, the watchdogs would expect us to be.

In administrative which is fundraising, in that category, we're only at 3 percent. That's an area obviously we can continue to grow. Typically they like to see not-for-profit companies at 10 to 20 percent.

And then mission delivery is extremely high in our industry, our business, which is obviously total service. And typically that's 65 to 75 percent and we obviously tipped the scales on that indicator at 89 percent.

But this kind of gives you a breakdown of all the revenue and expense by the key categories which helps us as we've tried to streamline this budget process in the last several years.

All right. Then you have your budget detail which is a very colorful page. It's two pages. And what Tim has tried very hard to do is streamline activities that are related.

And so you will see if you compare the color to your footnotes on the second page that what's important is how those all relate together. And so I'm not going to spend obviously a great deal of time going through the details. We've gone through the overall summary with you.

But some things that I did want to bring to your attention which we anticipated as a question if Tim would get to the, quote, bottom line is that you will obviously this year, the difference of 877,000 deficit to where we hoped to be at 790,000.

We do have additional expenses this year as I talked about, the P&S Conference. This is the first year we're not going to be relieving any money from reserves for the mission trainings.

We have a presidential inauguration for President Peggy to attend as well as adding the travel back in for the Divisionals were some of the big things.

And then our first attempt with the voting machines this year was a new expense for us and so we rent those at this given time. And our goal is to increase our AEF grants if at all possible.

So those are some of the highlights that are the differences in the expense from this year '12 to what you'll see in '13. All right?

And then an area that sometimes is a bit confusing because it's only known to us as the VISTA Program and that we are two types of VISTA grants. VISTA Exhibit A is for internal focus. The original VISTA Program Call to National Service Corps was for poverty and looking at capacity building within your organization.

So you can plan for the future better within the ALA. And so that budget you will see is in front of you.

The main thing to remember with VISTA is we are a pass-through. These are individuals that are coming out of college and are learning to live what it's like to live at

a poverty level. So they're giving back their service. And in turn, we have human resource capital for them then to do our work for us as well.

So you will see that there is an expense to the organization at the bottom, but you will also see what in turn that human resource capital is actually back to the organization.

And then the second VISTA grant which is a consortium grant, you heard National Secretary Dubbie mention yesterday the multitude of organizations, 28 organizations that all support veterans, military, and their families and that we are the outreach there.

This grant does have, as you scroll down the page, a matching grant and noted in the highlighted area a 24 percent match that is required. And so that is our commitment. But you will also see at the bottom that the AmeriCorps total value of contributions is 15 AmeriCorps National members.

And so for us, the investment is well worth the effort and the rewards that we reap across the country.

Questions for me on the budget?

Yes, Sandi.

MS. DUTTON: First I want to thank you. You've done a marvelous job and in - your presentation help -- Sandi Dutton -- helps us to understand what's going on and a fabulous thank you.

I do have a couple of questions though. On the expense 101, 102, 103, could you tell us what those figures are?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: I'm going to turn to Tim 'cause he's got the multitude of detail. He's got to come back up and bring another folder. Just a moment.

MS. DUTTON: I'll go to my second question then.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Okay.

MS. DUTTON: Travel as authorized, is that in this budget somewhere 'cause I don't see it?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: I'm sorry. Is what?

MS. DUTTON: Travel as authorized.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: It is in by -- by -- I won't say category. It's by activity.

MS. DUTTON: By what?

MR. BRESNAHAN: It's by activity.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Activity.

MS. DUTTON: What number?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: So whatever the activity is, be it P&S, be it Mission Training, it's all in those categories.

MS. DUTTON: Oh, okay. So it's included in the program that it --

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Right.

MS. DUTTON: -- corresponds to?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Correct.

MR. BRESNAHAN: Which -- which categories did you want?

MS. DUTTON: 101, 101 and 102 and 104.

MR. BRESNAHAN: Okay. 101, the fiscal year '12 budget was \$116,000.

MS. DUTTON: Sixteen?

MR. BRESNAHAN: A hundred and sixteen thousand.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: That includes companion travel. We've done away with the companion travel policy.

MS. DUTTON: The total is 16?

MR. BRESNAHAN: A hundred and sixteen thousand. The fiscal year -- the fiscal year '13 budget for 101 -- did you want the -- I'm giving you a comparison. Do you just want the fiscal year '13? Fiscal year '13 budget for 101 is \$112,400. The fiscal year '13 budget for 102 is \$28,138. I'm sorry. Let's go back up for a second. 102 is \$18,100.

MS. DUTTON: Eighteen thousand one hundred?

MR. BRESNAHAN: Yeah. For 103 which is the National Divisional VPs, it's \$21,000. For 104, it's \$5,710. And for 105, it's \$28,138, \$28,138.

MS. THOMPSON: Madam National President, Linda Thompson from Minnesota.

Because of the closeness of the chairs and the -- my shoulder, may I just be -- ask to be allowed to move from my seat that's marked Minnesota?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Yes.

MS. THOMPSON: Thank you.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: You're an exception.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Are there any other questions? We did not receive any prior to Convention.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Hearing none, Madam President, on behalf of the Finance Committee, I move to adopt the fiscal year 2012-2013 annual budget.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Since the motion comes from a Committee, a second is not required.

The question is on the approval of the proposed 2012-2013 budget as presented. And this also includes the \$750,000 for the expense of the awareness campaign.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Correct.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Any other questions?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The question is on the adoption of the 2012-2013 budget as presented. All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The motion to approve the proposed 2013 budget is adopted.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Marta Hedding will now present the Foundation budget.

Marta.

TREASURER HEDDING: Thank you, Madam President.

I believe you all received a copy of the Foundation budget. A little bit smaller than the Auxiliary's, thank goodness.

Projected revenue is \$183,954 and that includes contributed services and in kind -- gift in kind. And those are provided by the Auxiliary. And you'll see an offset for those in the expense category.

Projected expenses \$178,854 for a projected net of revenue over expense of \$5,100.

A couple key things to note about this budget. There's an increased emphasis on fundraising activities and soliciting grants for Auxiliary programs. There's also an increased -- with that increased emphasis, there -- the amount of contributed services, of course, will -- will increase accordingly.

The FY13 budget also reflects an increased emphasis on awareness of the Foundation through Board training, strategic participation, and various associations and cultivation meetings and the Auxiliary Past National Officers.

This budget was reviewed and approved by the Foundation Board. It was also reviewed by the National Finance Committee.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The question is on the approval of the proposed FY13 Foundation budget as presented. Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The motion to approve the proposed FY13 budget -- Foundation budget is adopted.

And at this time, I would like to say the reason that Linda Boone had to leave is because there was a death in the family and she has to go to a funeral. I think it's her husband's relative if I understand correctly.

When you came into the meeting this morning, you should have had documents on your chair. Among those documents should have been copies of two resolutions.

The first one is a resolution clarifying disciplinary authority of the NEC and standing rules. This is a follow-up to Wednesday's amendment number five to amend both the Constitution & Bylaws.

Hopefully this resolution is self-explanatory as it clarifies the disciplinary authority of the NEC and it's dictated by state minutes.

Are there any questions concerning the resolution?

VOICE: What number is it?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: It's -- I don't think it has a number on it, but it's the one to clarify disciplinary authority of NEC's standing rules. It's submitted by the National President, immediate Past President and immediate Past Chaplain, Governing Documents Review Committee. And the subject is to clarify disciplinary authority of

NEC's standing rules.

MS. DUTTON: Sandi Dutton. I have a question. On number six, it says -- I'm just confused about it. It says that they become incapacitated or otherwise unable to discharge the duties, they declare the position vacant only if it's held -- who is not an employee. So what if they are an employee? Does it say somewhere else what happens?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The Chair recognizes Kris Nelson for clarification.

MS. NELSON: I can answer that. The National Secretary and National Treasurer don't have to be employees. So this is for the governance piece, not the management piece.

So they would -- just say we had a Secretary who -- who's not the manager of the operations. That's what this refers to.

Because Dobbie and Marta have two different job descriptions, one as a National Secretary and National Treasurer, which is the governance piece, and one as Director of Operations and Deputy Director, so they -- it could -- it could happen that Peggy didn't want them to serve as officers. She could have appointed someone else as officers. They'd still be employees.

So we had to put that on in case there's a President who chooses not to have the management of the organization as an officer of the governance piece.

Does that make sense?

VOICES: Yes.

MS. NELSON: Okay.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Any other questions?

VICE PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Madam National President, I move the adoption of the resolution that clarifies disciplinary authority of the NEC and the standing rules.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: It's been moved and seconded to adopt the resolution that clarifies the disciplinary authority of the NEC and the standing rules.

Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The resolution is adopted.

It is my understanding that after clarification from Counsel General there are some NECs that would like to reintroduce the resolution requesting the American Legion Aux -- American Legion's assistance in obtaining an American Legion Auxiliary Federal Charter.

Madam President, after hearing what -- is anybody there to say anything?

MS. BOEHLER: Madam President, Karen Boehler, alternate NEC from the Department of Colorado.

I think that was very helpful to us a couple of days ago in the NEC 101 meeting

when we got that clarification.

And in talking with a number of the other membership, we would like to ask that this be reintroduced as a resolution as is written and so that it could be brought up again this coming year for a vote.

I do think, however, the clarification needs to be made to membership, probably in a better document than this, but I would like to reintroduce this document and then ask for additional publicity and clarification.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Once it would be adopted, then it would be communicated.

MS. BOEHLER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: So thank you.

MS. BOEHLER: I would make that motion. You're welcome.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

Is there a second?

VOICE: I'll second.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Further discussion?

MS. SMITH-RIED: I'm Mary Smith-Ried, Department of Mississippi.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Uh-huh.

MS. SMITH-RIED: After hearing the explanation at our Post NEC meeting the other morning, it really makes sense to me that this proposal be adopted. It's like an insurance policy for our National Department to adopt this because if we were sued or anything like that, it would protect our National Department. And so, therefore, I would like to speak in approval of this.

MS. DUTTON: Madam President, Sandi Dutton.

I'd like to reiterate what I said at the other NEC meeting. I'm not opposed to it. I'm just concerned and want to make sure that The American Legion does want this.

We were told that the Legion suggested it and, you know, whatever rationale they were given, we aren't privy to. I did speak with several of the National leaders of The American Legion. They didn't know anything about it.

So who in The American Legion is asking us to do this if it's not their leadership? That's my concern, that whatever we're doing is going to be accepted and not taken wrong by the leadership, not -- not employees, but the leadership of The American Legion.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Kris Nelson.

MS. NELSON: Madam President, Kris Nelson, Past National President, Department of Minnesota.

We spoke to -- it was Phil Onderdonk who introduced it. He spoke to the leadership and at dinner the other night, we spoke to Jake Comer who's one of the top three. And he also said that he believes that we should go forward with this for the protection.

And we talked about the comment about the divorce and he said there -- we in order to exist at all have -- we have to -- we're a veterans organization serving under The American Legion.

So it will be no divorce. We will still have the same qualifications for membership. It will still have to be under an immediate veteran. So none of that will change. It's just a charter to protect us. And he said it could take years, but now is the time to take the first step.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Further discussion?

MS. DORAN: Sharon Doran, NEC, Department of Arizona.

I understand the rationale behind it because I will admit I always thought we were -- had our own charter like I'm sure many of us did.

If we went ahead and reintroduced this today and it passed, then it would become before the Convention in 2013 and you would probably be putting out information to the different Departments; is that correct?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Yes -- no, no.

MS. DORAN: Because I think this needs a lot more discussion and a lot more clarification because I, too, have talked to other people and they knew nothing about it in The American Legion. So I'm hesitant to vote on this at this time.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: I have no opinion, but I can't make a decision or anything. I can only tell you that I went and met with the Legion leadership when -- right before the Membership Workshop and there were like 15 of the top leadership in there including the incoming Commander and Phil Onderdonk talked about this. And the Legion said are we ready for this and he said we are past due. And that's all I can say. Just for clarification, I did want to mention that.

VICE PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Madam National President, I -- I would like a little bit of clarification because I know we've had some conversation and it might help.

As I read below, I know that this is in part a protection for our status as a women's organization, if I'm correct, which I think is important.

Also, I think it has something to do with membership numbers as The American Legion -- as we look to add additional members, I think we've reached a saturation point with the Sons of The American Legion. Am I not correct?

Can you clarify that for us, Kris?

MS. NELSON: That's one of the things that Phil told us is that if they bring this up, they can at the same time bring up the classes of membership. We would -- we would not then -- in my understanding, we would not then be included in their number.

So they as an organization would be able to find a place for the spouses of the female veterans. That would be under their organization. And then they could -- they could open up the other membership because our membership numbers would not come up and be part of that 25 percent; is that right?

VOICE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The reason they're asking us to do this is because it fosters a better relationship between the Legion and the Auxiliary and it looks more supportive from our side.

MS. BATISTE: National President Peggy, Monique Batiste, Department of Louisiana.

Can you also clarify to -- there were some of the members in my Department

that were concerned. They wanted to know if this was only a request for assistance from the Legion. So can you clarify that this is just a request for the Federal Charter?

PRESIDENT THOMAS: They're in support of it.

MS. BATISTE: Okay.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Is there any other discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: All in favor, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Opposed, no.

VOICES: No.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: The resolution is adopted.

We'll move on to new business. Is there any other business to come before this NEC meeting?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: If not, the Chair calls on the National Secretary Dubbie Buckler for announcements.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Madam President, the announcements are to have safe travels as you leave this city. While you're still here, take a few moments to enjoy something you've not had time to enjoy yet.

I wish to announce that it is with great admiration that we wish the best to our newest immediate Past National President Kris Nelson.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And I wish to announce that we all send our love, prayers, and support to you, Madam President, and look forward to serving with you this coming year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Thank you, Dubbie. Thank you.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: As we close the first meeting of the 2012-2013 National Executive Committee meeting, I leave you with these words.

Let us never forget that our obligation to our country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of the duties of citizenship.

Let service in the community, stayed a nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members.

Let us ever be watchful of our organization and ourselves that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice and freedom, loyalty, and democracy.

Please stand with me as our National Chaplain Rosemarie Hauck offers the Benediction.

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray that you will be with us as we depart from this place. Go with us and keep us safe until we meet again.

We pray that you will bless those whose families have been separated by

military service, that they will be united soon with their loved ones.

We pray that you will bless those who have lost loved ones and that they may be comforted in the knowledge of their sacrifices be honored and their loved ones memorized by a grateful nation.

Let us as American Legion members serve as beacons of light to the rest of the nation that our men and women in uniform will not be forgotten until we have all come home.

We thank you once again for your many, many blessings. Go with us for safe travels, especially those that are close. Those are the accidents that happen most.

All these blessings we ask in your holy name. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Just stay where you are. I want to tell you one other thing.

I have a special gift for all of you, so please listen carefully to the following instructions. If you've already turned in your conflict of interest form and your confidentiality agreement, please exit through those doors over here to your right as you turn and receive your gift. If you have not turned in both forms, please head to the staff table over here and see Maria Potts.

VOICE: (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Well, you're just out of luck. You don't -- you've already signed.

Ladies, this -- we're -- the meeting is now adjourned.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT THOMAS: Happy travels. Past National Presidents are always on duty. Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 11:17 a.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

**Appendix A**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE  
NATIONAL CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS,  
RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**ADOPTED BY  
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
92ND ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**AUGUST 24-30, 2012  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

## **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS** *(proposed changes appear in bolded text):*

### **AMENDMENT #1** – **amend National Bylaws Article 1, Organization, Sections 3 and 4, to grant discretionary authority to Departments to create intermediate bodies between the Units and Department (commonly known as districts/counties/councils)**

Proposal from the National President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer to allow departments the authority and discretion to establish districts or counties or other intermediate bodies, recognizing a long-standing practice.

#### The Section of the Bylaws presently reads:

*Section 3.* There shall be one Department in each state, in the District of Columbia, and there may be one Department in each territory of the United States. The National Executive Committee may establish Departments or Units in the insular and other possessions of the United States and may also establish Units in foreign countries. All Departments previously established by the Auxiliary are hereby confirmed and approved.

*Section 4.* A Unit in the territorial or insular possessions of the United States or in a foreign country, which does not have Department status, may have the status of a foreign Unit not attached to any specific Department of the American Legion Auxiliary. Any such Unit which requests affiliation with a Department shall be assigned to the same Department as its American Legion Post, if accepted by the Department. If there is no Department of the American Legion Auxiliary, the National Executive Committee shall assign said Unit to a Department.

#### If the proposed amendment is passed, the Section of the Bylaws will read:

*Section 3.* There shall be one Department in each state, in the District of Columbia, and there may be one Department in each territory of the United States. The National Executive Committee may establish Departments or Units in the insular and other possessions of the United States and may also establish Units in foreign countries.

***Section 4.* Departments shall have authority to create intermediate bodies between the Units and Department to act as a liaison between such organizations and for the purpose of promoting the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.**

*Section 5.* A Unit in the territorial or insular possessions of the United States or in a foreign country, which does not have Department status, may have the status of a foreign Unit not attached to any specific Department of the American Legion Auxiliary. Any such Unit which requests affiliation with a Department shall be assigned to the same Department as its American Legion Post, if accepted by the Department. If there is no Department of the American Legion Auxiliary, the National Executive Committee shall assign said Unit to a Department.

#### Consequential Changes

If the above amendment is adopted, the Bylaws, Standing Rules and governing documents shall be updated where appropriate to reflect the additional wording "intermediate bodies".

**RATIONALE:** Counsel General strongly advises this amendment be adopted. This amendment effectively recognizes that many departments have established districts/counties/councils for the purpose of conveniently conducting department business and mission outreach. Neither the national bylaws of the Legion or the ALA recognize the existence of districts/counties/councils. The ALA is proposing this change in coordination with The American Legion which is proposing a similar change to its Constitution and Bylaws.

Without their existence being acknowledged in the national governing documents, districts/counties/councils are using the names and emblems of the Legion and Auxiliary without being subject to trademark protections, and in turn, being duly protected by a fidelity bond. There is also considerable misunderstanding about the need for a district/county/council to file some form of an annual IRS Form 990. The problem is further compounded by the fact that a) some unincorporated districts/counties/councils have not been included in the department's 990; and b) some are separately incorporated and have never been included in the department's 990; and c) some of those separately incorporated have been granted tax-exempt status by the IRS which in turn requires those districts to file separate 990's.

Upon adoption of this amendment, departments will have the nationally recognized option to establish districts/counties/councils, and those that already have them can duly require they be bonded, can require who pays for the bond, and require that the districts duly report to the department and be included in the department 990, or, for those districts that have their own tax exempt status, require they be compliant with 990 reporting requirements. Also, by recognizing the existence of department sub-entities other than units, districts/counties/councils not in category "c" above would then be covered by the National Organization's IRS Group Exemption Number (GEN).

###

**AMENDMENT #2 – amend Bylaws to rename national Girls State Committee to Girls Nation Committee**

Proposal from the National Girls State Committee to amend Article V, Committees, Sections 2 and 3, to change the name of the national Girls State Committee to Girls Nation Committee, by striking "Girls State" and replacing with "Girls Nation", and change subsequent references throughout the organization's governing documents. This proposal is advised by legal counsel because the national organization does not have responsibility or liability for ALA Girls State programs.

The Section of the Bylaws presently reads:

*Section 2.* There shall be the following Standing Committees: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Cavalcade of Memories, Children & Youth, Community Service, Constitution & Bylaws, Education, Finance, Girls State, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Liaison to the Child Welfare Foundation, Membership, National Security, Past Presidents Parley, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

*Section 3.* Of the Standing Committees named in Article V, Section 2, the following shall consist of five (5) members: Americanism, Community Service, Finance, Girls State, and National Security. The following shall consist of four (4) members: Cavalcade of Memories, Education, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation. The following shall consist of three (3) members: Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children & Youth, Constitution & Bylaws, Liaison to the Child Welfare Foundation, Past Presidents Parley, and Poppy.

The following Standing Committees, in addition to the committee members, shall consist of five (5) Division Chairmen, one of whom shall be appointed from each Division for a one-year term: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children & Youth, Community Service, Education, Girls State, Junior Activities, Legislative, Membership, National Security, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

If the proposed amendment is passed, the Section of the Bylaws will read:

*Section 2.* There shall be the following Standing Committees: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Cavalcade of Memories, Children & Youth, Community Service, Constitution & Bylaws, Education, Finance,

**Girls Nation**, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Liaison to the Child Welfare Foundation, Membership, National Security, Past Presidents Parley, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

*Section 3.* Of the Standing Committees named in Article V, Section 2, the following shall consist of five (5) members: Americanism, Community Service, Finance, **Girls Nation**, and National Security. The following shall consist of four (4) members: Cavalcade of Memories, Education, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation. The following shall consist of three (3) members: Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children & Youth, Constitution & Bylaws, Liaison to the Child Welfare Foundation, Past Presidents Parley, and Poppy.

The following Standing Committees, in addition to the committee members, shall consist of five (5) Division Chairmen, one of whom shall be appointed from each Division for a one-year term: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children & Youth, Community Service, Education, **Girls Nation**, Junior Activities, Legislative, Membership, National Security, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

#### Consequential Changes

If the above amendment is adopted, the Bylaws, Standing Rules and governing documents shall be updated where appropriate to reflect the committee name "Girls Nation".

RATIONAL: Counsel General strongly advises this amendment be adopted. The national organization does not have the responsibility for department ALA Girls State programs, nor is the national organization liable for the actions of departments. The number of actual and threatened legal action against ALA Girls State programs is increasing, and plaintiff attorneys assume the national organization is a valid party because of the very existence of a national committee on Girls State. The Legion does not have a national Boys State Committee and strongly advises the name of the ALA committee be changed to Girls Nation to mitigate potential legal costs to the organization. The Girls Nation Committee can continue to advise and convene representatives of department ALA Girls State programs. This change only affects the name, not the duties of the committee.

## #

### **AMENDMENT #3 – amend Bylaws to clarify Audit Committee Composition**

Proposal from the National Audit Committee to amend Article V, Committees, Sections 5, to adjust the composition of the national Audit Committee from three to five members to align with how the committee has been operating in accordance with its approved National Audit Committee Charter and with best practices.

#### The Section of the Bylaws presently reads:

*Section 5.* There shall be an Audit Committee under Administrative Committees that shall consist of three members appointed annually by the National President and ratified by the NEC. The first operating year of the committee, one member will be appointed to serve a term of three (3) years or until her successor is appointed; one member will be appointed to serve a term of two (2) years or until her successor is appointed; and, one member will be appointed to serve a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, one member will be appointed annually to serve a term of three (3) years or until her successor is appointed.

#### If the proposed amendment is passed, the Section of the Bylaws will read:

*Section 5.* There shall be an Audit Committee under Administrative Committees that shall consist of **five (5) members confirmed by the NEC: three appointed members, annually appointed by the National President; one (1) designated member from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation; and one (1) designated member from the National Finance Committee. One appointed member shall be appointed annually by the National President to serve a term of three (3) years or until her successor is appointed.**

RATIONALE: Both Counsel General and the Auxiliary’s national external audit firm recommend this amendment be adopted. This adjustment is in keeping with the ALA/ALAF Audit Committee Charter approved by the 2009-2010 NEC and reflects how the Audit Committee has effectively been operating with 3 appointed members and 2 designated liaison members from the National Finance Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. Currently, the ALA Bylaws, The ALA Foundation Bylaws, and the ALA/ALAF Audit Committee Charter differ in their description of the Audit Committee. The 5-member composition of appointed and designated members reflects a financial “best practice” as recommended by outside professional auditors and legal counsel. The committee has existed for three years and the phase-in provisions are now obsolete.

###

**AMENDMENT #4 – amend Constitution and Bylaws to change Amendments Notice from 30 to 20 days, consistent with the Legion’s Constitution and Bylaws and to allow departments sufficient time to submit proposals**

Proposal from the National Governing Documents Review Committee to amend National Constitution, Article VII Amendments, Sections 1- 2; and National Bylaws, Article XIII Amendments, to change the required notice for amendments to the National Constitution and Bylaws from 30 days to 20 days, to be consistent with the Legion’s notice requirements and to give departments time to complete their department conventions and submit proposals without missing the national deadline.

Article VII of the Constitution presently reads:

*Section 1.* This Constitution may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat, provided the proposed amendments shall have been submitted through the National Secretary to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by mailing same to them at least thirty (30) days prior to the convening of the next National Convention; and provided further that all proposed amendments shall be read at a regular meeting of the convention.

*Section 2.* Necessary amendments proposed after distribution or revision as shown in Section 1, may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegation, provided they have been read at one meeting of the session prior to taking the vote.

If the proposed amendment is passed, Article VII of the Constitution will read:

*Section 1.* This Constitution may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat, provided the proposed amendments shall have been submitted through the National Secretary to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by mailing same to them at least **twenty (20) days** prior to the convening of the next National Convention; and provided further that all proposed amendments shall be read at a regular meeting of the convention.

*Section 2.* Amendments proposed after distribution, as shown in Section 1 hereof, may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegation, provided they have been read at one meeting of the session prior to taking the vote.

The Sections of the Bylaws presently read:

*Section 1.* The Bylaws may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat, provided the proposed amendments shall have been submitted through the National Secretary to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by mailing same to them at least thirty (30) days prior to the convening of the next National Convention; and provided further that all proposed amendments shall be read at a regular meeting of the convention.

*Section 2.* Necessary amendments proposed after distribution or revision as shown in Section 1 may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegation, provided they have been read at one meeting of the session prior to taking the vote.

*Section 3.* An amendment not having been previously read or distributed as required in Section 1, may be adopted by the unanimous vote of the convention body

If the proposed amendment is passed, the Sections of the Bylaws will read:

*Section 1.* The Bylaws may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat, provided the proposed amendments shall have been submitted through the National Secretary to all Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by distributing same to them at least **twenty (20)** days prior to the convening of the next National Convention.

*Section 2.* Amendments proposed after distribution, as shown in Section 1 hereof, may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegation, provided they have been read at one meeting of the session prior to taking the vote.

*Section 3.* An amendment not having been previously read or distributed as required in Sections 1 and 2 hereof, may be adopted by the unanimous vote of the convention body.

**RATIONALE:** Notice of 20 days conforms to the Legion's notice requirement, is adequate with modern technology, and gives departments time to complete their conventions and submit proposals to NHQ without missing the deadline for inclusion in the national convention notice. Each year several departments complain that the current deadline is unfair given their convention dates. Counsel General recommends adoption of this amendment.

###

## **AMENDMENT #5 – Clarify the role, responsibility, and authority of the National Executive Committee**

Proposal from the National Governing Documents Review Committee to amend National Constitution, Article V National Executive Committee, Sections 1- 3; and National Bylaws, Article IV National Executive Committee to incorporate the role of the NEC, clarify its authority in the removal or discipline of national officers and national committee members who serve multiple-year terms, update sections written when there were only 48 states, and move procedural matters appropriately to the Standing Rules.

Article V of the Constitution presently reads:

*Section 1.* Between National Conventions, the administrative power shall be vested in a National Executive Committee which shall be composed of the National President, National Vice President, the five Division National Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, National Historian, and one Executive Committeewoman or alternate from each Department, to be elected as such Department shall determine, and such other members as provided in Section 2 hereof. The National Executive Committeewoman from each Department by virtue of her office shall be a member of the Executive Committee of the Department which she represents, and her alternate shall act in her behalf in the absence of such committeewoman.

*Section 2.* All Past National Presidents in good standing in the local Units shall be members for life of the National Executive Committee, with all rights except the right to vote.

*Section 3.* Term of Office: The term of office of National Executive Committeewoman shall commence immediately following the adjournment of the National Convention next ensuing, and shall end at the adjournment of the next succeeding National Convention.

If the proposed amendment is passed, Article V of the Constitution will read:

*Section 1.* Between National Conventions, the National Executive Committee shall serve as the governing body of the organization with fiduciary, policy, and strategic responsibility for the organization.

*Section 2.* The National Executive Committee shall be comprised of the National President, National Vice President, the five Division National Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, National Historian, and one Executive Committeewoman or alternate from each Department, to be elected as such Department shall determine, and such other members as provided in Section 3.

*Section 3.* All Past National Presidents in good standing in the local Units shall be members for life of the National Executive Committee, with all rights except the right to vote.

*Section 4.* The term of office of a National Executive Committeewoman shall commence immediately following the adjournment of the National Convention next ensuing, and shall end at the adjournment of the next succeeding National Convention. The Alternate National Executive Committeewoman shall serve only in the absence of the National Executive Committeewoman.

Article IV of the Bylaws presently reads:

*Section 1.* In case of death, resignation or removal from her respective Department of any National Executive Committeewoman or alternate, her successor shall be chosen for the unexpired term as such Department shall determine.

*Section 2.* Meetings: The newly elected National Executive Committee shall meet within twenty-four hours after adjournment of the National Convention at the Convention City, and shall meet early in the new administrative and/or fiscal year at the call of the National President. It shall also meet immediately preceding the holding of the succeeding National Convention at the Convention City and at the call of the National President. Special meetings may be held upon reasonable notice at the call of the National President. The National President shall call a meeting of the National Executive Committee upon written request of not less than fifteen members.

*Section 3.* Quorum: Twenty-five members shall constitute a quorum of the National Executive Committee.

*Section 4.* All questions affecting the election, eligibility and conduct of National Officers shall be referred to and determined by the National Executive Committee. All questions affecting the election, eligibility and conduct of the National Executive Committeewoman from any Department or of the Department Officers or members of Department Executive Committees shall be referred to and determined by the Executive Committee of the Department involved, which shall be the final authority thereon.

If the proposed amendment is passed, the Section of the Bylaws will read:

*Section 1. Role:* The National Executive Committee shall serve as the governing body of the organization with fiduciary, policy, and strategic responsibility for the organization between National Conventions. It shall be the duty of the National Executive Committee to ensure that the organization has adequate resources to fulfill its mission. The National Executive Committee is responsible for the organization's adherence to legal standards and ethical norms.

*Section 2. Duty:* It shall be the duty of each National Executive Committeewoman to fulfill the responsibilities of the National Executive Committee, and to articulate the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and to her Department.

*Section 3. Meetings:* The National Executive Committee shall meet at least three times a year as described in the Standing Rules. Special meetings may be held upon reasonable notice at the call of the National President. The National President shall call a meeting of the National Executive Committee upon written request of not less than fifteen members.

*Section 4. Quorum:* A majority of the voting National Executive Committee members shall constitute a quorum of the National Executive Committee.

*Section 5. Authority:* All questions affecting the election, eligibility, conduct, and capacity of National Officers shall be referred to and determined by the National Executive Committee. The National Executive Committee shall be responsible for establishing the process and procedure for making the determination that a National Officer or a national committee member serving a multiple year term is incompetent, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to discharge the duties of the national office.

All questions affecting the election, eligibility, conduct, and capacity of the National Executive Committeewoman from any Department or of the Department Officers or members of Department Executive Committees shall be referred to and determined by the Executive Committee or governing board of the Department involved, which shall be the final authority thereon. The rules governing the fulfillment of this section shall be as provided in the Standing Rules.

**RATIONALE:** The role and responsibility of the governing body of any organization should fundamentally be defined in any organization's core governing documents. Likewise, the fundamental role and duty of a board member should be defined in any organization's governing documents. The wording is standard for nonprofit boards.

This amendment reflects a portion of the work completed by the Governing Documents Review Committee. It updates the governing documents to include the NEC's role which has been void in the governing documents since inception. It also clarifies that the NEC has the responsibility and authority to determine, discipline, or remove a National Officer or a member of a national committee whose appointment is for a multiple-year term. A National President has corporate authority to discipline or remove any of her appointments. The NEC always has had the corporate authority to discipline or remove national committee members serving multiple-year terms, but the authority was not clear in the governing documents.

Given that the make-up of the NEC essentially changes annually, a new NEC woman should be able to go to the ALA's national governing documents and find the basic role and responsibility clearly stated. The portions of the bylaws that encompass more detailed process and procedures are more appropriately suited to the Standing Rules where that can be easily updated as needed. Parts of this section were outdated, having been written when there were only 48 states. Upon adoption of this amendment, the post-Convention meeting of the NEC will consider the resolution to adopt the resultant Standing Rule referenced in this amendment.

Both Counsel General and the Auxiliary's national external audit firm recommend this amendment be adopted.

###

### **AMENDMENT #6 – amend Bylaws to establish a National Executive Board to augment current governance structure**

Proposal from the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee to amend the American Legion Auxiliary National Bylaws, creating a new Article to follow the current Article III, to establish a 15-member American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Board that reports to the National Executive Committee, and whose membership includes representation elected from the National Executive Committee to serve staggered 3-year terms. If adopted, this amendment will become effective at the beginning of the 2013-2014 administrative year.

The Section of the Bylaws presently reads:

There is no existing section.

If the proposed amendment is adopted, the new Section of the Bylaws will read:

***New Article V (all other articles to be re-numbered): National Executive Board***

***Section 1. Role:*** The purpose of the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Board is to conduct business on behalf of the ALA National Executive Committee between regular meetings of the NEC when timing is critical; to improve organizational effectiveness and meet best practice governance standards; to provide continuity in knowledge and understanding of ongoing issues and matters affecting the organization; and ensure continuous and timely mission delivery.

***Section 2. Duty:*** It shall be the duty of each member of the National Executive Board to fulfill the responsibilities of the National Executive Board, and to articulate the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public, and to review and appropriately examine major issues and proposals to the organization to make informed recommendations to the NEC.

***Section 3. Composition:*** The National Executive Board shall be comprised of no less than fifteen (15) members. Six (6) members shall serve by virtue of position: National President, National Vice President, National Secretary, National Treasurer, Immediate Past National President, National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chair. A minimum of nine (9) shall be elected to serve three-year terms: Six (6) At-Large Members elected from the NEC, one from each size Membership group as defined in the Standing Rules; and three (3) At-Large Members elected by vote of National Convention delegates.

***Section 4. Meetings:*** The National Executive Board shall meet at the call of the National President and elect its own Chairman. The National President shall call a meeting of the National Executive Board upon written request of not less than five members.

***Section 5. Quorum:*** A majority of the voting National Executive Board members shall constitute a quorum of the National Executive Board.

***Section 6. Authority:*** The National Executive Board has the authority to conduct the business of the NEC between meetings of the NEC; all decisions of the National Executive Board shall be ratified or confirmed at the next regularly scheduled NEC meeting. The NEC will have the authority to accept or reverse any and all decisions of the National Executive Board.

***PROVISO:*** In the event that the proposed amendment is adopted, all provisions in this Article will not go into effect until the beginning of the 2013-14 national Auxiliary administrative year. The At-Large Members shall serve staggered terms commencing with elections to one, two, and 3-year terms to initiate the staggered 3-year term rotation.

***RATIONALE:*** Much has been circulated previously about this proposal. The American Legion Auxiliary is a large international organization whose national governing body make-up and national officers change annually. The ALA's annual turnover in leadership, along with the large size of its governing body, is contrary to industry standards; has been criticized by the organization's external auditors for several years; and, under the vastly expanded IRS Form 990, is a red flag to the IRS, charitable watchdog groups, and the public.

After three years of discussion by the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee, a general model was shared at each 2-day Mission Training held within the past year. At each Mission Training, one segment was devoted to governance reform and soliciting specific suggestions about how a smaller executive board should be comprised. The proposed National Executive Board reflects the make-up most widely suggested.

As proposed, the ALA National Executive Board does not become effective for a year, allowing sufficient time to further define its role and responsibilities in the ALA National Standing Rules, including but not limited to such rules as a) the board's preferred and usual manner for meeting will be virtually, via digital and electronic technology; b) the Board will conduct business according to Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised; c) National Executive Board meeting minutes will be provided to each member of the board and each member of the NEC in a timely fashion; d) definition of Membership Size Groups; and e) the Chairman of the National Executive Board will make a verbal report at each regularly scheduled NEC meeting. All decisions of the National Executive Board will be ratified or confirmed at the next regularly scheduled NEC meeting. The NEC will have the authority to accept or reverse any and all decisions of the National Executive Board.

By conducting meetings virtually via teleconference, web conferencing, and email, there would be no cost burden to the organization. The National Executive Board will usually meet virtually, or meet at a time and place to coincide with another meeting when the members of the National Executive Board would already be present.

This recommended update to the governance structure adds no significant cost to the organization while creating a manageable-sized executive board that provides more oversight and transparency, better organizational effectiveness, and better meets industry standards and public expectations for continuity and good governance.

###

**AMENDMENT #7 – amend Articles IV and V of the National Constitution, and Article III of the National Bylaws, to change the governance structure to establish an elected 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice President whose duties include chairing the national VA&R committee and a 3<sup>rd</sup> National Vice President whose duties include chairing the national Children & Youth committee**

Proposal from the Department of Arizona to amend the National Constitution, Articles IV and V, to establish the national officer positions of American Legion Auxiliary National Second Vice President who will serve as Chairman of the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee, and Third Vice President who will serve as Chairman of the National Children and Youth Committee. The job descriptions for these two new officers are added to the National Bylaws in Article III along with provisions for the absence of the presiding officer and vacancies for the new officers being added.

The Articles of the Constitution presently read:

ARTICLE IV – National Officers

*Section 1.* The National Convention shall elect annually a President, a Vice President, five Division National Vice Presidents, a National Chaplain and a National Historian. The Division National Vice Presidents shall serve without seniority and one shall be elected from each Division. The President and Vice President shall be delegates to the National Convention and members of the National Executive Committee, and shall serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of both bodies. The five Division National Vice Presidents, the National Chaplain and the National Historian shall be delegates to the National Convention and members of the National Executive Committee.

CONSTITUTION ARTICLE V – National Executive Committee

*Section 1.* Between National Conventions, the administrative power shall be vested in a National Executive Committee which shall be composed of the National President, National Vice President, the five Division National Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, National Historian, and one Executive Committeewoman or alternate from each Department, to be elected as such Department shall determine, and such other members as provided in Section 2 hereof. The National Executive

Committeewoman from each Department by virtue of her office shall be a member of the Executive Committee of the Department which she represents, and her alternate shall act in her behalf in the absence of such committeewoman.

The Section of the Bylaws presently reads:

BYLAWS ARTICLE III – Duties of Officers

*Section 2.* Vice President: In the absence of the President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the Vice President to be the presiding officer. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, a chairman pro tempore shall be elected. The Vice President shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the National Vice President shall become President and shall assume the duties and authority of the office.

She shall assume such other duties as assigned to her by the National President.

Should illness or accident permanently incapacitate the National President, or if for any reason she shall be unable to discharge the duties of President, the National Secretary shall apprise the National Executive Committee, submit to its members medical confirmation from three doctors of this incapacitation, and call for a referendum vote to declare the office of the National President vacant and to authorize the National Vice President to assume the duties and authority of the office. If the unexpired term of office for National President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the office of National President.

In the event the National Vice President thus assumes the office of National President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the office of National Vice President. If this term is less than six months, the person so named is eligible to election by regular process to the office of National Vice President.

If the proposed amendment is adopted, the new Articles will read:

CONSTITUTION ARTICLE IV – National Officers

*Section 1.* The National Convention shall elect annually a **National President**, a **National First Vice President**, a **National Second Vice President**, a **National Third Vice President**, five Division National Vice Presidents, a National Chaplain and a National Historian. The Division National Vice Presidents shall serve without seniority and one shall be elected from each Division. The **National President**, **National First Vice President**, **National Second Vice President**, and **National Third Vice President** shall be delegates to the National Convention and members of the National Executive Committee, and shall serve as Chairman and Vice **Chairmen** respectively of both bodies. The five Division National Vice Presidents, the National Chaplain and the National Historian shall be delegates to the National Convention and members of the National Executive Committee.

CONSTITUTION ARTICLE V – National Executive Committee

*Section 1.* Between National Conventions, the administrative power shall be vested in a National Executive Committee which shall be composed of the National President, National **First Vice President**, **National Second Vice President**, **National Third Vice President**, the five Division National Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, National Historian, and one Executive Committeewoman or alternate from each Department, to be elected as such Department shall determine, and such other members as provided in Section 2 hereof. The National Executive Committeewoman from each Department by virtue of her office shall be a member of the Executive Committee of the Department which she represents, and her alternate shall act in her behalf in the absence of such committeewoman.

If the proposed amendment is adopted, the new Section of the Bylaws will read:

BYLAWS ARTICLE III – Duties of Officers

**Section 2. National First Vice President:** In the absence of the **National President** at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the **National First Vice President** to be the presiding officer. The **National First Vice President** shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the **National President**, the **National First Vice President** shall become **National President** and shall assume the duties and authority of the office.

She shall assume such other duties as assigned to her by the National President.

Should illness or accident permanently incapacitate the National President, or if for any reason she shall be unable to discharge the duties of **National President**, the National Secretary shall apprise the National Executive Committee, submit to its members medical confirmation from three doctors of this incapacitation, and call for a referendum vote to declare the office of the National President vacant and to authorize the **National First Vice President** to assume the duties and authority of the office. If the unexpired term of office for National President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the office of National President.

In the event the **National First Vice President** thus assumes the office of National President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the office of **National First Vice President**. If this term is less than six months, the person so named is eligible to election by regular process to the office of **National First Vice President**.

**Section 3. National Second Vice President: The National Second Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee. In the absence of the National President and the National First Vice President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the National Second Vice President, to be the presiding officer. The National Second Vice President shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.**

**In the event of a vacancy in the office of National Second Vice President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the office of the National Second Vice President. If the unexpired term of office for National Second Vice President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the office of National Second Vice President.**

**Section 4. National Third Vice President: The National Third Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the Children and Youth Committee. In the absence of the National President, the National First Vice President, and the National Second Vice President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the National Third Vice President, to be the presiding officer. In the absence of the National President and all three National Vice Presidents, a Chairman Pro Tempore shall be elected. The National Third Vice President shall serve as a member of the National Executive Committee.**

**In the event of a vacancy in the office of National Third Vice President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the office of the National Third Vice President. If the unexpired term of office for National Third Vice President is less than six months, the person so named shall be eligible to election by regular process to the office of National Third Vice President.**

**(The current Bylaws Article III Sections 3 to 7 will be renumbered as Article III Sections 5 to 9, as appropriate.)**

*Consequential Amendments to the National Bylaws and Standing Rules if the above amendments are adopted:*

1. The new National Second Vice President and National Third Vice President will be added to Bylaws Article II Sections 1 and 6.
2. The term 'Vice President' or 'National Vice President' will become 'National First Vice President' in the following:
  - a. National Bylaws Article II. Election of Officers, Sections 1and 6.
  - b. National Standing Rules V. Duties of National Officers.

*PROVISO:* In the event that the proposed amendments are adopted, the offices of Second Vice President and Third Vice President will not go into effect until election process at the National Convention in 2013.

RATIONALE: This amendment is being proposed to safeguard the right of National delegates to elect the organization's National leaders.

Currently, the National VA&R Chairman and Children & Youth Chairmen are appointed by the new National President every year. The practice has developed that these women will automatically go on to run for National Vice President and National President.

Delegates feel they are being given only one choice when they vote, and other members are being discouraged from running for National Vice President or National President if they have not held these two named Chairmanships. In essence, members feel that the National Presidents are choosing their own successors.

It is understood that the office of National President requires experience and skill. By adding the two new offices, the elected officers will have sufficient time to gain this experience and skill, and the Delegates will be electing the four highest offices in the organization. The aim is to encourage women, when they feel they are prepared, to run for National office with no specific national appointments implicitly required.

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**END of PROPOSED 2012 AMENDMENTS**

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL CONVENTION**  
**August 28-29, 2012**

**RESOLUTION 1**

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**SUBJECT:**        **Divisional National Vice Presidents Travel**  
**SUBMITTED BY:** **Department of Nebraska**  
**DATE:**         **American Legion Auxiliary National Convention, August 28-29, 2012**

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*WHEREAS,* the American Legion Auxiliary Constitution Article IV, Section 1 states The National Convention shall elect annually five Division National Vice Presidents, one from each division, and

*WHEREAS,* when members declare their candidacy to represent their division as a National Vice President, they do so with the expectation that they will travel to the departments within their division, as has been established by a long standing precedent, and

*WHEREAS,* Standing Rule V, National Division Vice President, #2, gives specific instruction as to the required process for authorization of said visits by the National President, and

*WHEREAS,* the American Legion Auxiliary Guidelines for National Officers book is still being used by upcoming leadership, and

*WHEREAS,* the section covering guidelines for division vice presidents, paragraph #9 states : requests for official visits to Departments must be made through the National President's office. The National President will authorize the Division Vice President's visits so as not to conflict with her own schedule; **now, therefore be it**

**RESOLVED,** that Standing Rule V, Division Vice President, paragraph 2 have the following sentence added: As soon as possible after receipt of the request, the National President will authorize the official visits so as not to conflict with her own travel plans allowing the National Division Vice President to finalize her travel plans in a timely manner and be it finally

**RESOLVED,** that this change will be hereby adopted by the American Legion Auxiliary convention body during the 2012 National Convention and become effective during the 2012-2013 administrative year.

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL CONVENTION  
August 28-29, 2012**

**RESOLUTION**

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**SUBJECT: National Awareness Campaign**

**SUBMITTED BY: National President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer; National PR Committee**

**DATE: American Legion Auxiliary National Convention, August 28-29, 2012**

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*WHEREAS,* in recent years, National Presidents have observed and remarked that public awareness and understanding about the American Legion Auxiliary is sorely lacking, and

*WHEREAS,* when meeting domestically and internationally with military servicemembers, veterans, and their families, National President Kris Nelson has further observed that the American Legion Auxiliary is not known by the very people for whom the Auxiliary exists to serve, and

*WHEREAS,* American Legion Auxiliary membership and revenue have steadily declined, and members have often cited in surveys and focus sessions that a factor is lack of awareness about the organization among those unknowingly eligible to belong, and

*WHEREAS,* National President Nelson at every department visit has remarked about the lack of public awareness and consistently recommended the need for a professional national public relations initiative, and

*WHEREAS,* a professional public awareness campaign will provide new opportunities to increase membership and donations to offset the cost for a professional awareness campaign; ***now, therefore be it***

***RESOLVED,*** that the American Legion Auxiliary embark on a professionally developed and conducted national awareness campaign to raise public awareness about the organization's existence, mission, and service outreach, and; and be it further

***RESOLVED,*** that upon adoption of this resolution by the 2012 National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary, the National Executive Committee take action at its first 2012-2013 meeting to appropriate funds not to exceed \$750,000 for the initial phase of a professional American Legion Auxiliary Public Awareness Campaign; and be it further

***RESOLVED,*** that the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee be apprised of the results of the initial phase of the campaign and proceed with future allocation of funds for two subsequent phases of a national public awareness campaign upon successful implementation of the prior phase; and be it finally

***RESOLVED,*** that the national organization proceed with retaining the services of a reputable professional national public relations firm to develop and initiate a public awareness campaign for the American Legion Auxiliary upon the adoption of this initiative by the National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary held August 28-29, 2012 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

# # #

## **Appendix B**

### **AWARDS**

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>	<b>DEPT</b>
Dorothy Pearl Plaque	Engraved Plaque	Unit	Carries out and reports the most outstanding Americanism Youth Program	St. Petersburg Unit #14, Cynthia Weatherby, Chairman	Florida
Department Americanism Award.	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Central Division	Best Overall Department program in Division	Patricia Testen, Chairman	Illinois
Department Americanism Award.	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Eastern Division	Best Overall Department program in Division	Patricia Hensley, Chairman	New York
Department Americanism Award.	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Northwestern Division	Best Overall Department program in Division	Jean Horack, Chairman	Minnesota
Department Americanism Award.	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Southern Division	Best Overall Department program in Division	Michelle DeGennaro, Chairman	Florida
Department Americanism Award.	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Western Division	Best Overall Department program in Division	Michelle Soares, Chairman	California
Americanism Essay Contest Awards:	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Central Division - Class I	Write a narrative 150-250 words.	Katie Zimmer, Unit 316	Wisconsin
Americanism Essay Contest Awards:	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Central Division - Class II	Write a narrative 250-300 words.	Carter Bremer, Unit 48	Iowa
Americanism Essay Contest Awards:	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Central Division - Class III	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Michael Egan, Unit 675	Illinois
Americanism Essay Contest Awards:	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Central Division - Class IV	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Erin Ehlers, Unit 703	Illinois
Americanism Essay Contest Awards:	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Central Division - Class V	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Laura Turner, Unit 25	Missouri
Americanism Essay Contest Awards:	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Eastern Division - Class I	Write a narrative 150-250 words.	Zackary Moyer, Unit 217	Pennsylvania

Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Eastern Division - Class II	Write a narrative 250-300 words.	Michael Martz, Unit 5	Delaware
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Eastern Division - Class III	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Michael Hepburn, Unit 11	Maryland
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Eastern Division - Class IV	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Nicole Hallak, Unit 130	New Jersey
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Eastern Division - Class V	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Andrea Sleeman, Unit 30	Vermont
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Northwestern Division - Class I	Write a narrative 150-250 words.	Cassie Smith, Unit 121	Montana
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Northwestern Division - Class II	Write a narrative 250-300 words.	Jakenda Short, Unit 60	North Dakota
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Northwestern Division - Class III	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Myah Selland, Unit 93	South Dakota
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Northwestern Division - Class IV	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Tavin Schneider, Unit 48	Montana
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Northwestern Division - Class V	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Montella Forman, Unit 91	Colorado
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Southern Division - Class I	Write a narrative 150-250 words.	Brigid Lowery, Unit 6	Georgia
Americanism Essay Contest Awards	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Southern Division - Class II	Write a narrative 250-300 words.	Emma Bissell, Unit 135	Florida
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Southern Division - Class III	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Chester Urbati	Mississippi
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Southern Division - Class IV	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Jessica M. Tolbert, Unit 257	Alabama
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Southern Division - Class V	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Christy Allen, Unit 221	Florida
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Western Division - Class I	Write a narrative 150-250 words.	Gunnar Trulson, Unit 4	Idaho
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Western Division - Class II	Write a narrative 250-300 words.	Laural Cantor, Unit 468	California
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Western Division - Class III	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Bridget Woodbury, Unit 16	Idaho

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012****Committee: Americanism**

Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Western Division - Class IV	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Darren Duffy, Unit 468	California
Americanism Essay Contest Award	Citation Folder and \$50 Award & Honorarium	Western Division - Class V	Write a narrative 450-500 words.	Monica Suriaga, Unit 318	California
Junior Americanism Award	Citation Plaque	Unit/Dept.	Awarded to a Junior for Most Outstanding Americanism Program	Oak Orchard- Riverdale Unit 26	Delaware

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Citation Plaque Recognition	Citation Plaque	Unit	One unit contributing largest amount	South Carolina Unit 178, Murrells Inlet
Citation Plaque Recognition	Citation Plaque	Department	One department contributing largest amount	Department of Minnesota
Citation Recognition	Citation	Department-Central Division	Department contributing largest amount from each division	Department of Indiana
Citation Recognition	Citation	Department-Eastern Division	Department contributing largest amount from each division	Department of Pennsylvania
Citation Recognition	Citation	Department-Northwestern Division	Department contributing largest amount from each division	Department of North Dakota
Citation Recognition	Citation	Department-Southern Division	Department contributing largest amount from each division	Department of Texas
Citation Recognition	Citation	Department-Western Division	Department contributing largest amount from each division	Department of California

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Best Overall Department Chairman Award	Citation Plaque	A Department Chairman in the Central Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Department of Illinois, Judy Shippee, Chairman
Best Overall Department Chairman Award	Citation Plaque	A Department Chairman in the Eastern Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Department of Delaware, Elizabeth Lenkiewicz, Chairman
Best Overall Department Chairman Award	Citation Plaque	A Department Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Department of Minnesota, Mary Kuperus, Chairman
Best Overall Department Chairman Award	Citation Plaque	A Department Chairman in the Southern Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Department of Virginia Cindy S. Kokernak, Chairman
Best Overall Department Chairman Award	Citation Plaque	A Department Chairman in the Western Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Department of California Linda Fercho, Chairman
Outstanding Promotion of Supporting Activities	Citation Plaque	A Unit Chairman in the Central Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	KT Crossen Unit 21 Department of Ohio Kathy Hecht, Chairman
Outstanding Promotion of Supporting Activities	Citation Plaque	A Unit Chairman in the Eastern Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Dalton Unit #155 Department of Massachusetts Charlene Gero, Jolene Forgey, Gail Maston, Co-Chairmen
Outstanding Promotion of Supporting Activities	Citation Plaque	A Unit Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	Melvin E. Bender Unit 265 Department of North Dakota Delight Fercho, Chairman

Outstanding Promotion of Supporting Activities	Citation Plaque	A Unit Chairman in the Southern Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	General Billy Mitchell Unit 85, Department of Virginia Sheryl Lemanh, Chairman
Outstanding Promotion of Supporting Activities	Citation Plaque	A Unit Chairman in the Western Division	Conducted best promotion of Children & Youth Program. Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words	San Diego Unit 416 Department of California, Laura Schweighart, Chairman
Honoring Their Service Award	Citation Plaque	A Unit in the Central Division	Conducted the best innovation program supporting military children. Submitted Narrative-1000 words	No entries submitted
Honoring Their Service Award	Citation Plaque	A Unit in the Eastern Division	Conducted the best innovation program supporting military children. Submitted Narrative-1000 words	No entries submitted
Honoring Their Service Award	Citation Plaque	A Unit in the Northwestern Division	Conducted the best innovation program supporting military children. Submitted Narrative-1000 words	No entries submitted
Honoring Their Service Award	Citation Plaque	A Unit in the Southern Division	Conducted the best innovation program supporting military children. Submitted Narrative-1000 words	USS Tampa Unit #5 Department of Florida Rosemary Hamblin, Chairman
Honoring Their Service Award	Citation Plaque	A Unit in the Western Division	Conducted the best innovation program supporting military children. Submitted Narrative-1000 words	John J. Morris Unit #62 Department of Arizona Amanda West, Chairman

NAME OF AWARD	TYPE OF AWARD	ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP	CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING	AWARDED TO:
Outstanding Department Award	Citation	A Department Community Service Chairman in the Central Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Department. Must include at least two of the designated areas of special emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Department of Wisconsin - Jean Anderson, Chm
Outstanding Department Award	Citation	A Department Community Service Chairman in the Eastern Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Department. Must include at least two of the designated areas of special emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Department of Delaware - Deborah Guenther, Chm
Outstanding Department Award	Citation	A Department Community Service Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Department. Must include at least two of the designated areas of special emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Department of Wyoming - Peggy Miller, Chm
Outstanding Department Award	Citation	A Department Community Service Chairman in the Southern Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Department. Must include at least two of the designated areas of special emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Department of Texas - Jeannine Donaldson, Chm

Outstanding Department Award	Citation	A Department Community Service Chairman in the Western Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Department. Must include at least two of the designated areas of special emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Department of Arizona - Cathy Jarvis, Chm
Outstanding Unit Award	Citation	A Unit in the Central Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Unit. Must include at least one of the designated areas of emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Ceredo-Kenova Unit 93 - Shirley Davis, Chm. Department of West Virginia
Outstanding Unit Award	Citation	A Unit in the Eastern Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Unit. Must include at least one of the designated areas of emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	William T. Spooner Unit 17 - Deborah Guenther, Chm. Department of Delaware
Outstanding Unit Award	Citation	A Unit in the Northwestern Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Unit. Must include at least one of the designated areas of emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Campbell County Unit 42- Terry Case, Chm. Department of Wyoming
Outstanding Unit Award	Citation	A Unit in the Southern Division	Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Unit. Must include at least one of the designated areas of emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	Huntsville/Madison County Unit 237 - Shirley Mohler, Chm., Department of Alabama

Outstanding Unit Award	Citation	A Unit in the Western Division	narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form. Most Outstanding Community Service Program by a Unit. Must include at least one of the designated areas of emphasis. Submit a narrative of 1,000 words as well as annual report form.	William Bloys Unit 2 - Lula Vomhof, Chm. Department of Arizona
Senior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Senior Member in the Central Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 300-500 words.	Shirley Davis - Ceredo-Konova Unit 93 - Department of West Virginia
Senior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Senior Member in the Eastern Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 300-500 words.	Gail Willey-W.T. Spooner Unit 17, Department of Delaware
Senior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Senior Member in the Northwestern Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 300-500 words.	Joyce Menke- William horne Unit 64, Department of Wyoming
Senior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Senior Member in the Southern Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 300-500 words.	Ann Barbour- Dan River Unit 1097- Department of Virginia
Senior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Senior Member in the Western Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action Narrative of 300-500 words.	Nancy Tschikof- Unit 79, Department of Arizona

Junior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Junior Member in the Central Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 250 words.	Skylar Mastronicola- Palmer-Roberts Unit 214- Department of Ohio
Junior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Junior Member in the Eastern Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 250 words.	Olivianne Mousaw- Archie Van Patten Unit 141- Department of New York
Junior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Junior Member in the Northwestern Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 250 words.	No entries
Junior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Junior Member in the Southern Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 250 words.	Korri Gregory- Arlington Unit 139- Department of Virginia
Junior Volunteer of the Year	Citation	A Junior Member in the Western Division	Outstanding Volunteer Service in one or more of the areas emphasized in the Plan of Action. Narrative of 250 words.	Maysea Kessler- Unit 14- Department of Nevada
Operation Impact Award	Citation	A Unit in the Central Division	Outstanding Promotion of a monthly Community Service Program. A Minimum of 10 months is required. Narrative of 1000 words.	Palmer-Roberts Unit 214- Martha Setlock, Chm. Department of Ohio
Operation Impact Award	Citation	A Unit in the Eastern Division	Outstanding Promotion of a monthly Community Service Program. A Minimum of 10 months is required. Narrative	William T. Spooner Unit 17 - Deborah Guenther, Chm. Department of Delaware

			of 1000 words.	
Operation Impact Award	Citation	A Unit in the Northwestern Division	Outstanding Promotion of a monthly Community Service Program. A Minimum of 10 months is required. Narrative of 1000 words.	Campbell County Unit 42- Terry Case, Chm. Department of Wyoming
Operation Impact Award	Citation	A Unit in the Southern Division	Outstanding Promotion of a monthly Community Service Program. A Minimum of 10 months is required. Narrative of 1000 words.	Unit 347- Donna McGlone, Chm. - Department of Florida
Operation Impact Award	Citation	A Unit in the Western Division	Outstanding Promotion of a monthly Community Service Program. A Minimum of 10 months is required. Narrative of 1000 words.	No entries

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Most Outstanding American Education Week Program	Citation Plaque	Unit Education Chairman:	Most Outstanding American Education Week Program/Narrative of no more than 1,000 words	Cerro Gordo Unit #117 Department of Illinois
Most Outstanding Scholarship Program	Citation Plaque	Unit Education Chairman:	Most Outstanding Scholarship Program/Narrative of no more than 1,000 words	Beaumont Unit # 33 Department of Texas, Christine Trahan, Chairman
Most Outstanding Literacy Program	Citation Plaque	Unit Education Chairman:	Most Outstanding Literacy Program/Narrative of no more than 1,000 words	Betty Ann Dahlke, Arlington Unit 139 Department of Virginia
Most Outstanding Veterans in the Classroom Program	Citation Plaque	Unit Education Chairman:	Most Outstanding Veterans In The Classroom Program/Narrative of no more than 1,000 words	Atwood Unit #770, Department of Illinois
Most Outstanding Department Education Program	Citation	Central Division Department Education Chairman	Most Outstanding Overall Department Education Program in the Central Division	Department of Illinois, Teri Miller, Chairman
Most Outstanding Department Education Program	Citation	Eastern Division Department Education Chairman	Most Outstanding Overall Department Education Program in the Eastern Division	Department of Pennsylvania, Diane Dougherty, Chairman
Most Outstanding Department Education Program	Citation	Northwestern Division Department Education Chairman	Most Outstanding Overall Department Education Program in the Northwestern Division	Department of Wyoming, Cassandra Lancaster, Chairman
Most Outstanding Department Education Program	Citation	Southern Division Department Education Chairman	Most Outstanding Overall Department Education Program in the Southern Division	Department of Texas Donna Dillard, Chairman
Most Outstanding Department Education Program	Citation	Western Division Department	Most Outstanding Overall Department	Department of

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012****Committee: Education**

Education Program		Education Chairman	Education Program in the Western Division.	Arizona, Linda Carroll, Chairman Department of Kansas
Honoring the Service of Our Military Award	Citation	A Unit in the Central Division	Most Outstanding Promotion of education for military children	Department of Kansas
Honoring the Service of Our Military Award	Citation	A Unit in the Eastern Division	Most Outstanding Promotion of education for military children	Department of Maine, Mary Wells, Chairman
Honoring the Service of Our Military Award	Citation	A Unit in the Northwestern Division	Most Outstanding Promotion of education for military children	No entries
Honoring the Service of Our Military Award	Citation	A Unit in the Southern Division	Most Outstanding Promotion of education for military children	Betty Ann Dahlke, Arlington Unit 139 Department of Virginia
Honoring the Service of Our Military Award	Citation	A Unit in the Western Division	Most Outstanding Promotion of education for military children	Department of Washington, Janet Sperry, Chairman

NAME OF AWARD	TYPE OF AWARD	ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP	CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING	AWARDED TO:
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Senior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Central Division	Norma McKimney, Department of Kansas
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Senior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Eastern Division	Georgine Butman, Department of Maine
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Senior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Northwestern Division	Marcy Schmidt, Department of North Dakota
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Senior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Southern Division	Carolyn Tardy, Department of Mississippi
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Senior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Western Division	Cherie Galvan, Department of California
Toomey Award	National Plaque	Senior Department Historian	Submitted the best overall department history	Carolyn Tardy, Department of Mississippi
Letter of Participation	Letter	Senior Department Historian	Submitted a department history	<i>SEE ATTACHED SHEET</i>
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Honorary Junior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Central Division	Clara Smith, Department of Illinois, Honorary Junior Historian
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Honorary Junior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Eastern Division	No entries
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Honorary Junior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Northwestern Division	Clarrisa Bors, Department of Nebraska, Honorary Junior Historian
Certificate of Merit	Citation	Honorary Junior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Southern Division	Shelbilyn Mott, Department of Louisiana, Honorary Junior President

Certificate of Merit	Citation	Honorary Junior Department Historian	Submitted the best department history in the Western Division	No entries
Letter of Participation	Letter	Junior Member	Forwards a copy of a Veterans History using Veterans History Project Form	No entries

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Junior Activities**

NAME OF AWARD	TYPE OF AWARD	ELIGIBLE PERSON OR GROUP	CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING	AWARDED TO:
Department Social Networking Award (one national winner)	Engraved Plaque	Department	Largest increase of Junior Members participating in electronic social networking by June 1, 2012	Department of Ohio
National Plaque - Best Overall Junior Activities program	Engraved Plaque	Unit Chairman	Best Overall Junior Activities Program- citing at least two action steps from each of the objectives in the Plan of Action	August-Vanek Unit 264, Dept of Nebraska. Unit Chmn: Marva Kasl
Unit Award - Best in Division	Citation	Central Division Unit Chairman	Best Unit Junior Activities Program in Division, including one action step from each of the objectives in the Plan of Action	Santa Claus Unit 242, Dept of Indiana. Unit Chmn: Lora Lange
Unit Award - Best in Division	Citation	Eastern Division Unit Chairman	Best Unit Junior Activities Program in Division, including one action step from each of the objectives in the Plan of Action	Charles C Kennedy Unit 275, Dept of Massachusetts. Unit Chmn: Bonnie Sladeski
Unit Award - Best in Division	Citation	Northwestern Division Unit Chairman	Best Unit Junior Activities Program in Division, including one action step from each of the objectives in the Plan of Action	Harvey Mann Unit 269, Dept of Nebraska Unit Chmn: Kari Blecha
Unit Award - Best in Division	Citation	Southern Division Unit Chairman	Best Unit Junior Activities Program in Division, including one action step from each of the objectives in the Plan of Action	Tucker A. Gregoire Unit 258, Dept. of Louisiana. Unit Chmn: Melanie DeMars
Unit Award - Best in Division	Citation	Western Division Unit Chairman	Best Unit Junior Activities Program in Division, including one action step	L.D. Lockhart Unit 14, Dept. of Nevada. Unit Chmn: Judy Cobb

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Junior Activities**

National Junior Member of the Year		Engraved Plaque	Junior Member in good standing for 2011-2012 who is not serving as HDIP.	from each of the objectives in the Plan of Action	Outstanding contribution through program or project outlined in the Plan of Action -nominated via essay.		Courtney Ann Reardon, L.D. Lockhart Unit 14, Dept. of Nevada
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**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Leadership**

NAME OF AWARD	TYPE OF AWARD	ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP	CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING	AWARDED TO:
Most Outstanding Overall Department Leadership Program	Citation Plaque	Department	Department that submitted the best report on the overall activities and promotion of the Leadership program	no entries
Best Unit Leadership Chairman	Citation in Folder	Unit Leadership Chairman - one per division	Unit Leadership Chair that submitted the best report on the overall activities and promotion of the Leadership program.	no entries

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Department Chairman Central Division	Best overall Department program in Division	Paula Booth, West Virginia
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Department Chairman Eastern Division	Best overall Department program	Barbara Duncan, New Jersey
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Department Chairman Northwestern Division	Best overall Department program in Division	Jean Forbord, Minnesota
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Department Chairman Southern Division	Best overall Department program in Division	Paula Kampanos, Virginia
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Department Chairman Western Division	Best overall Department program in Division	Awanda Gaines, Arizona
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Unit Chairman Central Division	Best overall Unit program in Division	Diana Weggen, Unit 118, Wisconsin
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Unit Chairman Eastern Division	Best overall Unit program in Division	No nominations
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Unit Chairman Northwestern Division	Best overall Unit program in Division	Terri Timmons, Unit 290, Nebraska
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Unit Chairman Southern Division	Best overall Unit program in Division	Loretta Smith, Unit 139, Virginia
Most Outstanding Overall Legislative Program	Citation	Unit Chairman Western Division	Best overall Unit program in Division	Jane Montaney, Unit 28, Washington

NAME OF AWARD	TYPE OF AWARD	ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP	CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING	Dept /Unit	President	Membership Chair	NEC	Secy
<b>Milestone 1 (55%)</b>	Honorary seat in the "golden circle" during the Presidents & Secretaries banquet	Dept Presidents & Secretaries of dept in each mbrship category w/ highest % of numeric objective	Department must reach their 55% milestone (55% of their numeric objective) by the 1st Thurs in October		Brenda Smith	n/a	n/a	
				Alabama				JoAnne L. McCord
				Iowa	Martha Travis			Marlene Valentine
				Mississippi	Mary L. Smith-Ried			Nancy L. Sanders
				Nebraska	Donna Hatfield			Jacki L. O'Neill
				North Carolina	Sue M. Gooch			Rosemary Turner
				Wisconsin	Joan Chwala			Bonnie K. Dorniak
<b>Milestone 2 (70%)</b>	National Level Recognition; honorary seat at Wash DC conf opening event	Departments - NEC & President with highest % of numeric objective in each mbrship category	Department must reach 70% of numeric objective by the first Thurs in February	Alabama	Brenda Smith	n/a	Donna B. Fluhr	n/a
				Arizona	Sharon L. Doran		Doris Theiss	

				Arkansas	Wanda S. Honeycutt		Dale M. Lester	
				California	Linda L. Fercho		Pilar Reyes	
				Colorado	Rhonda M. Larkowski		Karen Wessling	
				Connecticut	Aelyne M. Welton		Ruth S. Morgan	
				Delaware	Beth McGinn		Jenny Havel	
				Florida	Diane C. Rousseau		Irma M. Wehrli	
				Georgia	Hildegard Martin		Lola A. Harper	
				Hawaii	Frances L. Au		Laura Hashimoto	
				Idaho	Barbara A. Gehring		Connie Evans	
				Illinois	Diana L. Umdenstock		Pamela R. Ray	
				Indiana	Billie O'hare-Bubala		Carolyn A. Cunningham	
				Iowa	Martha Travis		Marilyn Block	
				Kansas	Ida Meyeres		Trish Ward	
				Kentucky	Lois Hall		Barbara J. Austin	
				Louisiana	Monique Batiste		Barbara T. White	
				Maine	Margaret R. Johnson		Nancy True	
				Maryland	Yvonne Rhone		Patti Lach	

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Membership**

				Massachusetts	Josephine R. Yakimowski		Bonnie L. Sladski	
				Michigan	Carrie Bowerman		Jan Kintz	
<b>Milestone 2 (70%)</b> --- <i>continued</i>	National Level Recognition; honorary seat at Wash DC conf opening event	Departments - NEC & President with highest % of numeric objective in each mbrshp category	Department must reach 70% of numeric objective by the first Thurs in February					
				Minnesota	Linda Thompson		Darlene Wondra	
				Mississippi	Mary L. Smith-Ried		Mary Lyles	
				Missouri	Claudia Goodin		Patricia A. Garrett	
				Montana	Karen E. Susag		Sandra D. Runkel	
				Nebraska	Donna Hatfield		Charleen K. Walters	
				Nevada	Anita Paquette		Nikolina Flores	
				New Hampshire	Irene A. Lewis		Elizabeth Ward	
				New Jersey	Patricia McElhaney		Linda Carroll	
				New Mexico	Nancy C. Palladino		Jan Semrau	
				New York	Ann Geer		Nancy G. Kurk	
				North Carolina	Sue M. Gooch		Wanda E. Moore	



			Wyoming	Linda Lenker-Orr						
<b>Milestone 3 (85%)</b>	National Level ribbon for National Convention Badge, and opportunity for photo w/ Nat'l Pres	Department; group photo op for Pres, Mbrship Chair & Secy	Alabama	Brenda Smith	Department must reach 85% of their numeric objective by 1st Thurs in April	Alabama		Vickie Thrower	n/a	JoAnne L. McCord
			Alaska	Susan Diaz		Alaska		Margaret Blankenship		Linda A. Schmitt/ Judy Pusti
			Arizona	Sharon L. Doran		Arizona		Kathleen L. Medalen		Barbara J. Matteson
			Arkansas	Wanda S. Honeycutt		Arkansas		Beverly A. Mulkey		Dorothy L. Gladden
			California	Linda L. Fercho		California		Karen N. Karanickolas		Peggy H. Voegelé
			Colorado	Rhonda M. Larkowski		Colorado		Evelyn J. McMahon		Lynn D. Cody
			Connecticut	Aelyne M. Welton		Connecticut		Nancy A. Hansen		
			Delaware	Beth McGinn		Delaware		Tina H. Washington		Tina H. Washington
			Florida	Diane C. Rousseau		Florida		Sandra J. Beasley		Robin C. Briere
			Georgia	Hildegard Martin		Georgia		Nancy L. Grist		Patty Hawkins
			Hawaii	Frances L. Au		Hawaii		Hilma K. Chang		Elizabeth Lee
			Idaho	Barbara A. Gehring		Idaho		Barbara A. Gehring		Mary Sue Chase

					Diana L. Umdenstock	Diann M. O'Hara		Karen K. Boughan
				Illinois	Billie O'hare-Bubala	Cherril L. Thete		Judith Otey
				Indiana	Martha Travis	Pamela Clark/Bobbie Pipho		Marlene M. Valentine
				Iowa	Ida Meyeres			Jo Dalquest
				Kansas	Lois Hall	Pamela L. Rice		Janet M. Klapheke
				Kentucky	Monique Batiste	Josie A. Leonard/Bobbie Davis		Cheryl Bossenmeyer
				Louisiana	Margaret R. Johnson	Susan A. Bair		Dora M. Michaud
				Maine	Yvonne Rhone	Iverna W. Christoffers/Cathie S. Kline/Dianne Russell		Pam Miller
				Maryland	Josephine R. Yakimowski	Beverly J. Monaco		Donna J. Blattenberger
				Massachusetts	Carrie Bowerman	Deanna Cortright		Bonnie J. Olson
				Michigan	Linda Thompson	Donna P. Arends		Sandie Deutsch
				Minnesota	Mary L. Smith-Ried	Angela S. Kilcrease		Nancy L. Sanders
				Mississippi	Claudia Goodin	Cathie J. Goth		Karen D. Larson
				Missouri	Karen E. Susag	Dixie M. Parsons		Bernadette L. Vick
				Montana	Donna Hatfield	JoAnn R. Sieck		Jacki L. O'Neill
				Nebraska				





				Arizona	Sharon L. Doran	Kathleen L. Medalen	Barbara J. Matteson
				Delaware	Beth McGinn	Tina H. Washington	Tina H. Washington
				District of Columbia	Janeal T. Ball		Jacqueline Y. Cunningham
				Florida	Diane C. Rousseau	Sandra J. Beasley	Robin C. Briere
				Hawaii	Frances L. Au	Hilma K. Chang	Elizabeth Lee
				Idaho	Barbara A. Gehring	Barbara A. Gehring	Mary Sue Chase
				Maine	Margaret R. Johnson	Susan A. Bair	Dora M. Michaud
				Mississippi	Mary L. Smith-Ried	Angela S. Kilcrease	Nancy L. Sanders
				Nevada	Anita Paquette	Hazel Lockhart-Breeding	Daela Gibson
				Pennsylvania	Barbara A. Miller	Debbie Taylor	Colleen G. Watson
				Puerto Rico	Hilda Soto		Noemi Burgos de Paneto
				Rhode Island	Lorraine R. Boucher	Dianne J. Winston	Beverly Burns
				South Carolina	Louise C. Winesett	Pat Ward	Louise C. Winesett
				Wyoming	Linda Lenker-Orr	Sonja Wright	Sonja Wright
<b>Num eric Objec tive Incent ive</b>	National Level Recognition, ribbon for National Convention Badge, and	Departments; for laptop: 1 in each membership category	Department must grow membership 1% or more over numeric objective by 30		n/a	n/a	n/a

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Membership**

	eligible to win a laptop computer (one per membership category)	days prior to National Convention						
			Alabama					
			Delaware					
			District of Columbia					
			Florida					
			Maine					
			Mississippi					
			Nevada					
			Pennsylvania					
			Puerto Rico					
			South Carolina					
<b>Unit Development award</b>	National recognition, eligible for one of six \$250 drawings (one in each mbrshp category); check payable to unit for mission	unit must increase membership by 1 or more over their numeric objective by 30 days prior to nat'l convention; list from dept to		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

	outreach programs or membership efforts		be received by Nat'l Mbrshp Vice Chair by <i>August 13, 2012</i>				
	National President's Citation & NP pin for each member of winning unit(s) and recognition at Nat'l Conv & in nat'l pubs	Units	Units must show how practicing "Service Not Self" helped them maintain &/or grow their membership; dept certified form due to NHQ by <i>April 15, 2012</i> .	<b>To be announced at Membership Pre-Con Meeting</b>			
<b>Service Not Self Award</b>					Boone Unit #4, Dept of Kentucky		
					Wink Sparks Unit #503, Dept of Iowa		
	Each Unit submitting a SNS nomination form receives a "Certificate of Admiration" signed by the Nat'l Pres & Nat'l Mbrshp Chair			<b>Honorable Mention (recognized)</b>			
					Grand Forks Unit #6, Dept of North Dakota		
					Marion Tanner Unit #29, Dept of Wyoming		

<b>Silver Brigade</b>	President's Choice (2012 - emblem charm)	Senior Auxiliary, Legion & SAL mbrs	Awarded to ALA, TAL or SAL member who recruits 25 or more NEW senior members; completed entry form due in NHQ by 6.1.12	<b>Awarded To:</b>
				Shirlene Armstrong Lyla JoAnne Baginski
				Dorothy J. Ballew Barb Bostwick
				Valerie Brown-Debro Kelsey Campbell
				Gladys Caudill Anita Darnell
				Mary Ann Davis Tami Doyle
				Lela A. Duke Barbara Edwards
				Kathy Falk Diane Fitzgarrald
				Judy M. Florence Danita Gainey
				Patricia Gawlik Coral May Grout
				Janice A. Gruber Sue Mucille Hackney
				Carol Ann Haines Mary Hammer
				Marie Hand Sherry Hardeman

				Ellen R. Hastings	Charlotte Hester
				Liz Hill	Trisha Hyde
				Marilyn Jedrey	Rennea A. Jensen-Brown
				Linda Jordon	Dorothy Kimbrough
				Tina Kirchoff	Wanda G. Knight
				Pauletta Koons	Lynn L. Laatsch
				Linda Lenken Orr	Lorene Martin
				Melveta Mason	Barbara McAdams
				Julia McBee	Joyce Menke
				Mary L. Mericle	Gale Nadeau
				Charlene Phipps	Ann C. Rascio
				Judy Schreiber	Shirley Thornberry
				Virginia Tinney	Heather Trapp
				Rosemary Truskowski	Carol A. Vinlove
				Wendy Walters	Courtney White
				Karen William	Sonja K. Wright
				Denise B. Yanus	

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Membership**

Recruit 3-Rene w 3	Recruiter Pin	Senior Auxiliary, Legion & SAL mbrs	Awarded to ALA, TAL or SAL member who recruits 3 or more new Seniors & renews 3 or more senior members; entry form due in NHQ by May 1, 2012				
<b>Awarded To:</b>							
	<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>Florida cont.</b>	<b>Iowa</b>	<b>Illinois cont</b>	<b>Michigan</b>	<b>Mississippi</b>	<b>New Mexico</b>
	Sherry Fortenberry	Ellen R. Hastings	Pam Clark	Agnes Smith	Roxanne Berg	Mary Jo Abraham	Fran Acre
	JoAnn McCollom	Diana Heilman	Norma Hawkins	Caroline Smith	Mary Boluyt	Mary Barrett	Virginia Ashley
	Rhonda Niemeier	Liz Hill	Frances Kruse	<b>Indiana</b>	Bevin Brock	Carolyn Bennett	Tammy Burns
	Barbara Rutledge	Marilyn Jedrey	Patricia Kyle	Sue Comerford	Cindy M. Gauthier	Andrea Bosarge	Geraldine Gallegos
	<b>Arizona</b>	Tina Kirchoff	Mary R. Luse	Brenda Hall	Evelyn Hull	Tracie A. Burnette	Leonor Jaramillo
	Kathy Falk	Lynn L. Laatsch	Jeanne Paustian	Shaanda Maze	Patricia Johnson	Rebecca Dufresne	Mary Lou Lopez
	Sherry Hardeman	Brenda Laraway	Lois Poppe	Linda Meister-Crowder	Kathy Kailunas	Stella Farnsley	Carmen McCleery
	Christa Pippett	Kathy Leonard	Arlene Wulf	Candace Napier	Eleen Tai	Eva Farrish Ford	Theresa Montoya
	Lee Thrombley	Shirley Love	<b>Idaho</b>	Barbara Parkhurst	Joyce M. Twining	Mattie Harris	Linda Nenno
	<b>California</b>	Rhonda Mansel	Cora J. Lockie	Janelle Sanneman	Linda Wallace	Amanda E. Havicek	Kathy Norton
	Kirsten Anderson	Debi McDaniel	<b>Illinois</b>	Betty Slagle	Karline Wood	Bonnie Howell	Donna Padilla
	Beverly Baldinger	Mary Jo Miller	Susan D. Bailey	Nancy J. Underwood	<b>Minnesota</b>	Zelma Jackson	Nancy Palladino
	Mina Carrasco	Billie Mills	Loretta Bair	Linda Wilson	Jodie Bitzer	Dorothy E. Jarrell	Rita Ransdell

Dorothy A. Castillo	Alice P. Odaffer	Freda Broadway	Patricia Zoch	Lou Ellen Christensen	Junie Laws	Frances J. Roberts
Deborah Driscoll	Carol A. Paulson	Shirley Campbell	<b>Kentucky</b>	Betty Enebreitson	Debra Martin	Joe Santillanes *TAL
Sheridan Greene	Michelle Poklinkowski	Sandi Clark	Nancy Brotherton	Marly's Jacobson	Shawn Morton	Myrtle Wenzel
Elizabeth Jones	Elizabeth Prodrick	Donna J. Cole	Barbara Corbitt	Carol Miller	Sheri Roebuck	<b>New York</b>
Amanda McLeod	Shirley Rhodey	Sue Cunniff Coughlin	Jackie Cote	Peggy Paulson	Nancy Sanders	Christine Brown
Julie M. Miller	Frances Santilli	Toni Fabbri	Lana Goley	Jeanette Rabe	Charlene Senter	Carole Bruggemann
Penny Minchella	Erna Schwabe	Donna J. Gogele	Helen E. Hall	Patricia Swanson	Hilda S. Taylor	Martha Davis
Janice Peticolas	Sharon E. Smith	Janice A. Gruber	Jerilynn Kabel	<b>Missouri</b>	Pamela Tucker	Mary Ann Davis
<b>Florida</b>	Virginia Sword	Valerie L. Harken	Patty Martinez	Dorothy J. Ballew	Patricia Whitney	Ann Marie Germain
Atumn Agens	Diana L. Van Effen	Rita Hess	Heather Trapp	Kathy Carew	Charlotte Williams	Cecelia Huther
Eleanor Amato	<b>Georgia</b>	Garnet Hibberd	<b>Louisiana</b>	Mary Coleman	<b>Nebraska</b>	Sally A. Johnston
Anneliese Anderson	Brenda Anderson	Eileen Hurst	Jacqueline Booker	Dolores Fliter	Rennea Jensen-Brown	Patricia Regan
Carolyn Bailey	Beatrice Carmona	Kay Ingram	Natalie Chevalier-Myers	Claudia Goodin	Patricia Polson	Charlotte Ricley
Phyllis Blanton	Debbie Condon	Wayne Irvin *TAL	Janet Lasseigne	Dorothy Goodin	Margaret Root	Barbara Riley
Sandra S. Burgess	Joan Holtzclaw	Marilyn Lambert	Barbara LeJeune	Linda Mitchell	Lorraine Stanfield	Arlene Shanno
Judy Carter	Anita Owens	Catherine E. Lance	Carolyn Mack	Marsha Mooney	Lisa Stevens	Lenore Thurber
Nancy Castro	Bernice Weaver	Mary Lang	Maxie Faye Monroe	Dawn Olsen	Barb Stuckwisch	Karen Williams

	Evelyn L. Congdon	Sandy Wittenmyer	Donna Locher	Margie Nelands	Joyce Richardet	Vera Wieman	
	Patricia I. Devine		Catherine M. McCormack	Bettye Pennywell	Emily Schevlen	<b>North Dakota</b>	
	Zella Durant		Joyce McDowell	Gail Reifsnider	Barbara Sheets	Freda Telken	
	Connie Ferreira		Rosemary Mulligan	Joanne Richard	Bonnie Sweeney		
	Danita Gainey		Phyllis Pierson	Mary Rothermel			
	Billie J. Groves		Mary K. Rowen	<b>Maine</b>			
	Janice Gulick		Norma Schalk	Marlene Angers			
	Marie Hand		Nancy Schwindenhammer	Jeri B. Greenwell			
	Linda Hart		Marcella Seagraves	Catherine Peters Gurney			
<b>Recruit 3-Rene w 3 cont.</b>							
	<b>Ohio</b>	<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>Texas</b>	<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>		
	Carolyn Borchertding	Mary Appell	Sharon Bates	Elaine Alvin	Leonore M. Percy		
	Nancy Brown	Betty Bradley	Barbara Bawolak	Marcia Forrester			
	LeeAnn Farnsworth	Myrtle Bryant	Shirley Burch	<b>Vermont</b>			
	Cheryl L. Gee	Linda Campbell	Karen Burks	Bonnie Lee Burke			

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Membership**

Rhonda Holeston	Wilda Gillespie	Judy Davidson	<b>Washington</b>		
Melissa Hooper	Gail Gilliam	Abbi Davidson-Everitt	Dixie Rohde		
Diane Johnson	Barbara Granada	Cindy Engstrom	<b>Wisconsin</b>		
Mary Ann Michael	Melinda Hackney	Sereita Giaketti	Tonya Alling		
Mary Murphy	Kathy Hargrove	Cathy Griffith	Berne Baer		
Donna R. Ray	Debbie Howell	Mary Hall	Lorrie Barber		
Marilyn Schmitz	Linda Latimer	Pat Hannah	Emma Chism		
Martha Setlock	Barbara McAdams	Cindy Hicks	Jane Dale		
<b>Oklahoma</b>	Julie McBee	Barbara L. Kelley	Joan M. Erickson		
Jance Carr	Edythe Owston	Diana Keough	Yvonne M. Hill		
Ruth Ann Turner	Geneva Pettit	Diana King	Gloria Hochstein		
Janet Vincent	Julia Pettus	Johnnie Lott	Bonnie Jakubczyk		
<b>Oregon</b>	Tom Shadwick *TAL	Gisela Marschall	Char Kiesling		
Eileen Berry	Constance Taylor	Marva McConnell	Marianne Lesko		
Jan Bryant		Sharon Nesteriak	Cheryl McNurlin		
Teresa Carson-Mastrude		Jeanie Northcutt	Mary Meaney		
Mary Lou Chewning		Virginia R. OnDov	Barbara Naffier		

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Membership**

	Sue Cotton		Judy Parker	Barbara Oswald			
	Paula Gibson		Kathy Patrick	Judy Pfalzgraf			
	Donna Hartwell		Mildred S. Peters	Linda Pfeiffer			
	Pam Seelye		Carol Powers *TAL	Mary Lee Pontzloff			
			Pat Rizos	Elaine Schickowski			
			Carla Shumake	Marcella Schmitz			
			Donna Simon	Linda Swangstu			
			John Straten *TAL	Nancy M. Swenson			
			Donnette Wilson	Mary Windor			
			Donita Winters	Lisa York			
			Denise B. Yanus				

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Dorothy Pearl Civil Preparedness (CERT) Award	Citation Plaque	Department	Awarded to the Department having the greatest percentage of units participating in Civil Preparedness	Department of Kentucky, Barbara Austin
Department National Security Program	Citation	A Department in the Central Division	Reported the best overall National Security Program Activities	Department of Wisconsin, Diana L. Sirovina
Department National Security Program	Citation	A Department in the Eastern Division	Reported the best overall National Security Program Activities	Department of New York, Julie McGill
Department National Security Program	Citation	A Department in the Northwestern Division	Reported the best overall National Security Program Activities	Department of Minnesota, Raleen Tolzmann
Department National Security Program	Citation	A Department in the Southern Division	Reported the best overall National Security Program Activities	Department of Virginia, Nancy Harting
Department National Security Program	Citation	A Department in the Western Division	Reported the best overall National Security Program Activities	Department of Washington, Jane Montaney
Military Support Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Central Division	Best overall program in support of our military with special emphasis on their quality of life.	K.T. Crossen Unit 21, Department of Ohio, Mona Shipley
Military Support Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Eastern Division	Best overall program in support of our military with special emphasis on their quality of life.	Oak Orchard/Riverdale Unit 28, Department of Delaware, Helen Skelton
Military Support Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Best overall program in support of our military with special emphasis on their quality of life.	Ole Semling Unit 139, Department of North Dakota, Judy Twete

Military Support Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Southern Division	Best overall program in support of our military with special emphasis on their quality of life.	Arlington Unit 139, Department of Virginia, Paula Kampanos
Military Support Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Western Division	Best overall program in support of our military with special emphasis on their quality of life.	Los Alamitos Unit 716, Department of California, Deborah Driscoll
Yellow Ribbon Program Unit Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Eastern Division	Best project incorporating yellow ribbons in support of military and military families.	Oak Orchard/Riverdale Unit 28, Department of Delaware, Helen Skelton
Yellow Ribbon Program Unit Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Best project incorporating yellow ribbons in support of military and military families.	Chaska Unit 57, Department of Minnesota, Karen Kath
Yellow Ribbon Program Unit Award	Citation	A Unit Chairman in the Southern Division	Best project incorporating yellow ribbons in support of military and military families.	Harold L. Gregory Memorial Unit 626, Department of Texas, Tina Hill

NAME OF AWARD	TYPE OF AWARD	ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP	CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING	AWARDED TO:
Unit Member of the Year	Plaque and recognition at National Convention	One member per department	<p>Must be a member of the American Legion Auxiliary. Must be nominated by a member because of significant contributions she has made to her unit. Must be selected by the National Past Presidents Parley Committee.</p>	<p>Carlotta Wagner, Alley-White Unit #52, Department of Arizona                      Donna FARRIER, Lawrence Riddle Unit #88, Department of Illinois                      Shirley Ohta, Floyds Knobs Unit #42, Department of Indiana                      Vicki Hulise, Department of Iowa                      Nancy Hayes, Dwight Lamson Unit #258, Department of Kansas                      Linda Drummond, Richie-Trent Unit #148, Department of Kentucky                      Rosie Sziszak, Tucker A. Gregoire Unit #258, Department of Louisiana                      Carolyn Ross, Cass Lake Unit #284, Department of Minnesota                      Ruth Schmitz, Unit #52, Department of Nebraska                      Sally Frizzell, Fredonwarell Unit #17, Department of New Hampshire                      Simona Collins, Unit #101, Department of New Jersey                      Linda Weisdofer, Roy Unit #33</p>

<p>Salute to Active Duty Service Woman</p>	<p>Plaque</p>	<p>Active duty service woman from each branch of service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard.</p>	<p>Nominated by American Legion Auxiliary Member, Completed entry form with narrative titled "Women's role in today's Armed Forces."</p>	<p>Sharon Williams, Merrick Unit #1282, Department of New York                  Betty Jo Young, Banner Unit #109, Department of North Carolina                  Mary Eita Richards, Marion Unit #179, Department of Ohio                  Donnetta Hockaday, Lowman Clark Unit #161, Department of Oklahoma                  Elsie Dieken, Piedmont Valley Unit #311,                  Department of South Dakota                  Jean Lundholm, Payson Unit #48, Department of Utah                  Julie Stuhlmeyer, Howard J. Schroeder Unit 457,                  Department of Wisconsin                  Audrey Ebsen, Roy                  Montgomery Unit #80,                  Department of Wyoming                  Kristie Starks, C.M. Joslin Unit #618, Department of Texas</p> <p><b>Army:</b> Chief Warrant Officer Natasha Wortman; <b>Marines:</b> Staff Sergeant Kieu Nga T. Gean; <b>Navy:</b> Lt. Commander Jennifer Thomas; <b>Air Force:</b> Brigadier General Dana H. Born.</p>
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<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Poppy Poster Contest Class I	Citation	A child in the Central Division in Grades 2 & 3	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Isaac Fleck, Indianapolis Unit #242
Poppy Poster Contest Class I	Citation	A child in the Eastern Division in Grades 2 & 3	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Morgan Taber Henry Mosher Unit 638 New York
Poppy Poster Contest Class I	Citation	A child in the Northwestern Division in Grades 2 & 3	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Dusty Volk, Dept of SD
Poppy Poster Contest Class I	Citation	A child in the Southern Division in Grades 2 & 3	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Julianna Deluane, Department of LA
Poppy Poster Contest Class I	Citation	A child in the Western Division in Grades 2 & 3	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Lizzy Lee, Sharon Pierson Unit 44
Poppy Poster Contest Class II	Citation	A child in the Central Division in Grades 4 & 5	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Cody Bredeweg, Zeeland MI Gilbert D. Karsten #33
Poppy Poster Contest Class II	Citation	A child in the Eastern Division in Grades 4 & 5	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Jadon Barron, New York

Poppy Poster Contest Class II	Citation	A child in the Northwestern Division in Grades 4 &5	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Mariah Brekke, Dept of ND Unit #133
Poppy Poster Contest Class II	Citation	A child in the Southern Division in Grades 4 & 5	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Marie Denham, Department of LA
Poppy Poster Contest Class II	Citation	A child in the Western Division in Grades 4 &5	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Fiorella Perez, Unit 98
Poppy Poster Contest Class III	Citation	A child in the Central Division in Grades 6 & 7	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Katya Krueger, De Pere, WI Chilton ALA #125
Poppy Poster Contest Class III	Citation	A child in the Eastern Division in Grades 6 & 7	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Colin Kloc Portville Unit 814 New York
Poppy Poster Contest Class III	Citation	A child in the Northwestern Division in Grades 6 &7	Judged by Department based on their criteria	no entry
Poppy Poster Contest Class III	Citation	A child in the Southern Division in Grades 6 & 7	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Elizabeth Denham, Department of LA
Poppy Poster Contest Class	Citation	A child in the Western	Judged by Department based	Amanda L. Britt,

III		Division in Grades 6 & 7	on their criteria	Unit 98
Poppy Poster Contest Class IV	Citation	A young adult in the Central Division in Grades 8 & 9	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Morgan Johnson, Wausau, WI Montgomery - Plant #10
Poppy Poster Contest Class IV	Citation	A young adult in the Eastern Division in Grades 8 & 9	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Shasta Sherwood Arthur S Moran Unit 66 New York
Poppy Poster Contest Class IV	Citation	A young adult in the Northwestern Division in Grades 8 & 9	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Justine Bye Dept of MT
Poppy Poster Contest Class IV	Citation	A young adult in the Southern Division in Grades 8 & 9	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Makayla Amonette, Department of Tennessee
Poppy Poster Contest Class IV	Citation	A young adult in the Western Division in Grades 8 & 9	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Danahe Garci, Unit 98
Poppy Poster Contest Class V	Citation	A young adult in the Central Division in Grades 10 -11	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Megan Robold, Wausaukee, WI Wausaukee Polomes- Tahlier ALA #150

Poppy Poster Contest Class V	Citation	A young adult in the Eastern Division in Grades 10 -11	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Brianna Marshall Arthur S Moran Unit 66 New York
Poppy Poster Contest Class V	Citation	A young adult in the Northwestern Division in Grades 10 -11	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Shannon Habel, Freeborn Unit 64, Dept of MT
Poppy Poster Contest Class V	Citation	A young adult in the Southern Division in Grades 10 - 11	Judged by Department based on their criteria	no entry
Poppy Poster Contest Class V	Citation	A young adult in the Western Division in Grades 10 -11	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Zoey Hupponen, Milwaukee Unit 180
Poppy Poster Contest Class VI	Citation	A young adult in the Central Division in Grade 12	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Ross Marvi, Kentwood, MI Caledonia ALA #305
Poppy Poster Contest Class VI	Citation	A young adult in the Eastern Division in Grade 12	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Melinda Drabant Arthur S Moran Unit 66 New York
Poppy Poster Contest Class VI	Citation	A young adult in the Northwestern Division in Grade 12		Holli Schmitz, Leo Brinda Unit 90 Dept of NE

Poppy Poster Contest Class VI	Citation	A young adult in the Southern Division in Grade 12	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Dajuaron Dale, Dept of Arkansas		
Poppy Poster Contest Class VI	Citation	A young adult in the Western Division in Grade 12	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Jennifer Williams, Unit 24		
Poppy Poster Contest Class VII	Citation	Student in Special Education/recommended in the Central Division	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Hassan Williams, Kentwood MINortheastern #459		
Poppy Poster Contest Class VII	Citation	Student in Special Education/recommended in the Eastern Division	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Cassidy Raut, Arthur S Moran Unit 66, New York		
Poppy Poster Contest Class VII	Citation	Student in Special Education/recommended in the Northwestern Division	Judged by Department based on their criteria	Emily Erickson, Winsted Unit 407 Dept of MN		
Poppy Poster Contest Class VII	Citation	Student in Special Education/recommended in the Southern Division	Judged by Department based on their criteria	no entry		
Poppy Poster Contest Class VII	Citation	Student in Special Education/recommended in the Western Division	Judged by Department based on their criteria	no entry		
Miss Poppy Ages 6-12	Citation Plaque	Must be between the ages of 6-12 and a Junior Member of the American Legion Auxiliary	Narrative not to exceed 100 words on the "Memorial Poppy." Submitted a Scrapbook containing photographs and clipping of how she promoted the Poppy program	Susan Ferris, Merle Guild Unit 208 Department of Illionis		
Miss Poppy Ages 13-18	Citation Plaque	Must be between the ages of 13-18 and a Junior Member of the American Legion	Narrative not to exceed 100 words on the "Memorial Poppy." Submitted a	Christina Mocsary, Tucker A. Gregorie Unit 258 Department of Louisiana		

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Poppy**

Unit Poppy Award	Poppy Gift	Auxiliary Central Division Unit Chairman	Scrapbook containing photographs and clipping of how she promoted the Poppy program Reported the best Poppy Program written in a narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.	Jodi Betts Ehrig-McTurk Unit 127, Department of Iowa
Unit Poppy Award	Poppy Gift	Eastern Division Unit Chairman	Reported the best Poppy Program written in a narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.	no entry
Unit Poppy Award	Poppy Gift	Northwestern Division Unit Chairman	Reported the best Poppy Program written in a narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.	Denise Wittmier, Melvin E. Bender Unit 265 Streeter, North Dakota
Unit Poppy Award	Poppy Gift	Southern Division Unit Chairman	Reported the best Poppy Program written in a narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.	Department of Tennessee, Donelson Unit #88
Unit Poppy Award	Poppy Gift	Western Division Unit Chairman	Reported the best Poppy Program written in a narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.	Jodi Green Matthew B. Jaun Unit 35, Arizona

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Unit Program Emphasis Award	Chairmen's Choice	A Unit Chairman in the Central Division	Created the three best media resources	Enid Struckhoff, Unit 218, Dept. of Missouri
Unit Program Emphasis Award	Chairmen's Choice	A Unit Chairman in the Eastern Division	Created the three best media resources	Dorothy Boozzone, Unit 153, Dept. of New Jersey
Unit Program Emphasis Award	Chairmen's Choice	A Unit Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Created the three best media resources	Darlene Theil, Unit 102, Dept. of Minnesota
Unit Program Emphasis Award	Chairmen's Choice	A Unit Chairman in the Southern Division	Created the three best media resources	Sherree Bertolasio, Unit 170, Dept. of Oklahoma
Unit Program Emphasis Award	Chairmen's Choice	A Unit Chairman in the Western Division	Created the three best media resources	Mary Lou Burke, Unit 110, Dept. of Oregon
Unit Website Award	Citation	Unit	Any unit that developed a website	No entries
Junior Public Relations Award	Chairmen's Choice	Junior group (department, district or unit)	Best published press or media coverage for a junior activity or project.	Raegan Junge, Keystone Unit 107, Dept. of Iowa
Public Relations Award	Citation	A Department Chairman in the Central Division	Most outstanding overall public relations program	Mary Petrie, Dept. of Wisconsin
Public Relations Award	Citation	A Department Chairman in the Eastern Division	Most outstanding overall public relations program	No entries
Public Relations Award	Citation	A Department Chairman in the Northwestern Division	Most outstanding overall public relations program	No entries
Public Relations Award	Citation	A Department Chairman in the Southern Division	Most outstanding overall public relations program	Nancy Brotherton, Dept. of Kentucky

Public Relations Award	Citation	A Department Chairman in the Western Division	Most outstanding overall public relations program	Judith Dillon, Dept. of Oregon
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Vera Gerner-Taylor, Washington Unit 218, Dept. of Missouri
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Mary Petrie, Dept of Wisconsin
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Eileen Doremus, Little River Unit 186, Dept of South Carolina
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Linda Smiley, North Augusta Unit 71, Dept. of South Carolina
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Cheryl Riggs, Lancaster Unit 31, Dept. of South Carolina
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Nancy Brotherton, Frankfort Unit 7, Dept of Kentucky
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Marie Eastman, St. Cloud Unit 80, Dept. of Florida
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Mary Jo Abrela, Glen Crosby Unit 165, Dept. of Mississippi
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Barbara Brooks, Chattahoochee Valley Unit 67, Dept. of Alabama
Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Margo McDonald, Haleyville

Innovative PR Activities	Citation	Unit	highlighted on National website	Unit 33, Dept. of Alabama
			Units best practices that get highlighted on National website	Sherree Bertolasio, Clarence L. Tinker, Midwest City Unit 170, Dept. of Oklahoma

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

<b>NAME OF AWARD</b>	<b>TYPE OF AWARD</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE PERSON or GROUP</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING</b>	<b>AWARDED TO:</b>
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Department Chairman	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Central Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of Wisconsin, Linda Kodi, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Department Chairman	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Eastern Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of New York, Diane Gerber, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Department Chairman	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Northwestern Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of Nebraska, Sharon Scott, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Department Chairman	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Southern Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of Texas, Christine Trahan, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Department Chairman	Citation Plaque	Department Chairman Western Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of California, Anita Biggs, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Unit Chairman	Citation Plaque	Unit Chairman Central Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of Ohio, Unit 597, Carol Kelly, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Unit Chairman	Citation Plaque	Unit Chairman Eastern Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Unit #71, Department of Connecticut, Ruth Morgan, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Unit Chairman	Citation Plaque	Unit Chairman Northwestern Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of North Dakota, Gilbery C. Grafton, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Unit Chairman	Citation Plaque	Unit Chairman Southern Division	Best overall program in VA&R	Department of Virginia, Unit 284, Barbara Willett, Chairman
Best Overall VA&R Program by a Unit Chairman	Citation Plaque	Unit Chairman Western Division	Best overall program in VA&R	TIE: Dept. of Arizona Unit 61, Mary Hays, Chairman; Dept. of California, Unit 496, Minda Carrasco, Chairman

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

VAVS Volunteer of the Year Award	\$500 Donation to VA Facility of winner's choice	A Regularly Scheduled VAVS Volunteer	Nomination through Department Chairman or Hospital Director. Be in an established VAVS assignment	Nancy Ellis, Department of Oklahoma, Unit #15 Ft. Gibson.
Volunteer Recruitment and Service Award	Citation Plaque	Department in the Central Division	Department with the largest increase of RS Volunteers and volunteer hours from April 1,2011-March 31-2012	Department of Missouri
Volunteer Recruitment and Service Award	Citation Plaque	Department in the Eastern Division	Department with the largest increase of RS Volunteers and volunteer hours from April 1,2011-March 31-2012	Department of Vermont
Volunteer Recruitment and Service Award	Citation Plaque	Department in the Northwestern Division	Department with the largest increase of RS Volunteers and volunteer hours from April 1,2011-March 31-2012	Department of Wyoming
Volunteer Recruitment and Service Award	Citation Plaque	Department in the Western Division	Department with the largest increase of RS Volunteers and volunteer hours from April 1,2011-March 31-2012	Department of California
Volunteer Recruitment and Service Award	Citation Plaque	Department in the Southern Division	Department with the largest increase of RS Volunteers and volunteer hours from April 1,2011-March 31-2012	TLE: Dept. of South Carolina and Dept. of Oklahoma
Field Service Volunteer Hours	Citation Plaque	Junior or Senior Field Service Volunteer - Central Division	Field Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	<b>Senior:</b> Cheryl Cox, Unit 317. <b>Department of Ohio/Junior:</b> Mikayla Homsemay, Unit 96, Department of Iowa
Field Service Volunteer Hours	Citation Plaque	Junior or Senior Field Service Volunteer - Eastern Division	Field Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours	No entries

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

				from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	
Field Service Volunteer Hours	Citation Plaque	Junior or Senior Field Service Volunteer - Northwestern Division	Field Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	Senior: Arlene Wilson, Unit 334, Department of Minnesota/No Junior entry submitted	
Field Service Volunteer Hours	Citation Plaque	Junior or Senior Field Service Volunteer - Southern Division	Field Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	Senior: Cindy K. Newton, Unit 47, Department of Louisiana/Junior: Shelbyynn Mott, Unit 47, Dept. of Louisiana	
Field Service Volunteer Hours	Citation Plaque	Junior or Senior Field Service Volunteer - Western Division	Field Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	No entries	
Home Service Volunteer Hours Award (Senior)	Citation Plaque	A Senior Home Service Volunteer in the Central Division	Home Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	Debra M. Krauter, Unit 128, Department of Ohio	
Home Service Volunteer Hours Award (Senior)	Citation Plaque	A Senior Home Service Volunteer in the Eastern Division	Home Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	No entries	
Home Service Volunteer Hours Award (Senior)	Citation Plaque	A Senior Home Service Volunteer in the Northwestern Division	Home Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	Annette Bray, Unit 435, Department of Minnesota	
Home Service Volunteer Hours Award (Senior)	Citation Plaque	A Senior Home Service Volunteer in the Southern Division	Home Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2009-March 31, 2010	Judy Sessums, Unit 321, Department of Florida	

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

Home Service Volunteer Hours Award (Senior)	Citation Plaque	A Senior Home Service Volunteer in the Western Division	Home Service Volunteer serving the greatest number of volunteer hours from April 1, 2010-March 31, 2011	Elaine Yates, Unit 19, Department of Arizona
10,000 Hour Volunteer Award	Citation \$100 donation to National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in winners name	Senior Volunteer	A Volunteer who has accrued 10,000 hours of volunteer service at a VA facility	<i>See Attached Sheet</i>
20,000 Hour Volunteer Award	Citation and \$200 Donation to National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in winner's name	Senior Volunteer	A Volunteer who has provided 20,000 hours of volunteer service to veterans.	<i>See Attached Sheet</i>
Veterans Creative Arts Festival Award	Bronze Award	Department	Departments who have contributed \$1,000-\$2,400 to the NVCAF from Sept. 1, 2011-July 31, 2012	Arkansas, Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Colorado, Massachusetts, North Dakota, South Dakota & South Carolina
Veterans Creative Arts Festival Award	Silver Award	Department	Departments who have contributed \$2,500-\$4,999 to the NVCAF from Sept. 1, 2011-July 31, 2012	Indiana, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, California, New York, Texas
Veterans Creative Arts Festival Award	Gold Award	Department	Departments who have contributed \$5,000-\$14,999 to the NVCAF from Sept. 1, 2011-July 31, 2012	Wisconsin, Ohio, Illinois, Maryland

**AWARDS LISTING: 2011-2012**

**Committee: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

Honoring Their Service Award	Citation Plaque	Unit Chairmen	Presented to the Unit that implements the Most Outstanding Event at any VAMC or VA facility	Ryan-Fuiten Unit #447, Department of Illinois, Phyllis Beccue, Chairman
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