



# **2024-2025 BOOK OF REPORTS**



***Sharon Phelps  
President 2024-2025  
ALA Department of Texas***

*HISTORY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS*

**2024 - 2025**

# Dedications



**Katherine J. Morris**  
**American Legion Auxiliary**  
**Department of Texas President 1987-1988**  
**National President 2003-2004**

We dedicate this years Book of Reports to the memory of **Katherine Jean Morris**, a beloved leader, mentor, and cherished member of our organization for 52 years.

Katherine's legacy is woven into the very fabric of our organization. She served with beauty, strength, and grace, leading not just with wisdom—but with heart. Her theme as Department President of Texas in **1986–1987**, “Hearts,” reflected the way she lived: open, generous, and full of compassion. Later, as **National President of the American Legion Auxiliary in 2003–2004**, she carried that same spirit to a national stage, continuing to inspire and uplift all those around her.

To many, Katherine was more than a leader—she was a guiding light. Her mentorship and presence touched lives across generations. Whether serving with distinction in leadership or offering a warm dinner and conversation to a young speech competitor, she made people feel seen, valued, and supported.

Her quiet dignity, unwavering dedication, and boundless kindness are remembered with deep gratitude. Though she is no longer with us in person, her spirit continues to inspire our work, our mission, and our hearts. With love and remembrance, we honor Katherine Morris—whose heart led the way. Katherine passed away August 11, 2024.



**Mickie Prendergast  
American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Texas President 2008-2009**

Ruth Marceline “Mickie” Prendergrast, known to her loved ones as Mickie, Mom, Grammie, or Meme was born on May 23, 1940 and raised in Syracuse, New York.

Mickie was a devoted member of the American Legion Auxiliary, a passionate advocate for our veterans, youth, Girls State and education. Mickie enjoyed being a chaperone for the DFW Girls State bus. Mickie is leaving behind a legacy of leadership, dedication and patriotism.

Mickie served her unit, the 5<sup>th</sup> District and Division 1 in all leadership positions. Serving the Department of Texas as President 2008-2009.

Mickie was an avid supporter of Salon 108 of the Eight & Forty. Serving as Chapeau for Salon 108 and as Departmental de Texas as Chapeau. Further demonstrating her unwavering commitment to Service Not Self.

For three decades, Mickie served as the Volunteer Coordinator for the DFW National Cemetery, where her leadership and dedication touched the lives of countless veterans and their families.

Mickie was a mentor, a friend, and a champion of the ideals the American Legion holds dear. Her dedication, energy and integrity left an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of serving alongside her.

Mickie passed away on April 7, 2025 and will be deeply missed, but her legacy of service, leadership, and love for country lives on in the countless lives she touched.

## *FORWARD*

President Sharon Phelps was elected at the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas 105<sup>th</sup> Convention on July 16, 2024. Her theme was Advocating for Change, One Veteran at a Time and Transforming Lives Through Membership. The organization she has chosen to focus on as her special project concerning PTSD is, Camp Hope, where they focus on peer-to-peer counseling for our veterans and first responders with PTSD.

The dedication and support of President Sharon Phelps to this chosen special project and all our programs, are reflected in the histories told in this Book - with countless volunteer hours and more innovative ways to support – Advocating for Change, One Veteran at a Time and Transforming Lives Through Membership.

We told our histories in this Book, showing our passion for our programs, reinforcing our commitment to Service, Not Self.

We became history itself by writing this book as we continue to be a part of the making of the History of the Department of Texas and the ALA.

*To all who have contributed to our Texas History and for continuing to preserve it, on a Unit, District, Division and Department level for many to read in years to come –*

*This Book is humbly presented with heartfelt thanks and appreciation for all you do.*

*Sharon Phelps  
President  
Department of Texas*



*2024 - 2025*

## *PRAYER*

Lord, as we come to the close of our American Legion Auxiliary year of 2024-2025, may we cherish our achievements and seek inspiration to aspire past our limitations.

May we remember our members who went home to be with You this past year and may we hold fast to their memories and be thankful for our members left behind to continue our mission.

May our passion for the American Legion Auxiliary shine through our belief in our mission statement.

May we become one in our efforts to improve the lives of our veterans, military, their families and our communities.

Thank You for our servicemen and women. Please protect and watch over them as they protect us and our families.

Impart to us a heartfelt commitment to service, not self.

Amen

*PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE*

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



*STAR-SPANGLED BANNER*

Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light  
What so proudly we hailed, at the twilight's last gleaming?  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thru' the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air  
Gave proof through 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?



## **PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

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 one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all 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 goodwill 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.

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## **ELECTED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS**

President .....Sharon Phelps  
Vice President.....Leigh-Ann Stewart  
Secretary..... Tiffany Troxclair  
Treasurer ..... Robin Alva  
Chaplain .....M’Lisa Nieman  
Historian ..... Sharon Shumate  
Sergeant-at-Arms .....Lupe Barrera  
National Executive Committee Woman..... Shay Kuehner

## **APPOINTED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS**

Chairman of Pages .....Mary Tatman  
Parliamentarian ..... Teresa Copeland

## **DIVISION PRESIDENTS**

Division 1 .....Myrtle Johnson  
Division 2 ..... Licia Kim  
Division 3..... Denise Yanus  
Division 4..... Nancy Webb

## **DISTRICT PRESIDENTS AND VICE PRESIDENTS**

District 1.....President Stephanie Herrera  
.....Vice President Glenda Barton  
District 2 .....President Bonnie Fraley  
.....Vice President Rose King  
District 3..... President Debra Christian  
.....Vice President Nancy Beavers  
District 4..... President Susan Frizell  
..... Vice President Lee Chamberlain  
District 5..... President Lisette Johnson  
..... Vice President Kimberly Wheeler-Smith  
District 6..... President Billie Day  
..... Vice President Courtney Hayes  
District 7 ..... President Beverly Sloan  
.....Vice President Mary Sanchez  
District 8 .....President Anna Franco Ruiz  
..... Vice President Sylvia Corpus

District 9 ..... President Valerie Coldwell  
..... Vice President Wendy Reiter  
District 10 ..... President Randi Weeks  
District 11....., President Susie Johnson  
..... Vice President Melissa Carlson  
District 12..... President Michelle Birkett  
..... Vice President Tonia Ison  
District 13..... President DeShayna Custard  
..... Vice President Mickey Nortman  
District 14 ..... President Patti Shows  
District 15 .....President Connie Thomas  
..... Vice President Elizabeth Tamayo  
District 16 ..... President Jane Bennett  
..... Vice President Jean Bennett  
District 17 ..... President Nancy Cobb  
..... Vice President Letitia Smith  
District 18 ..... President Dorothy Barfoot  
..... Vice President Katie Pemberton  
District 19 .....President Irene Szwarc  
..... Vice President Rachel Araujo  
District 20 ..... President Carol Evans  
..... Vice President Karen Ramaley  
District 21..... President Hilda Kruml  
..... Vice President Gerda Weathers  
District 22..... President Maria Holmes  
..... Vice President Diane Aguilar

### **HONORARY JUNIOR OFFICERS**

President ..... Lauren Ballay  
Vice President ..... Amber Bolton  
Secretary ..... Karli Trahan  
Treasurer .....Brealey Nieto  
Chaplain ..... Brianna Widener  
Historian .....Mariah Robinson  
Sergeant-at-Arms .....SoLee DuBowik  
Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms ..... Makenzie King

### **Membership Committee:**

Division 1.....Charlotte Ellis  
Division 2..... Brianna Torres  
Division 3..... Morgan Coldwell  
Division 4.....Michaela King

## **ACTIVITY AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

Americanism.....	Kimberly Wheeler
Auxiliary Emergency Fund.....	Candy Zavala
Cancer Research .....	Ann Pugliano
Children & Youth.....	Linda Dorsett
Community Service.....	Joan Crider
Constitution & Bylaws .....	Rosie Cherry
Distinguished Guest Chairman.....	Vickie Pollard
Education.....	Linda Malsbary
Finance.....	Christine Trahan
Girls State .....	Ann Doan
Junior Activities .....	Nicole Ebner
Leadership .....	Holly Heatly
Legislative .....	Candace Wicks
Membership .....	Shay Kuehner
National Security.....	Marty Peters
Past President's Parley.....	Teresa Copland
Poppy .....	Janey Arista
President's Personal Page.....	Jean Bennett
Public Relations.....	Misty Jeffcoat
Scrapbook.....	Beverly Sloan
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation .....	MaryAnn Paul
Ways & Means .....	Cathy Perry
Webpage .....	Teresa Copeland

## **NATIONAL OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS 2024-2025**

Christine Trahan .....	Americanism Chair
Marty Peters .....	Community Service Vice Chair
Teresa Copeland .....	Southern Division Membership Chair
MaryAnn Paul .....	Southern Division Poppy Chair
Paula Raney .....	Risk and Compliance Committee Member

## **PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENTS**

1974 – 1975 .....	Ione Kubby (D)
1993 – 1994 .....	Helen Holcomb (D)
2003 – 2004 .....	Katherine Morris (D)
2010 – 2011.....	Carlene Ashworth



## **PAST SOUTHERN DIVISION NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS**

1981 – 1982..... Myra Hester (D)  
1995 – 1996..... Mary Lahaie (D)  
2009 – 2010 ..... Lynda Horton-Turk  
2023 – 2024 .....Christine Trahan

## **VA MEDICAL CENTERS AND OUTPATIENT CLINICS REPRESENTATIVES AND DEPUTIES**

Amarillo VA Medical Center ..... Mary Jane Harper – Dep  
Beaumont Outpatient Clinic..... Mary Tatman – Rep  
..... Elaine Hull – Dep  
Big Springs VA Medical Center..... Shawna Dunlap - Rep  
Bonham..... Jo Ann Crawford - Rep  
Dallas VA Medical Center..... Theresa Hill - Rep  
..... Evelyn Lopez – Dep  
El Paso Outpatient Clinic..... Velois Vaughn – Rep  
Fort Worth Outpatient Clinic..... Betty Heedley – Rep  
Fort Worth Outpatient Clinic ..... Kathy Richeson - Dep  
Houston VA Medical Center ..... JoAnn Crawford – Rep  
Kerrville VA Medical Center..... Nancy Webb – Rep  
Longview Outpatient Clinic ..... Nancy Beavers - Rep  
Lufkin VA Medical Center/Clinic ..... Theresa Sabin – Rep  
.....Maryanne Theriot – Dep  
McAllen Outpatient Clinic..... Trish Harris – Rep  
McAllen Outpatient Clinic .....Theresa Varner - Dep  
San Antonio VA Medical Center..... Rosa Vasquez – Rep  
..... Jeanette Smith – Dep  
Temple VA Medical Center..... Nora Dahl – Rep  
.....Jo Ann Crawford – Dep  
..... Karen Stewart – Dep  
Waco VA Medical Center..... Mary Hueske – Rep  
..... Ruth Beers– Dep  
..... Tone Mahon–Dep



*Irish Ward*  
*2024-2025 National President*



*A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families*

Greetings, Fellow American Legion Auxiliary Members:

It's hard to believe department convention time is already here! This is always such an exciting point in the year for our members. We have had a great 2024-2025 American Legion Auxiliary administrative year so far by "Leading the Way" as we invest back into our units.

It has been an honor visiting so many of our ALA departments across the country, sharing with and educating members about the Department Excellence Initiative, a primary goal and focus for this ALA year. I have truly enjoyed delivering content to units and departments to help our members have a greater awareness, knowledge, and understanding on how they can positively impact this organization at the grassroots level.

During each visit, the conversation has been engaging, many great questions have been asked, and I enjoyed seeing the spark in members focused on growing membership and improving our organization even more from the ground up.

I look forward to seeing how many departments will be recognized at National Convention for the Department Merit Medallion as part of the Department Excellence Initiative.

I hope your department convention is productive as you conduct official Auxiliary business and you continue to focus on our importance as a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families. Remember: Together, we are stronger and can have a greater impact on those we serve.

Thank you for your continued membership and commitment to the American Legion Auxiliary and our mission! Have a great department convention!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trish Ward". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Trish Ward  
2024-2025 National President



*DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT*  
*Sharon Phelps*

It all began in Austin, Texas, on a bright summer day—July 14, 2024—when Sharon D. Phelps was duly elected the 104th President of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Texas. The joy, humility, and honor she felt standing before the convention body marked the first moment of a yearlong journey of service, advocacy, and connection. Her promise was simple but powerful: to honor the trust placed in her by giving nothing but her very best.

With 25 years of faithful service to the American Legion Auxiliary at Austin Reed Unit 84 in Madisonville, Texas, Sharon brought not only experience but also heart. Inspired by her father's service in the U.S. Air Force, she dedicated her year to "Advocating for Change... One Veteran at a Time." Her special project, PTSD Camp Hope in Houston, served as a beacon of that mission. A haven for healing and support, Camp Hope provides no-cost housing, counseling, and mentorship for veterans and their families, addressing a deeply personal and national need. And then, like a butterfly beginning its flight, her travels began...

Sharon's first official appearance came at the American Legion Baseball Tournament in League City, where she was honored to throw out the ceremonial first pitch. A celebratory dinner at Post 554 followed, where she brought greetings on behalf of the Department of Texas and congratulated the talented teams in the playoffs. This beloved tradition marked the beginning of her travels as President.

Upon returning from a weekend of budget planning at the beginning of August, Sharon was touched by an unexpected celebration organized by her Legion Family—complete with shrimp Alfredo, salad, cake, crown, and sash. For one night, she was Queen Sharon, wrapped in love and appreciation. The laughter, hugs, and surprise reflected the heart of the Auxiliary. Like butterflies drawn to warmth, members came together to lift her up and celebrate the spirit of unity and transformation that she brought to every encounter.

In mid-August, Sharon attended the celebration of life for Past Department and National President Katherine Morris. It was a heartfelt moment honoring a leader whose legacy continues to flutter through the lives she touched—much like the enduring path of a butterfly in flight.



In late August, Sharon proudly represented Texas at the National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary in New Orleans. Walking the convention halls, attending national sessions, and exchanging ideas with leaders from every state, she carried the spirit and strength of Texas with her. The experience not only reaffirmed her commitment to the mission of the Auxiliary but also deepened her perspective on the unity and diversity of service across the nation.

At the 13th Annual Spirit of '45 event in League City in early September, Sharon joined in honoring WWII veterans. Mr. Buck, a 100-year-old veteran, delighted the crowd with stories, music, and dance. He and his wife embodied the joy and resilience that mark a life of service—reminding all present that the spirit of patriotism can still dance, sing, and soar like butterflies on a breeze.

During the Fall DEC meeting in late September, budgets were approved, and a "Kaleidoscope of Color" Program Fair launched the year's plans. True to its name, this colorful kickoff reminded us of a butterfly's wings—diverse, vibrant, and beautifully united in purpose.

In early October, Sharon made it to Unit 817 in Beaumont for a leadership class with Past Department President and her Parliamentarian Teresa Copeland, that ended with warm smiles and late-night waffles. Her determination to lead, even when the skies rerouted her plans, echoed the butterfly's unyielding journey toward the light.

At Camilla on the edge of Lake Livingston, Sharon joined the 1st Annual District 7 picnic—a day full of fried chicken, laughter, and a gentle breeze across the water. George, her ever-steady companion, sat peacefully overlooking the lake. It was a perfect moment of stillness and reflection—like watching butterflies float across a sunlit field.

At the 2nd District Convention, Sharon reconnected with old friends and made new ones. It was a reminder that the Auxiliary's impact stretches far beyond meetings and events—it's in every hug, every word, every flutter of kindness.

Just before Thanksgiving, braving the cold, Sharon helped distribute water and fruit during a 5K walk for PTSD awareness. The event, hosted by Unit 33, supported her special project—Camp Hope. As veterans and supporters walked the course, it symbolized progress through resilience, much like the butterfly emerging stronger from the cocoon.



In Killeen, Sharon assisted in distributing 500 bags of Thanksgiving meal fixings to military families. The highlight wasn't just the turkey—it was the teamwork, the smiles, and a special visit from Walker Bush, grandson of President George H. W. Bush. The day was filled with gratitude and grace, a tribute to what can bloom when hearts unite.

December saw many VA Christmas Stores return for the first time since COVID. At VA facilities in Temple, Waco and Dallas, Sharon helped bring holiday cheer. In Waco, Madisonville's Unit 84 donated 75 backpacks and 36 handmade pillows stitched by a 93-year-old woman for female veterans. One pillow featured a butterfly, and it brought tears of joy to the recipient. These were the moments that mattered—small tokens with wings of compassion.

Sharon supported the Operation Comfort Warriors program, which provides nonessential recovery items for wounded veterans. These often-unseen needs are like the silent beauty of a butterfly's wing—unnoticed by most, but transformative to the one who receives it. Despite the rain, over 125 gathered to honor fallen heroes with wreaths in Lufkin on December 14th. Sharon, the guest speaker, received a gift basket adorned with a purple hummingbird feeder and butterfly-themed items. It was a symbol of hope and remembrance—graceful, lasting, and meaningful.

At Mid-Winter in January, Sharon received powerful training and contributed to the Americanism video project, "You're a Grand Old Flag." Shortly after, she faced a medical procedure that paused her travels, but not her spirit. She extended deep thanks to Past Department President Holly Heatly for stepping in for her at the State Oratorical Competition — a reminder that even when the butterfly rests, others continue the flight.

Dozens gathered to roast and honor Sharon at her homecoming in Madisonville at the beginning of December. Surrounded by joy and stories, she was reminded that transformation is best celebrated in the presence of those who walked the journey with you.

As Distinguished Guest Speaker at the 19<sup>th</sup> District Convention in mid-March, Sharon witnessed a well-run convention and enjoyed a homemade lunch among friends. Leadership was passed on, memories made, and like butterflies, friendships fluttered to new places.



The middle of April meant a special trip to Brenham where Sharon delivered an inspiring talk and shared ice cream sundaes with members. She and her husband George were made to feel at home—a sentiment that follows her wherever she travels.

Sharon attended all four Division Conventions, continuing to spread her message, encourage members, and celebrate their efforts. Each stop was another wingbeat in a year of steady, heartfelt flight.

As Sharon's term as Department President draws to a close, her journey reflects a metamorphosis—one marked by service, compassion, and a deep-rooted commitment to our veterans and their families. Like the butterfly, a symbol of transformation and quiet strength, Sharon has touched lives in delicate yet powerful ways across the state of Texas. Her leadership was gentle but powerful—an emblem of resilience, beauty, and quiet strength.

Her theme, “Advocating for Change... One Veteran at a Time,” resonated not only through her actions but also in the hearts of those she inspired. Every stop she made, every hand she shook, and every speech she delivered planted seeds of encouragement that will continue to bloom long after her presidency.

In the Auxiliary, as in nature, growth requires care, time, and courage—and Sharon brought all three to her leadership. Her travels were more than events; they were moments of connection, renewal, and transformation—reminding us that even the smallest acts of service can create a ripple effect of change. She has left behind more than memories—she leaves behind a trail of purpose, like butterfly wings brushing gently across the faces of those she served. And just as a butterfly never sees its own beauty but is admired by all who witness it, Sharon's grace in leadership has uplifted others and made the Department of Texas stronger, more vibrant, and full of life.

We thank her for the incredible year of dedication, for advocating boldly and serving humbly—and like the butterfly, for reminding us that through change, we all have the power to soar.







*DEPARTMENT VICE - PRESIDENT*  
*Leigh-Ann Stewart*

Leigh-Anne would like to thank all of the members of the Department of Texas for their wonderful hospitality and support this past year during her term of Vice President.

While working closely with the finance committee, she was able to attend several unit and district meetings, as well as many district and division conventions. She also attended the Fall Department Executive Committee Meeting, Mid-Winter Conference and the Department Convention.

She was also in attendance at this year's American Legion Auxiliary Fellowship Awards Luncheon for the winners of the cancer research scholarships. "I was amazed by the leading-edge research these scholarship winners are doing to make life-changing solutions," she said. Later she was able to speak with some of the scholars again at Unit 521's Cancer Research Banquet.

Leigh-Anne was also very excited to attend the Department Leadership National Convention in Indianapolis this spring. She explained that while there is a lot of information given to you in a short time, that the event was exhilarating and she came back with lots of ideas to implement and share. "It was also a great opportunity to meet other incoming presidents from around the nation and hear their ideas and issues," she said. "I have definitely made many new friends, and we continue to share with each other and had vowed to keep in touch next year."

She has thoroughly enjoyed working alongside President Sharon Phelps this past year and says she has benefitted from Sharon's wisdom of and dedication to the organization.





*DEPARTMENT SECRETARY*  
*Tiffany Troxclair*

Tiffany Troxclair was elected to the position of Department Secretary at the July 2024 Department Convention. She hit the ground running to prepare for the National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana. She continued to perform the duties of Secretary throughout the year learning as she went.

Tiffany has continued working to create a remote office out of her home to continue the day-to-day operations of the Department with as little disruption as possible. While this was not an easy task Tiffany accepted the challenge and met it to the best of her abilities.

Throughout her year she has recorded all proceedings of the Department organization and the Department Executive Committee meetings, conducted official correspondence and kept all records for the Department. She also performed such other duties as required.

Tiffany, worked closely with the DEC, Finance Committee, Activity Chairman, VA Reps., and Madam President Sharon. Tiffany distributed vital information that required votes and responses. Tiffany aids Units with membership, Article of Incorporation, and any other needs they may need. Tiffany works closely with new Units to make sure they have all the needs they need to get their Unit organized.

Tiffany travels back and forth from Little Elm to Austin to get much needed information to make sure headquarters runs properly. Tiffany is moving our organization to the 21st century.



*DEPARTMENT TREASURER*  
*Robin Alva*

Robin Alva wore several hats during 2024-2025. She served The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas as treasurer and bookkeeper. At her home post in Converse, she served as unit president, ensuring that Unit 593 achieved the goals it set for the year. As First Lady of the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Texas she spent time traveling across Texas with her husband, performing her duties with dignity and grace. In her professional career, as an accountant, Robin was recently promoted to a manager position with greater challenges, responsibility, and authority. Despite the demands on her professional and personal time, she always managed to keep the needs of the Auxiliary in her thoughts and on her list of priorities.

Robin's extensive and practical knowledge of bookkeeping and accounting practices and her determination to accomplish tasks have had a beneficial impact on the Department. She attended conventions, DEC's and workshops. She worked closely with President Sharon, Vice-President LeAnn, Christine, Tiffany, and the finance committee to maintain a balanced budget and to ensure all payments went out in a timely manner. She was always available to answer questions and assist when needed. She was not ever hesitant to ask questions and increase her knowledge.

Robin enjoys utilizing her education and experience in accounting to help veterans who have given so much for our freedom and wholeheartedly believes that The American Legion Auxiliary is a wonderful organization that she is proud to be a part of.



*NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
WOMAN  
Shay Kuehner*

As the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final year of Shay Kuehner's term as the National Executive Committee Woman comes to a close, she is very thankful for this opportunity to serve the American Legion Auxiliary at this level. Through this role she has participated in the decision-making process regarding Department issues or concerns brought to the NEC; a role that cannot be taken lightly as the outcomes are vital to the success of each member, Department, and the National organization. To that extent, things were a little quiet the first two years but she certainly feels that she is leaving this office with a wealth of knowledge after year three, and new leadership information that will benefit the Department of Texas as they go forward into another 100 years of service.

Participating in several regularly scheduled Zoom meetings and a few specially-called Executive Sessions chaired by National President Trish Ward, this year was a little busier than the previous two! These meetings are strictly confidential in nature and afford an up-close view of how the National leadership works, what issues the Departments are facing, and valuable insight into the process of fair and equitable due process for all. It is rewarding to be able to play a small part in that process.

Shay attended the National Convention in New Orleans and enjoyed the city very much. The National Convention schedule has plenty of down time to explore your surroundings and no time was wasted in taking in the sights and history of this amazing city. Of course, there was work to be done and the Department of Texas was well represented and ready to take home all the information shared and learned. The National Convention is always an amazing opportunity to meet ALA members from across the country – sharing ideas, learning, and making lifelong friends. The National Convention is an amazing opportunity that Shay encourages all members to experience.

In looking back, Shay says that the last 3 years have been amazing – hard work, amazing opportunities, rewarding outcomes, and new friends! A highlight was sharing a national role during her 2<sup>nd</sup> year with her friend and mentor Christine Trahan who was elected National Southern Division Vice President 23-24. What an honor it was for the Department of Texas to have such a highly-respected member in that capacity, and Shay was exceptionally honored to share a small part of that experience with such a special friend.

The 2025 National Convention will be held in Tampa this year and Shay looks forward to bringing her term to a close by representing the great state of Texas and all its amazing members. She encourages each member to reach out to leadership when you have questions or need assistance – we are family and though we may have our occasional squabbles, we all make up the village that it takes to continue our service to veterans, military families, children & youth, and our communities. he is appreciative of this opportunity and looks forward to continuous service in the ALA with pride.



*PARLIAMENTARIAN*  
*Teresa Copeland*

Teresa Copeland was appointed parliamentarian by Department President Sharon Phelps. Parliamentary procedure has always been a hobby of Teresa's, so she was quite honored to be asked to serve in that capacity. Teresa holds a special fondness for Parliamentary Procedure because its goal is to give everyone an equal voice. From a new member to the highest office, everyone has the same right to bring forward motions, debate, amend and most importantly, vote on action that is important to them. One Member, one vote.

Teresa has always believed that a parliamentarian is an integral part of the leadership team, in particular, their job is to make sure that the President or presiding officer is not only following proper procedure, but also sharing the most correct and up to date information with our members.

To say that the 2024-2025 year started off with a bang, would be an understatement. There were multiple units and members that had questions about parliamentary procedure, governing documents and the process of correcting old and incorrect habits in a unit and amongst members.

Teresa was pleasantly surprised to find out just how much members were eager to learn and she was eager to share knowledge and learn right along with them.

She stayed very involved assisting Madame President and others with official letters, parliamentarian enquiries and she even attended several conventions to talk and teach about proper procedure.

Teresa wholehearted believes that if you aren't going to follow the rules, then change them.... properly of course. Being seen and not heard is an old expression describing what a parliamentarian should be, and while it is true that parliamentarians should not interrupt with their opinion, Teresa believes that "Leading by example" and "teachable moments" are a cornerstone of leadership. Following proper procedure makes the business meetings go much smoother when everyone has a basic understanding of the correct way to proceed prior to their business sessions and not after the fact. This is why she believes that continuous training in procedure is crucial on all levels.

Teresa thoroughly enjoyed her year as Parliamentarian and hopes that more members will learn more about the procedures and consider taking on what she considers, an important role.



*FIRST DIVISION*  
*Myrtle Johnson - President*

Myrtle Johnson was elected to the office of Department of Texas American Legion Auxiliary Division 1 President at the Division Convention, June 8, 2024, Love Field Post 453 in Dallas, and was installed as President at the Department Convention in Austin on July 24, 2024.

Some of the activities Myrtle attended and participated in during her tenure are listed below:

07/21/24 - ALA Breakfast Post 626 Ft Worth  
07/28/24 - ALA Officers' Installation Post 275 Dallas  
08/10/24 - ALA School Supply Drive Post 511 Dallas  
08/11/24 - ALA 5<sup>th</sup> District Meeting Post 504 Mesquite  
08/15/24 - ALA National Community Service Zoom Call  
09/11/24 - ALA 5<sup>th</sup> District Fall Convention Post 81 Duncanville  
09/19/24-09/22/24 - ALA DEC Meeting Austin  
10/06/24 - ALA Cancer Fundraiser Post 379 Euless Bedford Hurst  
10/19/24 - ALA 12<sup>TH</sup> District Fall Convention Post 655 Haltom City  
11/19/24 - ALA Division 1 Zoom Meeting  
12/08/24 - ALA 5<sup>TH</sup> District Meeting Post 81 Duncanville  
02/22/25 - ALA 4<sup>TH</sup> District Convention Richardson  
03/01/25 - Madam President Sharon Phelps' homecoming Madisonville

03/15/25 - 3<sup>RD</sup> District Convention Tyler  
03/19/25 - VA Bingo Night Dallas VA Hospital  
04/06/25 - VA Patients Day Out Post 424 Dallas  
04/12/25 - ALA 5<sup>TH</sup> District Spring Convention Post 81 Duncanville  
04/16/25 - VA Bingo Night Dallas VA Hospital  
05/21/25 - VA Bingo Night Dallas VA Hospital  
05/24/25 - Laying of the American Flags at Calvary Hills Cemetery Dallas  
05/26/25 - Memorial Day Celebration ALA Unit 424 Dallas

There were other invites, but due to scheduling conflicts she was not able to attend. At DEC in Austin, Commander Kim McCarthy, Post 12 Tyler informed Division 1 President Myrtle that some ladies were interested in reviving ALA Unit 418 in Troup. President Myrtle contacted 3<sup>rd</sup> District President Debra Christian who followed up with the ladies and the rest is history. President Myrtle had the honor of attending the 3rd District's Spring Convention where ALA Unit 418 Troup had been revitalized and the Unit officers were installed by Department Secretary Tiffany Troxclair. The Unit came in with a whopping 32 members on the roster. There are a total of 6 Districts and 56 Units in Division 1. The services and support provided to our Veterans and Military families are TREMENDOUS. The members of Division 1 are very cooperative and supportive of the programs of the Department of Texas.

A shout out to Division 1, you are **TRULY #1. Leading Texas in MEMBERSHIP!!!** Division 1 President Myrtle Johnson would like to say **THANK YOU** to all Division 1 members for making this year (**I will toot our horn**) a success.



*DISTRICT 1*  
*Stephanie Herrera - President*

Units of the 1<sup>st</sup> District after returning from the Department Convention were ready to begin a new administrative year. With school starting, supplies for the kids became a priority. Local schools benefitted from donations of the Auxiliary Units throughout the District.

Bottled water was collected and delivered to First Responders of the District. Fire and Police were surprised and happy to be the recipients.

With Breast Cancer Awareness in October Units were proud to do a "Decorate the Bra" contest to raise not only awareness but to raise money to be sent to the Cancer

Research, A Texas only program. Parties, Dance contests and fun and games were used by members to gather in the dollars to be sent to MD Anderson Research Grant Program. District Units made cash donations to this program in memory of their members who were taken from us by this horrible disease.

Turkey dinners were prepared around the district for those members without family or a place to visit. Units were exceptionally good about providing a special gift for the oldest member of each branch of the service in attendance. Funny how our veterans are ready to shout their age when it means a prize.

Local food pantries were re-stocked across the district with units doing multiple food drives and one Unit gathering can goods and preparing for a wedding of the Post Commander.

Christmas is always a special time of year for all. Units across the District purchased toys and clothing for children with emphasis on kids in foster care. Members throughout the district became "Santa's Helpers" passing out candy canes, toys, and treats to children. Some received new clothing and shoes. Halloween is another fun time for Units to entertain children by hosting parties and haunted houses. A lot of candy was used to fill those bags.

A speaker at a District Meeting spoke about visiting Veterans who were in hospice in person or on the telephone. A brief visit means so much to that Veteran.

With fall just around the corner, Units began doing coat drives to assist and provide a little warmth for families in need. Some fortunate families in the district benefited from the Legionnaires doing home repairs following severe storms and a tornado.

Spring is arriving and the kids' baseball games are beginning. One Unit raised funds to purchase baseball team uniforms. Easter eggs were stuffed for the Community Easter Egg Hunts in Communities around the District. Some Posts and Units participated in Flag Raising Ceremonies at local cemeteries.

As the administrative year closes, District 1 members are already planning for the New Year.



*DISTRICT 3*  
*Debra Christian - President*

Her other units also participated in other events, such as Silent Auctions. It is a privilege and honor to share some exciting reflections on Debra Christian's journey with the American Legion Auxiliary. As the District 3 President, she expresses gratitude for the incredible support and inspiration which has been pivotal to its collective success. When she assumed that role, she was motivated by a vision to strengthen the community and foster a spirit of unity and healthy competition among the units.

Mentors and fellow members supported her in taking a brave step forward, volunteering to supervise a community project. It was during this role that a metamorphosis was completed. She emerged confident, empowered, and ready to embrace new challenges. The project's success fortified her resolve, illustrating how the culmination of small actions and mentorship could lead to profound personal evolution.

This journey was rewarding and prepared her for the next chapter of life—serving as Chaplain of Unit 12. As she transitioned into this role, she was eager to continue building on the foundation that had been laid. She committed to fostering an



environment that values tradition, embraces innovation, and nurtures each member's potential. Members, family, and mentors have been instrumental in the unit's achievements. Their dedication and resilience have inspired Debra every step of the way.

Debra's first year as District 3 President came her at one of the lowest points of her life. She lost the greatest gift of her entire life, her mother. But she could still hear her mother saying, "Now show the world what you can do to make it better, because I made you that way." Inspired by her father's creative spark, which ignited her passion for leadership, and her mother's unwavering reinforcement and encouragement, she was determined to push the initiative forward.

Today, she stands before others as a living testament to the power of transformation. Ready to make substantial contributions, inspire others, and lead with compassion and strength. Who would have thought her dad's military training, "one for all and all for one," would spill over into her adult life. Moreso, being born on a military base, Fort Riley Army Base, Kansas City, KS on June 26, 1954. It may be the reason she is so passionate about donating her family's land, over 64 acres, to support Texas State Veterans Cemetery in East Texas.

On April 3, 2025, at 2:27pm, she received an email from David Scott, Ph.D., Special Projects Director for the East Texas Council of Government 14 County Region (See Attached).

#### **UNIT REPORTS:**

The competitions held against other units not only brought them closer but has elevated their skills and camaraderie. Their collective commitment has led them to win several titles, including the annual Service Excellence Award and top honors in the state-level oratorical contest. Throughout her tenure, they have achieved significant milestones. Their district has seen a remarkable increase in participation in their events and programs. They recorded a 25% increase in membership, a testament to their vibrant outreach efforts and the compelling activities they have designed.

Others saw her skills, passion, and leadership, which propelled her to take on even more significant roles, like teaching classes and guiding new members. This year, as District 3 President, the unit won competition in membership growth with Unit 0131 Longview having 169.29% still being #1. District 3 shot into the lead with 112.21%, Unit 12 Tyler; Unit 15 Lindale; Unit 0131 Longview; Unit 296 Mineola; Unit 320 Winnsboro; Unit 353 Carthage; Unit 844 Henderson, all Texas. Division #1 is still in lockstep with Division #2. "We will prevail!"

Food Bank, Memorial Day Reception, Member Cremations, Salvation Army, Bras on Fire, Fireworks, Donation to Trotter House, Jeep for Vets, Paws for Pets, Our Cancer Awareness at the State Level, Graduating Scholarships to 5 Young Girls to State, Bingo, Kids Fishing Tournament, Craft Fair and Car Show.

They held an American Legion Auxiliary, District 3 Spring Convention, on Saturday, March 15, 2025. The keynote speaker was Secretary Department of Texas, Tiffany Troxclair who reported on membership through the online ALAMIS system PowerPoint presentation, which was excellent. The next presentation was about our Family Land donation, also on a PowerPoint with over 32 members and 5 units present, one division representative, Myrtle Johnson and one department representative, Tiffany Troxclair.



*DISTRICT 4*  
*Susan Frizell - President*

What an amazing learning experience this year has been. From learning her duties as President to learning the difference between the Units and the Auxiliary programs each Unit have chosen to work. This has been a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and make lifelong friends. The Units have worked with Susie and encouraged her when she was nervous when first installing newly elected officers. President Susie has been amazed at all the events the 4th District held this year. **Greenville Unit 17** was one of the first Units for President Susie to install newly elected officers, they had an awesome Chili Cookoff. Along with Toys-For-Tots, Garage sales and raffles to raise money for Girl State, Bonham VA Vets enjoyed a wonderful Christmas Party. **Denison Unit 62** does several fundraisers throughout the year for their Wreaths Across America program where they placed 1,100 wreaths on graves of our Veterans, had their first annual Spring Fest this April with a great fish fry, supporting the Walker House with donations, and delivered Christmas goodies to 1st Responders. **McKinney Unit 96** has an awesome casino night, a fish fry and bingo for the veterans, they do a lot of wonderful things with the Hoffman Mraz care Home along with Meals on Wheels Secret Santa.

**McKinney Unit 110** also helps Hoffman Mraz Care Home with a Secret Santa. Two (2) members deliver Meals for Wheels at Thanksgiving & Christmas. Unit 110 spends many hours coordinating Girls State transportation. Unit 110 supplied

1,500 poppies to an elementary school for Memorial Day 2024. Members of Unit 100 helped at Bonham VA for Packing of the Bags, a pizza party and bingo nights. Also helping with setting up the Dallas VA Christmas Gift shop, purchasing gifts and wrapping gifts. **Emory Unit 156** is out in the community at the Founders Day Festival, feeding the 1st Responders, and delivering gifts to veterans. **Kaufman Unit 165** is out and about in the community working Harvest Festival, Halloween and Easter egg hunt. **Frisco Unit 178** has been busy with the Girl State program, Blood Drives for the community to Veteran Day Ceremony. At **Lake Texoma Unit 231** President Susie enjoyed the Ragin Cajun and their annual Luan with some great food. Holding a garage sale for Cancer benefit. Hosting the Bonham Vets for an enjoyable Fish Fry. **Lake Kiowa Unit 265** has been busy working Wreaths Across America and honoring the WWII Veterans.

**Bonham Unit 283**, President Susie's home Unit, where they have had a busy year from the 911 Ceremony at Seven Oaks Nursing Home, stuffing bags at the Bonham VA to the Community wide Easter Festival held with over 18 thousand eggs for the kids to hunt. **Mabank Unit 310** has been working on the Girl State program and coat drives for the community. **Wylie Unit 315** had their Americanism Essay Contest, making Valentines for veterans along with their Gold Star Day Memorial for families. **Plano Unit 321** has been busy with the 1st Responders' dinner, benefit for the Bonham VA, a job fair for veterans, hosting their 1st Kentucky Derby party. **Van Alstyne Unit 376** is busy hosting the Bonham VA Vets with food and karaoke, having Boots on the Ground benefit to help build a house for a veteran. **West Tawakoni Unit 517** had a benefit for the Hunt County fire department, Veterans Day program with free lunch, donated funds to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, donated a flag that is flown at the Public Library and attended all patriotic events at the schools.

Serving as District President has given President Susie a sense of pride in seeing the programs our Units choose to work each year. It has helped President Susie to step outside her comfort zone which has help her grow in so many ways. President Susie will never be afraid to step out and take a chance.



*DISTRICT 5*  
*Lisette Johnson - President*

My first Year as district President has been very interesting. I have visited units in the district and can say most have been very busy. As my last year as District President, it started with going to presidents' school, although it was not my first, I still learned a lot and had a great time.

802 held its first annual senior resource luncheon. Chase Bank, Stand Up Wireless/Energy, and Oak Street Health sponsored this event.

On November 11, 2024, members visited Umphrey Lee Elementary School for their Veterans Day observance. Post veterans spoke, a video on the origin of Veterans Day was shown and over 100 flags were passed out to students. President participated in the American Legion Auxiliary Christmas Gift Shop opening at the Dallas VA Medical Center.

On December 14, 2024, one of Unit 802's member participated in the DFW Cemetery's "Wreaths Across America". On December 21, 2024, Post 802 had its annual *Socks for Veterans Drive*. The family hosted "Bingo with the Vets" at the Dallas Veterans Resource Center. We served 15 veterans. Each month, Unit 802 Auxiliary has two members who volunteer in the clothing give away at the Community Baptist Church of DeSoto.

511 also did some great things like juniors collected candy for treats for troops, participated in pod cast to talk about ALA, participated in Education week as well as many other programs.

368 started the year with an ALA Brunch inviting the community to have coffee and donuts, etc. They purchased 300 poppies from Emblem Sales for \$105.79.

453 held its annual Luau and PJ drives. They also hosted a gala for OCCW and was a great success.

597 had its annual Chili cook-off it was great time with the community. They also took part in Wreath across America at a cemetery in Farmers Branch. The juniors with help from young SAL set the Military Child table and got Proclamation from the cities of Carrollton, Lewisville and Farmers Branch for Military Child month.

Unit 424 has a Cancer Star display, \$10 each. 100 Mile/24 hours Bike Ride to San Leon to raise awareness and funds. The 4 Chaplains Ceremony was held at Post 81, this included their Color Guard, as well as their Mission 22 fundraiser, making lunch for girl state bus ride and other activities.

Our district donated money to cancer research, girls state lunch bags, and to the second annual PTSD bike ride to national convention. It has been an honor to serve the 5<sup>th</sup> District.



*DISTRICT 12*  
*Michelle Birkett - President*

Michelle Birkett was elected 12<sup>th</sup> District President at the Spring Convention held in Fort Worth in April, 2024 and was formally installed at the Department Convention in July. It has been a very busy first year for Michelle as she learned the leadership role, visited Units, attended leadership training, and much more.

Michelle is also very active in the American Legion Riders, currently serving as the Division 1 Vice Chairman. This keeps her busy but enables her to see things from every perspective of the American Legion Family. As such, she is very much in touch with all the Posts and Units throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> District and attends as many events as she can to encourage and motivate them.

Her first Fall convention was held in October at Post 624. As all first year Presidents are, she was nervous but held a very successful convention. The 12<sup>th</sup> District usually has at least 8 of 10 Units attend each convention and they are very active! From small to large, they serve the mission and the ALA programs with enthusiasm and pride.

Two Units are very close to a military base (Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base) and sponsor monthly activities for the servicemembers and their families. Several of the other Units join in these events which encourages a spirit of working together. Geographically, the 12<sup>th</sup> District is very close – the furthest Units are not very far apart – so they are able to enjoy each other's events and activities. Units regularly hold clothing and food drives to benefit Fleet & Family Services which provides items to military families; and provide arts and crafts, supplies, and sponsor various children's activities at the base Child Development Center. Units also reported donating snacks, water bottles, and juice to the military police at the base entry point; and doing a birthday cake for each branch of the service at the Main BX for all who come in.

Several Units donate clothing, household items, snacks, etc. to the Patriot and Liberty Houses, transitional living facilities for veterans who have fallen on hard times and they are a welcome sight to the residents who look forward to their visits.

Other Units participate in various community activities such as Meals on Wheels, Tarrant Area Food Bank, Autumn's Hope, Peer 2 Peer, and donate needed items to local schools (including sponsoring a 'nature garden' for PreK students). Community events at the local Posts include Halloween parties, Thanksgiving dinners, Taco Tuesdays, a "Love your Post" party at Valentine's Day, Mother's & Father's Day events, Bells Across America, delivering handmade pillows and fleece blankets to JPS Hospital cancer care and US Renal Care patients, Massing of the Colors, Sexual Abuse Prevention Awareness month activities, and much more.

In service and honor to Veterans, the 12<sup>th</sup> District Units participated in the Tarrant County Veterans Day Parade, Stand Down, donations and activities at the Fort Worth VA Outpatient Clinic, several Veterans Appreciation Day events, attend monthly Roll Call luncheons honoring local veterans, donations to Madam President's special project Camp Hope, and placing flags on veterans' graves for Memorial and Veterans Day. A very special National Vietnam Veterans Remembrance Day event was held at the base with local veterans receiving pins, gifts, and of course – cake!

A highlight of the year was the Holidays and Heroes event at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Fort Worth. This annual event provides Christmas gifts, dinner, and activities for the kids. Units worked together to provide a cupcake decorating table, enjoyed by young and old alike; and sponsored several military families by purchasing gifts for the entire family from their "wish lists". This was a humbling experience that the 12<sup>th</sup> District is proud to participate in.

The Spring Convention was held April 12<sup>th</sup> at Post 838 in Fort Worth and was another great success. A speaker from Peer 2 Peer – a local group dedicated to helping veterans who suffer from PTSD and other service-related issues – spoke about the amazing services they provide, prompting several Units to take this information back to the membership and donate to this worthwhile cause.

President Michelle attends all Department conventions and encourages leadership training at the Unit and District level. She is planning a District-wide leadership training soon. Michelle appreciates this first year of learning and looks forward to another year of learning more, sharing, and motivating the members of the mighty 12<sup>th</sup> District in Service, Not Self.



*DISTRICT 13*  
*DeShayna Custard - President*

President DeShayna Custard has been very busy in all of her volunteer work with the local school districts. She has traveled and helped legions even outside of the state, where family members reside. The units in the district have been very busy

Unit 120 held numerous garage sales and fundraising events to raise money for the legion. They volunteered at local events. They have taken their youth within the entire legion family, to volunteer showing them how to better serve their community. They have volunteered at the local Air Force Base and at air events. They have helped the local boy scouts troop learn how to properly retire a flag. They cook Friday nights for the veterans and their families. They host chili cook offs and game nights. They host trivia nights. They hosted a surprise wedding for one of the Unit members and a veteran (the veteran knew) and helped her have the night of her dreams. They volunteered at local youth sporting events, in the concession stand or to ref or ump for them, whatever may be needed. They participate in the local parades. The things they have done in the community have helped to draw in new unit members as well as Post members.

Unit 550 has donated money to help repair ac units, build a ramp and pay an electric bill to benefit numerous veterans. They supported the active-duty military members by putting together and mailing out 48 slider boxes. They've supported their local EMS by donating to the fire departments. They held two separate events to teach the local youth about the flag, its importance to our country and ourselves and why we fly it, when we fly it, how to properly display it and at the end of the events, they held a retirement ceremony so that the children could learn how to properly retire a flag. They hosted a Christmas party, there were fun crafts for the children, they also made stockings for each child in attendance.

Unit 202 has worked together with the local Children's home to ensure the children in the care of CPS have a good Christmas, as well as donating various school supplies to multiple schools. Many Unit members participate in military funerals for color guard. The unit has monthly feeds. The unit places wreaths on veteran's graves. The unit hosted an Easter get together for the local youth to ensure they could have a fun Easter egg hunt. The Unit hosted a fundraiser for a young member who needed back surgery.

Unit 169 is very involved in the youth of our active-duty military. They help out with the local JROTC. Every year the local active-duty military kids receive presents for each family that has a deployed member to help relieve some of the burden on the

parents. They also have volunteered to help with the local active-duty military with various tasks. They helped with the yearly garage sale the post has and brisket cook off. A member of the unit delivers meals on wheels. Unit 71 has dealt with many health issues within their unit over the past year, even so they have helped to ensure girls still learn about girl state and do everything they can to ensure they go, helping them get ready, preparing the parents and staying in contact. They help their veterans as much as they can, taking them to Dr. appointments and to get their medications.

Unit 264 holds cook nights. They're very involved in their community volunteering at the monthly events. They participate in local parades.

Unit 88 is very diligent in helping the veterans within their post and outside of it as well. If asked to help with something, they are right there helping.

In summary, the units in District 13 are as youth focused as they are veteran and active duty focused. We vehemently believe as a whole, that our children are of utmost importance and will be the future of our organization.



*SECOND DIVISION*  
*Licia Kim - President*

It all started with a phone call from the Dept President Sharon Phelps before arriving home from the Department convention. The message was clear – it's time to get to work on the ALA mission. The Division 2 President was ready to work but didn't know how interesting "work" was going to be. In a year's time there was one new unit started, one unit rechartered, a unit revived after a 2-year period of inactivity, one unit restored to good standing after a series of suspensions, one unit that voted to close, a potential merging of units, several potential unit closings, a resignation in leadership, one new District President elected, and many conflict management situations. The Division 2 District President displayed a commitment to this organization and the desire to handle each situation according to the proper



procedures. What a blessing to have so many ladies in this part of the state in leadership roles who were there to answer difficult questions and tackle whatever situation came before them.

The District, Division and the Department faced a couple of new scenarios. There were two National appeals from the state of Texas; both cases from within Division 2. One case was upheld by National and the other was not, presenting new challenges for the state of Texas. The Department met the challenges and has continued to work through them. It's through those challenges and triumphs this organization learns and becomes better.

The President's theme, "Advocating for Change, One Veteran at a Time," coupled with a butterfly blend beautifully together. The "Butterfly Effect" is the idea that small things can have a big impact. Division 2 was there making small changes affecting the lives of veterans one at a time.

Touring the Blind Rehabilitation Unit (BRU) was eye opening (pun intended). The training goes beyond the basics of everyday tasks to repairing leaky sinks, tandem bike riding, woodworking projects, painting, shooting arrows and firearms, etc. At a unit meeting, a mother and daughter, new ALA members, teared up because the daughter is seeing-impaired and knowing that a facility exists to assist others like her was encouraging. She knows first-hand the importance of those services. By sharing this story donations were made and more lives were impacted – the butterfly effect in action.

While touring the RISE unit there was a sense of pride seeing the contributions made by the units in my district. Those contributions were and are changing lives of the veterans needing the use of that facility. A picture was sent of a female veteran sleeping on the floor in the RISE unit. Her canine companion, complete with paperwork, was not permitted to sleep with her. The VA policy states no animals on the furniture. This has led to researching how to change the policy. Auxiliary members will continue to advocate for this policy change.

The butterfly effect could be seen in the Christmas Gift Shops. This was my first time helping the veterans shop. The men and women were so thankful for this event as over and over the words, "Thank you," kept pouring out. It was difficult not to be touched by a veteran writing a card to his family asking them to forgive him for his addiction and for all the hurt he caused his family. The same can be said of the veteran who found a teddy bear and clung to it, filling the need for security. Those seemingly small donations changed those veterans' lives.

As members record their volunteer hours and donations, the unit reports them collectively, then the district reports the numbers collectively, then the division, etc. Those seemingly small numbers from the members add up. Again, the butterfly effect is not only displayed but magnified. Division 2 recorded 174,535 volunteer hours and donations adding up to \$483,399.00. And those are only the recorded ones. So much more is done and never recorded.

There were also many events filled with hope for a brighter future. Listening to the students share about their research into different cancer treatments and students giving their speeches in the Oratorical contest were inspiring. It is comforting to know the future is in the good hands of these fine young men and women.

The year concluded with the spring conventions. I am thankful for those I have met and those who have shared their stories. I look forward to serving another year with them in the ALA journey.



*DISTRICT 2*  
*Bonnie Fraley - President*

District two had a good year for the 2024-2025 year. They had their Fall convention at Post 33 with both Department President and Division Two President in attendance. They also had a successful Spring Convention and training at Unit 49. Most Units were in attendance at both conventions.

The district was able to get Unit 493 rechartered and working hard to get everything up and running soon.

Unit 817 has completed all necessary training and is quickly getting their programs up and running. Unit 817 has held successful year with a Christmas Dance and Dinner, Black History Program and Mom's Brunch. They are always there to support Veteran's family's helping to host repast for their loved ones.

Unit 33, had an amazing year this year. They awarded seventeen scholarships totaling \$38,000. They make donations to ALA Department of Texas Education and Past President Parley, Cancer Research Fellowship program, ASYMCA, Spirit of Youth and Children of Warriors Scholarships to total over \$10,000. They are active

in the community by handing out “Stop Bullying” goodie bags, promoting patriotism by donating flags to local elementary schools and scout groups and Star-Spangle Kid kits. They help veterans and their families with assisting with living expenses, medical or dental needs as funds permit. Unit 33 is very active in supporting the Veterans who utilize the Beaumont VA with Christmas gift bags, cookie bags and Christmas boxes. All while also supporting the Beaumont VA Canteen in serving donuts and coffee to the Veterans. The Unit completed over 430 hours of VA&R service hours this year. Donated \$3,500 to Camp Hope/PTSD Foundation, \$2,000 to Birdwell foundation, and \$20,000 to help with the upkeep and beautification of their Post. Unit 33 will continue to sponsor the programs of the ALA Department of Texas and National by donating funds and working their programs.

Unit 49 put Piggie Banks out in the Post Club room to support Children and Youth. They collected \$151 and sent it to Department to support their cause. \$250 was raised for Orange County Sheriff’s Department Blue Santa program for children and youth in the county. A donation of \$200 was given to Parks and Recreation Department to help purchase candy for annual Easter Egg Hunt. They participated in the city’s annual Easter Egg Hunt. Unit 49 also sent a donation of \$300 to help with purchase of tiny homes in North Carolina after Hurricane Helene devastated that area. Unit 49 continues to support Department and National by upholding the values of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Unit 7 has been doing amazing work in the community and supporting the Veterans. They have held #3 spot in Department Membership. They support the Legionnaires of Post 7 with activities in the community and post. They provide rides to Veterans in their community to and from doctor’s visits, grocery store runs and any other errands they need done. Members of the Unit also have crochet blankets and handed them out to Veterans in the community.

Unit 393 has been working with every member to get their unit functioning and participating more in the community. They participated in city activities to support the Veterans in Cleveland area. They are hoping to get a set location to meet, and be able to get more participation in meetings and events. The officers are doing regular buddy checks with the members and assisting them as they are able.



## *DISTRICT 6*

### *Billie Day - President*

Let's take a walk through the 6<sup>th</sup> District Auxiliary Garden to witness all the wonderful things our American Legion Auxiliary unit butterflies have implemented this year. Looking at all the beautiful butterflies we can see that many projects were tended to, such as toy drives, Easter Egg Hunts, Halloween events, Christmas events, and even school supply collections to help meet the needs within their communities. Our lovely, fluttery Units also placed flags in cemeteries, participated in Wreaths Across America, raised awareness through Poppy distribution and participated with their cities in patriotic holidays and events.

As we pass through the peaceful spot of Cleburne Unit 50, we are reminded how peaceful a garden and its butterflies are, forgetting the many parts that keep it beautiful. Unit 50 cooked and delivered 90 Thanksgiving meals, stuffed 80 stockings and distributed them to 7 different nursing homes, participated in Needy Kids benefit to purchase gifts for veteran's families, and recognized first responders on 9/11. With all this beauty abound is it any wonder the American Legion Auxiliary is full of beautiful butterflies?

The first little flower we stop to rest at is in Waxahachie. Unit 137 has been hard at work growing as a new unit, by hosting several membership drives and increasing their unit numbers by 116%. They helped celebrate a post member's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday by throwing a 'sweet' celebration. The social butterflies of this group also made Thanksgiving dinner and worked with the local VFW to make ensure our veterans were fed and feeling very loved during the holiday. It will be exciting to watch this unit continue to grow.

Many of the lovely 'flowers' in our garden continue from month to month. Unit 159 in Bryan has taken these lovely buds and fostered them into beautiful blooms. One such bloom is their Thursday morning coffee, kolache, and donut gathering. This bud has grown so much since last year, as they are now serving over 14 dozen donuts and 495 cups of coffee each week. They held a barbeque celebration in honor of the 10 girls they sponsored for Girls State. Unit 159 participated in Quilts of Valor, donated to the RISE unit, sponsored a Patriot Paws dog, collected school supplies and participated in many more of the Auxiliary's programs throughout the year.

As we continue our walk, we spot Groesbeck Unit 288 in full bloom. From sending Valentine's Day cards to the Temple VA Center to distributing poppies at the Memorial Day Service to volunteering at the local food banks and hosting the 2025 Spring District Convention, this beautiful group of butterflies certainly are busy.

Midlothian Unit 388 is a pleasant place to stop on our garden walk. They are busy little bees working at the Spring Market, a Pancake Fly-In at the Midlothian Airport, hosting a B-B-Q lunch after participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, delivering Christmas gift bags to Senior Living Facilities and organizing a garage sale.

Alvarado is flittering with activity. If there is a patriotic ceremony you are guaranteed to find members of Unit 426 present and participating. The unit donated 18 cases of water to the Fire Stations in their area. They participated in the Old Settlers Reunion Parade, held the Four Chaplains Ceremony, a Purple Heart Ceremony and breakfast and many other programs honoring those who have served.

Along the path you can find a cute little flower who is not to be overlooked. Unit 491 is dedicated to helping all veterans in need, but when one of those in need is one of their own you will definitely see all their wings working overtime. They set up a large event that included dinners, silent auctions and 50/50 raffles to raise over \$6,000 to help with living and medical expenses for a long-time member.

As we conclude our walk around the Auxiliary Garden know that there is so much more the units do that is not stated here. The 6<sup>th</sup> District sent 31 girls to Girls State, provided 3 high school students with scholarships totaling \$2,000.00 and raised close to \$1852.00 when distributing poppies. In conclusion 23,745 volunteer hours were logged and a total of \$26,694.00 was raised and donated to make the lives of those in our communities and beyond a better place. Thank you for taking this walk through the garden with us and we look forward to more years of serving with American Legion Family.



*DISTRICT 7*  
*Beverly Sloan - President*

It was another wonderful year for District 7 President Beverly Sloan as she started the year off installing officers at Cold Springs Unit 629 and then headed to the Department Convention to hear all the wonderful things people have done throughout the year. She helped Post 411 start a new Auxiliary Unit and then worked with Rusk Post 293 and Nacogdoches Post 86 to help them start new units as well. Both of those units are completing the necessary paperwork. She then fluttered through the district to different units, listening to their plans for the year. In October, District 7 Units held their first District Picnic in Cold Springs. Unit 629 was a great host, making the arrangements for everyone to be at the marina, and then that night they had a live band, which was a great end to a wonderful day filled with fellowship, games, and sharing ideas. In the fall many of the District 7 Units held their annual activities, such as Halloween festivals, trunk-or-treat events, distribution of poppies, and Make a Difference Days to provide supplies for local schools. Unit 618 had a Halloween Carnival with a Haunted Trail that everyone agreed was truly haunted.

As the holidays came, the units moved into the holiday spirit and hosted Thanksgiving meals, fall festivals, parades, Veteran's Day celebrations, Christmas celebrations, placing wreaths on veterans' graves, and more. Lufkin Unit 113, Madisonville Unit 84, and Willis Unit 618 held their annual wreath-laying ceremony and placed wreaths at local cemeteries. The year ended with Christmas parties, Christmas parades, and the annual visit to the DeBakey VA Hospital Gift Shop, where Auxiliary members helped by donating things to the shop, helping veterans pick out gifts for their families, wrapping them for the veterans, and mailing them to their families. Auxiliary members also send Christmas cards to veterans and servicemembers around the world. Cold Springs, Unit 629 gave \$2000 worth of toys to Toys for Tots. Livingston, Unit 312, held their annual Community Christmas Party where every child received a bicycle or an electronic gift along with an opportunity to visit with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, who also gave them a gift along with a picture with them. There was food, games, and even a fire truck for kids to climb on. Beverly got to help with the games and being one of Santa's elves giving out the gifts to the children. They had over 600 children in attendance this year.

As the new year came in, the units in District 7 kept fluttering around hosting meals for veterans and helping veterans with needs such as housing, medical supplies, or just lending a listening ear. Throughout the year other activities took place, such

as Unit 305 holding Americanism Essay contests at their local schools, Unit 134 in Crocket hosting a prom dress event for local girls to get a prom dress and accessories for prom night. Each month Unit 113 takes a van loaded with lap throws, telemetry bags, pillows, and ditty bags to the Houston VA. They also do quilts for the patients receiving cancer treatment. Unit 411 took on a project to help a local organization send 10,000 thank-you cards to the troops. During the spring as the butterflies began to flutter around East Texas units hosted Easter Egg hunts and other spring events to help support our children and veterans in the community. Unit 629 in Cold Springs provided 3 scholarships totaling \$2000 to seniors at their local school. This year District 7 sponsored over 20 girls for Girls State. Units in the 7th District also raised money through cook-offs, dinners, craft shows and bake sales. They sponsored CPR classes, blood drives, and flag disposal ceremonies. Unit 305 had over 100 participants at their flag disposal ceremony this year. If there is a need in their community, the 7th District units are glad to step up with a fundraiser to help meet that need.



*DISTRICT 22*  
*Maria Holmes - President*

**Americanism:** There were 4 units who participated in the Americanism program. The participation included handing out applications for the Americanism essays at area schools. Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance at meetings. Attending the Ceremonies at Christmas and Memorial Day for placing wreaths on the WW1 graves at Soldiers Rest in Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery.

**Cancer Research:** There were 5 units who participated in the Cancer Research Program by donating money to the Department. Unit 521 has an annual Cancer Dinner to raise money. The other 4 Units all attended and helped support the cause.

**Children and Youth:** There were 5 units who participated in Children and Youth activities. Events were put on for Children to receive gifts at Christmas. 4<sup>th</sup> of July events with games, food and prizes given to community children. Gift cards given to children of Active Military Serviceman. School supplies were collected and given to area community drives. Food was donated to Sarah's house for abused children.

Community Services: There were 6 units who participated in numerous Community Service projects. Money was donated to area churches, Gold Star Moms, Sarah's house. Food was donated to area food banks. Some of the units participated in their communities' parades. Blankets were distributed to area shelters. Some of the units participated in events for Seniors.

Poppies: 6 units participated in handing out poppies at different events or area restaurants in their communities, especially during Memorial and Veterans Day. Money was also donated to the Department for the Poppy Program.

Education and Scholarships. Some of the units had fundraisers to raise money for scholarships to be given out to seniors who were graduating. Over \$8000.00 in scholarships were given.

Girls State: 6 units had girls attend Girl's State. There was an orientation for all the unit's girls to attend.

VA&R: 7 Units participated in numerous activities to help Veterans. A few of the units attend quarterly visits to DeGeorge Hotel and play Bingo with the Veteran's that live there. Pillows, hygiene items, canned goods, cleaning supplies and snack packs were handed out. Items were also collected for Veteran's at Warriors Refuge in West Columbia. Dinners were held for Veteran's Day to honor them. Numerous units helped JoAnn Crawford (DeBakey VA Rep) with different projects she needed for the patients at The VA hospital. Some included making snack packs, meals, donating socks and underwear. Donating items for the Christmas store as well as volunteering at the hospital on the days the store was open. Visiting area nursing homes and bringing items to the Veteran's there.

Numerous units donated money to Department for other programs as well. This year there was a lot of support from each unit with events that units had. They attended Post 164 & Unit 164 grand opening at their new location, Unit 490's Christmas Dance, Unit 521's Cancer Research Dinner and Unit 472 hosting the Girl's State Orientation. 5 Of the units attended the District Conference.

As President this year I attended the Cancer Research Scholarship luncheon, Wreaths Across America event at Soldiers rest, Girls State Orientation, Unit 164's grand opening,



Unit 490's Christmas Dance and their Veteran's Day baked potato dinner. Unit 521's Cancer Research Dinner. I was able to get together a group of ladies to get Unit 654 going again for 3 months but most dropped out due to miscommunications between the Post Commander, board members and the President of the Auxiliary. I am still trying to get members to step up and continue the tradition for the good of the Auxiliary. The Issues I have found that some of the Units are facing with is registering new members and getting current members to be involved in events. The other issue is dealing with their Post. For some reason some of the Legionnaires do not realize that we are a family. My suggestion is that the Department Officers of all three divisions should come together at the Convention and remind everyone.



### *THIRD DIVISION*

#### *Denise Yanus*

Denise Yanus was elected at 3<sup>rd</sup> Division Convention in San Leon, Texas June 1, 2024 and was installed at Department of Texas Convention July 14, 2024. She began her year as any good executive by reviewing the budget.

In September, Denise attended Port Lavaca Unit 167 for their final roundup for sending in their Charter Application. It was wonderful for Denise to see and hear their excitement on this start to their life as an American Legion Auxiliary Unit in the Great State of Texas.

October brought attendance at Denise's home District Fall Convention in Rockport, Texas. As the 14<sup>th</sup> District didn't have a Sargent at Arms, Denise was able to assist by performing those duties for her Home District.

Also in October, Denise began her preparation for her own Convention next June by inviting Department of Texas Auxiliary President Sharon Phelps to attend. As Sharon accepted, Denise's prep was well under way for next year.

In November, Denise was able to attend the Department of Texas Cancer Luncheon in Houston, Texas. As always, it was an inspiring and uplifting day of celebration for the awarding of grants to twelve young people fighting cancer to eradicate it.

December's Holiday Season was spent in Rockport enjoying the season with her local American Legion family.

January brought a new year working with American Legion Department of Texas Vice Commander for 3<sup>rd</sup> Division Danny Muth regarding issues with multiple Post and Units. Also, they began working more diligently on their joint 3<sup>rd</sup> Division Convention.

February brought about working on the local level with the local high school to find and interview young people for Bluebonnet Girls State and Legion Boys State coming in the summer of 2025. As a dual member, Denise finds this very rewarding.

In March, Denise was invited to attend the 19<sup>th</sup> District Convention in Hallettsville, Texas. She was honored to speak there on ALA Membership and Girls State. She also spoke on how her membership in the American Legion Auxiliary had been a factor in her transformation from a very shy young woman with a lack of confidence in her own abilities to one who had been given the opportunity to learn from some of the best and gain confidence in her own abilities. She was seated with Delegates from Unit 164 Port Lavaca and was very happy to hear of their progress and to answer questions to assist with their Membership and Girls State.

April brought more convention preparation and answering questions from a possible 3<sup>rd</sup> Division President for 2025-2026. This helped in moving forward to the end of Denise's year as 3<sup>rd</sup> Division President of Department of Texas. It had been a rewarding, enjoyable, frustrating, exciting and exhilarating year for Denise.



*DISTRICT 9*  
*Valerie Coldwell - President*

Serving the 9<sup>th</sup> District as President these past two years has been both rewarding and humbling. This year was kicked off with our Coffee Tour for the Galveston County Units. Each unit met with us and discussed plans for this year and any concerns they may be facing. The Fall Convention was held in Sugar Land, hosted by Unit 942, it included a brief information training by Mary Waddell, Past Department President, discussing the program basics and bringing awareness to the medical scholarships. We discussed and updated the bylaws concerning our 9<sup>th</sup> District Junior Program and submitted the changes to Department. There were 7 units represented at this convention with many new members attending. Spring Convention was held in Missouri City and kicked off with training by Past

Department President Teresa Simmon-Copeland on Saturday. There were 7 units represented with special guests including Past National President and Past Department President Betty Rohan; Past Department Presidents Mary Waddell and Holly Heatly; Department Vice President Leigh-Ann Stewart; Finance Committee member Colene Blankinship; and Missouri City Council Member Joanna Ouderkirk. Both conventions and training sessions were a great success with lots of information shared and received.

The 9<sup>th</sup> District has 18 units spread out over 4 counties. It is filled with members who truly have a heart for veterans and the aims and purposes of the Auxiliary. This is reflected by the hours they put in and the lives they touch while serving their communities. Units are actively working within their communities by making donations and partnering with local police and fire departments, assisting in schools, and supporting their post functions. Units supported Children & Youth by hosting Children's Easter, Halloween, and Christmas Parties for their communities and provided Food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas for needy families. They are raising funds by hosting bake sales, soup sales, vendor events, and dipping chocolate strawberries. Americanism is shown by posting flags at meetings, saying the pledge, hosting veterans' day and Memorial Day programs, participating in patriotic parades, and sending students to Girls State. Unit 554 organized and hosted a "Spirit of '45" celebration (in collaboration with the Legionnaires, Sons, & Riders) with special guest speaker Buck Sloan, a WWII Veteran, who served on the European Honor Guard that fired the 21-gun salute to honor President F.D. Roosevelt. The units of the 9<sup>th</sup> District continuously showed their heart for our programs and communities and reported 11,142 hours volunteered, 837 Veterans assisted, 855 Military Families assisted, and 20 scholarships given to graduating seniors totaling \$17,200. More than 1200 Poppies were distributed at local businesses resulting in donations more than \$3,485.00.

While it goes without saying that some are struggling with the familiar issues of membership shrinkage and participation decline as they face the inevitable reality of time and the human condition taking its toll. It is also true that others are finding new paths to successful growth and supporting their units with vitality and strength even in the most challenging situations. While visiting with members, regardless of the situation, it is easy to see the smiles of welcoming faces and to witness their strength in the stories from the past and their plans for the future.



## *DISTRICT 14*

### *Patti Shows - President*

Patti served as Vice President of District 14 for 2 years. This is her first year as President. She was not familiar with the 14<sup>th</sup> District. She had been in the 9<sup>th</sup> District for 20 years. As Vice President she was able to go to unit meetings with the President, Denise Yanus. Denise was a great mentor. It was nice to get back on track after covid.

Patti is very proud of Unit 547, Nixon. Last year at the Department Convention Unit 547 was put on suspension. The new President and her officers worked hard to bring everything current. As of today, the unit membership is 155%. They have worked hard and done training.

This year District 14 had 3 new unit Presidents. Patti had made a Presidents book for her unit presidents when she was District Vice President. Training is very important to Patti.

October 12 District 14 had their fall convention and training .in Rockport. Half a day was spent on training and half a day was Convention. Holly Heatly was the trainer. Holly was great with the new officers and members. The training and exchange of questions and answers was exactly what we needed.

Patti attended the DEC and Presidents school in September in Austin.

Patti participated in poppy distribution, putting flags on veterans' graves and visited veterans in 2 nursing homes for Veterans Day.

In 2024 Patti was able to attend unit meetings for Three Rivers, Nixon and Floresville. She stays in contact with the units by email texts, and phone calls.

On Valentines Day and Easter Patti distributed gifts and spent time with veterans in 2 nursing homes.

On May 3,2025 the District 14 Spring Convention/training was held in Kingsville. The first half of the day was training. Teresa Simmons-Copeland did the training.

Focus was on officers and membership. Another great convention.

Patti's focus in her second year will be training, using social media, mentoring, and volunteering.



*DISTRICT 19*  
*Irene Szwarc - President*

This has been a roller coaster year for District 19. Word was received shortly after the last Department Convention that Port Lavaca Post 167 wanted to start up an Auxiliary. The late summer and fall were spent getting the Unit put together and walking them through the basics. In December the Charter was given to the new formed Unit so there was a big celebration at their Christmas party. There were still a few hurdles to jump with incorporation and the bank but that was finally accomplished.

The district was riding a high with that news only to crash to the ground with the notice from East Bernard that after years of struggle and no forward motion they had decided to close. At the end of January their closing papers were accepted and forwarded to Department. So, in the space of a few months, the district had gone from 11 Units to 12 and then back to 11.

During the year all the District Auxiliary Units were active in programs benefiting veterans in the VA & R programs, participating in Memorial Day and Veterans Day programs as well as special Veterans Appreciation Days. This information was confirmed not just in narratives submitted but in visits and phone calls to the Units. Also, all 11 Units sent in their Christmas Assessment, Unit Data Form, Certification of Officers, and bond fee. Only four of the 11 sent verification of turning in their 990s. From the Units reporting, only 9 young ladies went to Girls State. This is a significant decrease from previous years.

Three Units from the 19<sup>th</sup> District (Schulenburg, La Grange, and Flatonia) and one from the 9<sup>th</sup> District (Shelby) banded together with their Posts and the VFW from La Grange, Vietnam Veterans Chapter 870, the Marine Corps League Colorado Detachment and Praha Veterans to put on the first Annual Armed Forces Appreciation Dinner and Dance in Flatonia on May 18, 2024. It was a huge success.

All Units gave back to the veterans all year round by delivering meals to homebound veterans and auxiliary members, collecting items and donations for the ASYMCA and military families, monetary and clothing donations to the Houston Michael E. DeBakey VAMC, Thanksgiving food basket drives for the Family Crisis Center, as well as donations to the Deputy Santa Program. One Unit with some Post members, planned visits to the three assisted living centers in their area to sit with veterans, visit, and encourage them to tell their stories.

Most Units distributed poppies for Memorial Day and Veterans Day at schools, from businesses in the towns, to the Poppy Lady walking the courthouse, square, and surrounding businesses.

Of the Units reporting, 12 scholarships were presented for students in the area, totaling \$4,750.

The 19<sup>th</sup> District held their 4<sup>th</sup> annual District Convention on March 15, 2025, in Hallettsville at the American Legion Hall Post 230. A memorial was held for the veterans followed by the Legionnaires holding their business session and the Auxiliary holding a mini training led by Holly Heatly, Leadership chairman. Following a meal and raffle prizes, the Auxiliary held their annual business session. Guest speaker was Department President Sharon Phelps. Elections were held and Irene Szwarc was re-elected as President and Nicole Ebner was elected as Vice President for the 2025 – 2027 year. Door prizes were given out following the meeting.

As this report was being written, the East Bernard Post contacted this District President about not shutting down the Auxiliary. The district is in the process of seeing why this has suddenly surfaced and if there is a true possibility for breathing life back into the East Bernard Unit.

All Units report issues in being able to attract younger local members and are afraid of the future as most current members are in their 80's or 90's.

One Unit, Ganado 346, has been working hard this year to reestablish their tax-exempt status. Unknown to the membership, their past President, who suddenly resigned and moved last year, had not filed the Unit 990s for the last three years causing the Unit to lose their tax-exempt status.

Even with information coming directly from Department to the Unit Presidents communication still appears to be in limbo. Sometimes to get a response, this District President has had to individually email/call/text the Unit President. Upon questioning, they will a.) deny getting any email, or b.) when the email is described they remember it but claim they did not think it applied to them. This President notes that some Units, even after several years of being told not to do this, still

refer to themselves in the newspaper, on the officer certifications, and the Unit Data forms as "the Ladies Auxiliary". Frequently they even do not remember what Division they are in. New Presidents, who should have a problem with this are not the major offenders, but it is the "seasoned" Presidents who are the culprits.

Again, welcome into the fold, Port Lavaca (Calhoun County) Unit 167.

## 19<sup>th</sup> District Statistics

As of this report, there are 11 Units in the 19<sup>th</sup> District. In December of 2024, Unit 167 Calhoun County (Port Lavaca) was welcomed into the district. In January of 2025 East Bernard Unit 226 turned in their paperwork to close out their Unit. Existing Units are Unit 94 Flatonia; Unit 102 La Grange; Unit 143 Schulenburg;

Unit 167 Port Lavaca; Unit 230 Hallettsville; Unit 251, El Campo Unit 338, Round Top; Unit 392 Moulton; Unit 571 Moulton; and Unit 571 Blessing.

Impact reports turned in: 6 (55%)

End of Year Narratives turned in: 7 (64%)



*DISTRICT 20*  
*Carol Evans - President*

In April of 2024 Carol was elected 20<sup>th</sup> District President for round 2. WE ARE STILL THE MIGHTY 20<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT AND WE ARE AS STRONG AS EVER1

She started her year at the Department Convention in July and attended Presidents School, DEC, as well as Mid-Winter. She also held a Fall & Spring Convention for the Mighty 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Units of the 20<sup>th</sup> District held many, many events this past year to celebrate out veterans and the programs we support. From Back-to-School supplies to Halloween parties for the kids to Thanksgiving for our Veterans who may be alone. Christmas brought on Angel trees to help families in need. One unit even wrapped gifts -placed them in black plastic bags and while their kids were visiting Santa members hid the gifts in back of cars so that the parents could sneak them in the house later and put out on Christmas Eve confirming YES VIRGINIA THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS.

Monies were donated to all of the programs sponsored by the ALA. Attending the reception for Girls State was a highlight seeing all the wonderful and talented girls that we're are sending to Seguin. Makes us have confidence in our future generations.

Participation at Ft Sam is always a heart touching event. Placing flags & wreaths by Units shows our loyalty to our fallen. One of our Units has even adopted a section of Ft Sam to maintain by their Unit for all holidays.

Membership is growing as this is being written with many Units reaching & exceeding 100%.

Volunteer hours are impossible to give with an exact number as they are constantly adding up as weeks go by & they continue to serve our veterans & military families. They continue to raise funds & hold events to honor & serve our military & veterans families in ways too numerous to list all here. This could be a book by itself. The MIGHTY 20<sup>TH</sup> steps up & answers the call whenever it arrives & will continue to do so.

We will continue to following our Department Presidents theme of “Advocating for Change, One Veteran At A Time” till we run out of the need!

Looking forward to her 2<sup>nd</sup> year with the greatest group of members a president could ask for!!



*FOURTH DIVISION*  
*Nancy Webb - President*

This has been a difficult but fun year. I have seen some amazing activities of auxiliary member honoring our veterans, children and active- duty military members. Watching how some units with as little as 5 participating members support local women’s shelters, to sending 7 girls to Girl’s State and even doing activities for our next generation renews my enthusiasm for this amazing organization.

Division 4 is always at the bottom of membership numbers, although we encompass half the state of Texas. What some members don’t realize is to go from our southern most unit to the northern most unit takes almost 8 hours. Kind of like our eastern unit to our western unit is 9 hours. For us to accomplish all that we have done, stay in contact with each other and have the friendships that we do is another amazing task of this organization.



July 4th is always a way to show off our veterans and support for great country. Our units did everything from veterans as grand Marshalls, kids booths with Americanism items of coloring books, and flags. To sending care packages to troops overseas.

Trunk or treat is a big thing for many units handing out candy, ALA information and coloring books and crayons to the kids. This is a safe environment for many organizations to let kids still participate in an event that America has done since the 1930's.

Unit 163 handed out free dinner vouchers at the local Texas Road House on Veteran's Day. The turnout was bigger than in years past. Other units participated in Veteran's Day Parades, unit 572 had an entire gold star family as their Grand Marshalls.

Christmas is always a big event from unit 208 and their angel tree to most of our units visiting nursing homes, giving out gifts to VA inpatients and local veterans, to giving gifts and cards for troops overseas and gifts to children in need across Division 4.

We even had unit 575 participate in a coming home of an honor flight, with posters and participation, Unit 425 has 3 gold star families and their post is named after one of the wives.

Unit 19 made lollipoppies, poppy cupcakes, poppy bears and poppy coloring books and crayons at the local air show.

Our units have done meals for veterans, community and members who have had surgery, are sick or dealing with issues in life. Unit 832 hands out food and hygiene supplies to the homeless.

Valentine's day is full of cards, candy and fun things for our veterans and troops overseas. VA hospitals and clinics had units sponsor a day to hand out coffee and snacks to outpatient clients to handing out Valentine bags to inpatients for Salute to Veterans.

Girls State is a big one. I don't even know how to give the recognition and kudos the crew that puts this fabulous program on deserve. Our units in Division 4 sent hundreds of girls to learn civics and how they can accomplish anything they set their minds to. This is our next generation of girls that are still proving that the women of this great country are a force to be reckoned with and respected. Giving the knowledge of Girls State only empowers these young women even more.

Unit 61 did a block party at Dyess AFB for the youth of the base. It included flag etiquette in a fun way that brought many children to the booth and they received American themed gifts along with knowledge and information about our country and flag.

Poppy programs are strong and thriving in Division 4 with poppy poems, coloring books, felt flowers and lots of beautiful ladies and handsome men educating people on the sacrifices our troops have given. This program is one of our foundations as the American Legion Auxiliary. The ability to carry this on and educate the public is so needed, especially today. Educating our young people will hopefully bring in new hope and resources to continue defending our county in the future.

The biggest issue all the units have reported is the aging of the members and difficulty in recruiting new members, this is not just in the Division but even at National. So, this is something we, as American Legion Auxiliary members need to concentrate on. Unit 832 has one member who has logged in 896 hours and 632 miles just for VA volunteering. These are the types of volunteers we need. We, as unit members, are doing our best and logging in lots of hours for all the above activities. As Division 4 president I am sooo humbled and proud of the members of Division 4 for ALL their dedication and help they provide.

We, in Division 4, have multiple ways to remember our veterans, from unit 575 Cavalcade of memories, to brick gardens, quilts of valor with unit 437, banners with veteran's names, flags flown at homes of veterans for recognition. This is a pillar of our organization and our units in Division 4 continue to honor those that have sacrificed for our freedom and rights.

I want to personally thank each and every member of Division 4 for all they do for our ALA, veterans, children, communities and active-duty military. THANK



*DISTRICT 16*  
*Jane Bennett - President*

In her first year as 16<sup>th</sup> District president, Janie attended the National Convention in New Orleans, all Department of Texas conventions, the 4<sup>th</sup> Division convention and conducted two fun and informative District conventions with trainings in Leadership by PDP Myra Cooper, Membership, Poppy, Americanism, and PR. Attendees were assisted with setting up Unit websites and designing eye-catching flyers; given "Star Spangled Kids Kits" with assembly ideas such as America the

Beautiful coloring books, Pledge of Allegiance book marks, American Flag comic books, and more; what to distribute with poppies to generate more donations such as “LolliPoppies”, Poppy coloring books and Poppy Bears; how to submit membership electronically and utilize ALA MIS effectively; and how to update and use Unit governing documents to lead their Units to success.

16<sup>th</sup> District Units observed all patriotic holidays, Teacher Appreciation and Education Weeks, Christmas, Valentine’s Day and other holidays with gifts, cards, supplies, and lots of community interaction. They distributed Poppies, placed thousands of flags and wreaths on military graves on Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Christmas, and delivered a gazillion school supplies. Many Unit members attended all conventions, several Leadership training sessions, and volunteered for Department of Texas Program Committees. Several members went on a tour of the Ft Bliss Armed Services YMCA to see how their Units could help with food, baby supplies, clothing and school donations for at least 300 families on the Base who are struggling to make ends meet.

Unit 19 Midland distributed more than 400 Poppies, raising over \$3,000. They handed out 450 “Star Spangled Kids Kits” at the Midland Airshow, the Midland Children’s Rehabilitation Center “rodeo” and events at their Post, including 4 Family Days. They collected 65 moving boxes full of school supplies from Operation Homefront and delivered them to 10 schools, 15 teachers, the Midland Soup Kitchen and Family Promise, and awarded 11 college scholarships. They made several trips to Big Spring to the VA Hospital with 46 patients, and the Texas Veteran Retirement Home Laymun-Lusk-Sanchez with around 150 residents, to deliver snacks and soft drinks. At Christmas, they donated piles of Christmas gifts, clothing and treats to both facilities. For Valentine’s for Veterans, they delivered 350 cookies, boxes of chocolates, and bags of gummie bears with 300 cards from local school kids given to the veterans by Little Miss Poppy Aspynn Beeson with a hug. They even danced with veterans and sang karaoke at the Retirement Home party. Unit 19’s complete remodel and conversion of 2 Post bathrooms to ADA compliance was featured in a National ALA Magazine article.

Unit 36 El Paso held a huge Vietnam Veteran Dance and fundraiser attended by 400 people and organized hundreds of coffee mugs stuffed with treats for the VA Clinic in El Paso. They also delivered 80 backpacks to an elementary school.

Unit 58 El Paso raised \$1,500 with a “Designer Purse Bingo” event to benefit the Rio Grande Cancer Foundation. On Patriot Day, they provided meals for firefighters and police departments. The Post 58 Family hosted a wonderful 16<sup>th</sup> District Spring Convention, where we were presented with a certificate designating our District as a “Purple Heart District”.

Unit 79 Alpine delivered 50 zippered “Period Pouches” to nurses at elementary, middle and high schools. They also donated 25 copies of the Berenstain Bears book “God Bless American” to the Valentine ISD.

Unit 122 Anthony participated in a Veterans Day “Children’s Reading Day” at Don Haskins elementary school, reading to 250 children and inviting veterans to share their stories. They partnered with their SAL squadron to donate 100 blankets to homeless veterans and delivered 100 winter jackets to children in need. They co-hosted a New Years Eve dance with other El Paso Posts and helped recruit kids for their American Legion Baseball Team.

Unit 430 Odessa donated \$500 to the Permian Basin Honor Flight. They adopted a nursing home and visited the veterans with gifts on Valentine’s Day, Easter and Christmas. They were featured in an article for the ALA National Magazine honoring their flag program called “The Last Patriotic Act”, where they collect retired flags to be draped over veteran caskets for cremation with the veteran.

Unit 598 Horizon City held a flag retirement ceremony with their mayor and fed their local fire and police departments. They also hosted local Girl Scout and Boy Scout Troops at their Post on a weekly basis. Horizon City also hosted a fabulous 16<sup>th</sup> District Fall Convention.

Unit 832 El Paso partnered with other El Paso Units to serve snacks at the El Paso VA Clinic for 3 months each out of every year. Unit member and CDCE Rep Velois Vaughan volunteered 3 days a week at the VA Clinic. Unit 832 is working on a partnership with the Fort Bliss Armed Services YMCA to help military families in the El Paso area.

All Units are up to date on their mandatory donations and paperwork, and the 16<sup>th</sup> District has 4 Units at or over 100% membership, with several Units close behind. With 8 out of 11 Units reporting, the 16<sup>th</sup> District assisted over 3,800 veterans, military and their families, volunteered over 17,000 hours and donated almost \$52,000. Community Service hours totaled over 2,600, with donations of over \$51,000. More than 3,200 hours were volunteered for Children and Youth, and Girls State, with over \$22,000 donated and 17 college scholarships awarded.



*DISTRICT 17*  
*Nancy Cobb - President*

It has been a great honor to serve as the 17<sup>th</sup> District President of the Department of Texas American Legion Auxiliary. There have been times of sadness, times of uncertainty and times of great reward. It is always a challenge that a President should take to increase their knowledge of this great organization. The units in the 17<sup>th</sup> District are all easy to work with and they take our mission seriously.

President Nancy uses the internet to stay in contact with her units. President Nancy keeps all units abreast and informed of all information from our department office. There have been many visits to the units in this past year. President Nancy has attended many functions of several units during this past year. A Great Big Shout Out to Units 61 Abilene, 75 Mineral Wells, 163 Weatherford, 240 Stephenville, 57 Abilene, 82 Baird and unit 661 Lueders. There have been great things going on in these units all year. Unit 82 Baird recruited 8 new members and reached all the membership goals by January 1 2025.

The President's job is made easier when all the officers are working together, which is exactly what happens in the 17<sup>th</sup> District. Membership is a top priority in the 17<sup>th</sup> District. Each unit competes with each other from September 1 till March 15<sup>th</sup> to see who gets a certificate for most membership percentage and most new members each year. We call it Retain – Renew and Recruit for the 17<sup>th</sup>. In the paragraph above you see that Unit 82 reached 114% and recruited 8 new members for the year.

All the units in the 17<sup>th</sup> District have worked hard this year with their Posts and Sons on fund raisers and volunteer their time and services to their communities. There has been a total of over 21,000 hours volunteered in this district just this past year. Americanism was and is promoted at any time the Units take part in parades, meetings, flag ceremonies; POW/MIA Remembrances and flag folding ceremonies.

Cancer Research is a program that each Unit takes an active part in. They contribute to the Cancer Research Program through yearly or monthly donations. President Nancy encourages each unit to do fund raisers during the year to help this program because Cancer has touched most all of us in one way or another.

Children and Youth is a program near and dear to her heart. Children are our next generation and if we don't start now, well let's just say we won't be here in a few more years. Unit 61 in Abilene is very active in their community with children. They provided many events and services in their community and covered 22 families and volunteered 76.5 hours with donations of over \$1300.00. Unit 75 Mineral Wells holds a Veteran's Day program where it is held at their football field and for over an hour you will witness bus after bus bringing the children – youth and teenagers to the ballfield to wave their American Flags and watch the program from the bleachers. These are just a few of the ways that District 17 is trying to incorporate Children and Youth and Education together.

Unit 240 in Stephenville bakes cookies each month and deliveries them to the EMS – Police – Sheriff's Department and the Fire Departments. This is a way of reaching their community and thanking them for their service as many of those same men and women are Veterans.

Unit 163 works with several different organizations in Weatherford where they as a Unit hand out poppies and get donations for Wreaths across America. The Wreaths across America program is both a community service, education, children and youth as well as Americanism and VA&R program. The Unit places wreaths on every Veterans grave at Memory Gardens Cemetery in December where approximately 750 Veterans have found their final resting place. The Weatherford community comes out and helps with the wreath placing. President Nancy is the chair for the Wreath program and it makes the heart happy to see families there placing wreaths on that day and teaching the little ones the value of our Freedom. It teaches the younger generation the respect that a Veteran should receive especially at Christmas where they are not forgotten.

Some members of units attend unaccompanied veterans' funerals. Some members simply sit with a veteran at a nursing home. Some attend the Gold Star Mothers ceremonies at state cemeteries.

District 17 juniors are just as busy. They are earning patches for volunteer work alongside the senior members of their unit. Unit 661 in Lueders has one such junior that has over 20 patches for her volunteer work with the senior members. District 17 has 3 juniors that are officers in the Department of Texas Junior program.

VA&R program is worked by all units and some of our Units have a Veteran in their unit.

Our space is limited and I could fill up a few more pages with the accomplishments of each unit in the 17<sup>th</sup> District. Our Unit members volunteer daily and weekly to make a difference one Veteran at a time.

President Nancy continues to spread the word about the ALA and their services with her church members, along the highways and byways of her travels to many different states. We have visited 6 American Legions in 6 different states, and there is no place like TEXAS. Her officers this term were Parliamentarian and Guest Chair both Past Presidents of Department, Sgt at Arms and Assistant Sgt at Arms are both Veterans and are mother and daughter. Her Vice President Letitia has kept her junior on track getting more patches for her volunteer work. Her secretary is very organized and makes sure that our minutes are recorded properly and timely. Her Chaplain has been there with encouraging words and notes during fun times and rough times and can be called on to pray for our unit and members at any time. So, you see the 17<sup>th</sup> District has been very busy and will continue to be busy.

The Units in the 17<sup>th</sup> District are very blessed and May God continue to bless them and all their members along with our Veterans and May God bless America and our Military.



*DISTRICT 21*  
*Hilda Krum - President*

District Officers for 2025 are: Hilda Lindt, President; Gerda Weathers, Vice President; Nancy Webb, Secretary; Alyce Suddeth, Chaplain; Bee Rose, Sergeant-at-Arms; Joan Crider, Parliamentarian.

The 2025 District Spring Convention was held on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at Kerrville Post 208.

District 21 consists of the following 16 Units: Bandera 157, Bangs 308, Boerne 313, CenterPoint 583, Harper 650, Kerrville 208, Kingsland 437, Lakehills 410, Lampasas 277, Leahey 489, Lometa 116, Mason 285, Northlake-Brownwood 470, Priddy 487, San Angelo 572 and Uvalde 479 which is a combined land area of almost 234 square miles.

It is often a challenge to stay active in these small rural areas but these units do not let that slow them down! They are out there every day working the programs for our Veterans and communities.

**Bandera 157** has had a very busy year. Unit President, Gerda Weathers and members have been busy visiting two nursing homes in Bandera. They keep the residents entertained by playing games such as Bunko which are fun for everyone. The Bandera unit loves to bake! They do a monthly cookie party for nursing home residents and just this past year alone, have made four hundred dozen.... that's right....**FOUR HUNDRED DOZEN** cookies. That is a total of almost 5,000 cookies!! They also provide HOMEMADE desserts for first responders, teachers and the nursing staff at the nursing homes they visit.

In addition to all of that baking, they provide annual donations to local organizations in their area such as Silver Sage, Meals on Wheels, Bandera Livestock Show, K-9's, Boys and Girls Club of the Texas Frontier (Bandera County). Even with all those activities, all that baking and volunteering, they found time to recruit seven (7) new members!! Way to go Bandera!

**Kerrville 208** has also had a very busy year. Every Easter they do an Easter Egg hunt on the lawn of the Kerrville VA Hospital. The Veterans and their families love it! They also send care packages overseas to troops (usually twice a year). They have an annual school supply drive as well. They provide first responders with cookies on 9/11.

Their fundraiser for cancer awareness was so successful last year that they decided to do it again this year. They literally turn the Post pink for their "Paint the Post Pink for Cancer" fundraiser. Cancer survivors' handprints in every color representing different types of Cancer can be found throughout the Post. They have a potluck, raffles and drawings. All proceeds are donated to the ALA Cancer Awareness program.

Halloween is always fun at the Kerrville Post when they do Fright Night at the Park. This year there were over 3,000 kiddos who came out to join in the fun! They baked goodies for the VA car show and for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row, took 1<sup>st</sup> place for the most money raised for the inpatient needs.

And if that isn't enough, they also do an Angel tree for Christmas for those families that would otherwise not have a Christmas. They also provide food boxes to Veterans in need so they can enjoy a delicious Christmas meal. Well, done Kerrville 208!



**Bangs 308.** Where does one begin? There is so much to say about Bangs 308! Just last year we thought they were going to be turning in their Charter when all of a sudden, Unit President, Alyce Suddeth, showed up at the District Convention raring to go!

This year Bangs has increased their membership to 12 members! They managed to contribute 50 volunteer hours with only 8 members. They placed flags at their local cemetery. They are building a memorial wall at their local nursing home for Veterans that will consist of the Veteran's picture, their Military affiliation and a brief story. Together with the Legionnaires, they build beds for children who have no bed! The sky's the limit for this unit! Way to go Bangs 308!

**Kingsland 437.** With only a handful of active members, you can often hear Unit President, Hilda Lindt saying "we are small but mighty". The members of Unit 437 stay busy throughout the year. They have recently started to do a meal night on the first and fourth Thursday of the month. They have taco night, spaghetti night, pizza night, etc. Money raised from meal nights is used to help fund quarterly donations to Meals on Wheels and Sharing the Harvest, their local food pantry.

The Kingsland Auxiliary participates in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July "AquaBoom" parade where they pass out American Flags and candy to children. They also participate in the Christmas Festival of lights parade.

They have also started to hold dances where they hire a DJ, provide food and snacks and decorate the hall. These dances are open to the public. Children are welcome. They use these functions as a fun way to get the community involved and also to recruit new members. They have now held three dances and each time they are becoming more successful.

This past year they have donated candy to the Kerrville VA for their Halloween party. They provided the items needed to make 300 dump cakes for the Kerrville VA. They passed out poppies, assisted the Legion with Flag retirement ceremonies and hosted many Quilts of Valor events. Lastly, Unit 437 members reported volunteering 180 hours and spending \$1,119 dollars for the 2024-2025 Year.

**San Angelo 572** is always on the move. Unit President Mary Frentz and her unit members stay busy! They help support the Post in an annual golf tournament. They go to local merchants to distribute poppies. They participate in highway cleanup. They have a pink basket where they put all the loose change they find along the way. This year they collected over \$200 and donated it to Department for Toys for Tots. They hosted a Terlingua Chili Cook off. They collect Ronald McDonald pull tabs and encourage all units to do this. President Mary takes these to Ft. Worth to drop them off. Their Unit also participates in two city Veteran Day parades.

There is no doubt that the units in District 21 stay busy. This year we had eight units who submitted an end-of-year report. The total numbers reported were 5,713 members volunteer hours, \$20,543 member dollars spent, and \$2,000 scholarship funds awarded.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the President of District 21. Along the way, I have had the opportunity to visit many new places, forge meaningful friendships, and meet some of the most generous, loving, and selfless individuals I've ever known. The members and officers of the Units in District 21 truly embody the spirit of service, not self. I am deeply grateful to be part of such a dedicated and compassionate community.



*AMERICANISM*  
*Kimberly Wheeler - Chairman*

The Americanism Committee began the year with open communication during the Department Executive Committee (DEC) meeting by organizing an Americanism exhibit table. Committee members disseminated copies of the program engagement plans. Items were sold to raise funds to purchase incentive for the winners of the Americanism Essay Contest and Most Outstanding Unit American Program. Also, the committee began a year long raffle for a blanket to continue to support Americanism initiatives.

During the Mid-Winter Convention, the Department of Texas participated in the "You're a Grand Old Flag Challenge" in which a video was created and submitted to national. It was great seeing the convention attendees participate in this national challenge.

Americanism essays were submitted from across the state in which enhanced perspectives on how youth perceive Americanism. The Americanism essays were judged by prominent educators. The winners were forwarded to national.

Other national challenges for the 24-25 year include promoting the Star-Spangled Kits and creating a video regarding The Star-Spangled Banner.

The Americanism Committee would like to thank everyone for their dedication to providing resources and services to veterans, military, their families, and the community. It is evident members are dedicated to ensuring the Department of Texas continues to execute the mission and vision of this great organization.

Madam President Sharon Phelps, the Americanism Committee thank you for their appointments. It was an honor to serve the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas.



*AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND*  
*Candy Zavala - Chairman*

In keeping with the Purpose of the American Legion Auxiliary's Emergency Fund, raising funds for and promoting knowledge about the program, the A.E.F. Committee is proud to announce that as of April 28, 2025, \$16,134.01 was raised in support of this essential program.

Donations came from the arduous work of twenty-five units, one District, individual donors, as well as fundraising by the Texas AEF Committee itself. As is typical of our organization's members, they always find a way to make the "magic" happen.

In reading the narratives received, and from what the A.E.F. Committee saw on a variety of Texas ALA Facebook pages, a great deal of our units fundraised throughout the year with rummage sales, bake sales, burger burns, a variety of themed dinners, hosted chili cookoffs, collected cans, worked local festivals, raffled baskets, made donations in the names of members that passed, and of course the tried-and-true collection jug set by the monthly meeting sign-in sheet. Texas is also fortunate to have units that host Bingo, and which are truly kind with their donations, each donating over \$1,500 each.

The Texas AEF Committee itself did a bit of fundraising. To coincide with President Sharon's butterfly theme, the committee dressed as entomologists, hats on and nets in hand, and sold butterfly cutouts during the D.E.C. program fair, as well as selling 50/50 tickets to be drawn at the Department Convention. The Committee also created an incentive called "Texas' 100 for \$100", in which an individual or Unit donating at least \$100 would receive a "Collector" Vintage AEF pin. The donor was also placed into a drawing for a \$100 prize.

The Texas AEF Committee made sure to get the word out about the AEF program, its requirements and benefits, at every opportunity given; unit meetings, District and Division conventions as well as D.E.C., Midwinter and Annual Department Conventions. The Committee also submitted articles to the Department's bi-monthly bulletin.

Though the Committee was disappointed in the sparse number of end-of-year reports received, we know the members understood the program's importance as was witnessed by the more than generous donations made throughout the year. The AEF fundraising efforts continued after the end-of-year "cutoff" date because catastrophic events do not come at a convenient time or on a schedule and we must be prepared to assist when it is needed.



*CANCER RESEARCH*  
*Ann Pugliano - Chairman*

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas Cancer Research Program is a Texas-based one of a kind program that provides scholarships for graduate students studying cancer research at the University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Science at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Hospital in Houston. More than 1.7 million has been awarded to nearly 200 high achieving doctoral students trained by MD Anderson and UTHealth Houston's leading biomedical scientists. The American Legion Auxiliary Units across the great state of Texas have worked diligently to turn in as much money as possible to forward to MD Anderson. Here are just a few of the things that these dedicated units have accomplished.

**Bedford Unit 379** – Each year dedicates an entire weekend filled with good food and live entertainment. Many baskets, gift cards, and poppers continue to be popular. Cancer jewelry was also available to help with awareness. They have a goal of \$20,000 for their 20 years of fundraising for a cause that has touched everyone's lives.

**Pasadena Unit 521** – Each year this unit holds a Cancer Research Dinner and Program where they sell Luminaries to honor loved ones that have survived this horrible disease and to memorialize those who have passed away.

**Midland Unit 19** – They not only donated to our Cancer Research, but they collected to help one of their members, participated in the Breast Cancer Chili Cookoff, ran the Bloody Mary Booth and participated in many other events to help raise Cancer Awareness.

**Willis Unit 618-** Each year they donate \$100 per month to help combat this disease.

**Madisonville Unit 84** – donated \$1.00 for each member.

**Farris Anderson Unit 75** has a jar marked \$1.00 from each member for the Cancer Fund that they collect at each meeting.

**Lubbock Unit 575** – They did unit and individual donations and contributed to the Bike to Fight Cancer project.

**Conroe Unit 411** – Even though they are a new unit they included the entire Legionnaire Family in their efforts to collect funds. At each meeting a piggy bank named Ms. Unipig was placed on the table for members to put their loose change. This was for “Change for Cancer.”

Division 2 contributed to Cancer Research; along with District 11 and District 20.



*CHILDREN & YOUTH*  
*Linda Dorsett - Chairman*

The Department of Texas American Legion Auxiliary has been active this past year, working throughout the state to support and assist children, particularly those from veterans and military families. The auxiliary has engaged in various initiatives, such as providing school supplies through programs like Benbrook Unit 297 "Stuff the Bus" and organizing school supply drives to distribute backpacks filled with necessary items. Midland Unit 19 donated 60 boxes of school supplies to 8 elementary and 2 high schools in their community and contributed \$1000 to the A S YMCA in Killeen. Abilene Unit 61 expresses their gratitude to the school bus drivers by hosting a breakfast at the start of each school year. These individuals, with their exceptional composure, ensure that our children safely travel to and from school each day. Additionally, several units have made monetary donations to schools for various needs.

In autumn, orange and black butterflies organize fall festivals or Halloween carnivals. During these events, Halloween coloring books with crayons are provided, and various crafts and games are organized for the participants. In

addition to our poppy lollipops, assorted candy, flags, and toy soldiers are distributed to the children in attendance.

Unit 511 Wynnewood Butterflies participated in Red Ribbon Week. Unit 159 in Bryan read books such as "America's White Table" and "Twenty-One Steps," while Greenville Unit 17 read "The Poppy Lady" to school children. Additionally, Odessa Unit 430 donated copies of Bernstein Bears' "God Bless America" to local schools. Other units, like Lueders Unit 661, provided school equipment such as wooden kitchenettes and utensils for Pre-K students.

The red, white and blue butterflies like Mineral Wells Unit 75 help with Patriotic events, including flag placement and wreaths on veterans' graves organized by Wreaths Across America, are held to honor and remember our veterans. Additionally, our Katy Unit 164 butterflies help our children to organize "Breakfasts with Veterans" to show appreciation and support for their service.

During Christmas, the multi-colored tinsel butterflies held festive parties where Santa Claus, and occasionally Mrs. Claus, distribute gifts to the children and provide special treats such as cookies, cupcakes and candy canes. Santa has even shown up in a surprise aircraft landing at a Naval air Station to hand out gifts to the military children. Let's not forget our "Purple Up "Day

Our organization offers a variety of engaging and meaningful activities, including picnic days, arts and crafts sessions, and playdays. Unit 593 Converse also organize events such as egg coloring activities, Easter egg hunts with the Easter Bunny, and Huntsville Unit 95 helped with classroom projects like planting Victory Gardens for growing vegetables. Additionally, our members engage in community service by gathering clothing and personal hygiene items for military children, organizing chili cook-offs to benefit special needs children, and sponsoring rehabilitation centers with horse therapy programs for children with cerebral palsy. I wish I could post all the photos of our members, joining together wearing their purple shirts, to show their love and support on this special day.

It is important to highlight our participation in the Girl State program, which continues to expand annually. Each Unit that has turned in a report to this committee acknowledges that they sent one or multiple candidates to this exceptional program in Sequin.

Lastly, we would like to highlight the significant number of scholarships awarded to the younger generation, who represent our future. These scholarships will support various fields, including medicine, education, engineering, veterinary science, and pastoral studies. Regardless of the chosen field, these individuals represent both our future and the future of our children.

The Children and Youth Committee is honored to present this report in the book of reports. Texas continues to inspire and positively impact on the lives of our children through the submission of reports, over 5,800 hours of volunteering, and the awarding of nearly \$24,000 in scholarships



*COMMUNITY SERVICE*  
*Joan Crider - Chairman*

The American Legion Auxiliary Units in The Department of Texas was very busy this year working all of our programs. Many of the activities overlapped programs.

At the first of the year the Community Service committee helped guide our units by giving them ideas and suggestions of ways to promote and do community service in our communities. We encouraged them to think outside of the box. Ideas like starting a community garden, teach tech skills at retirement homes or start a recycling program.

I am going to highlight some of the amazing events and activities the Units of Texas did throughout the year.

Wallis Unit 200 is a very proud sponsor of the Austin County Champion Drive. Their purpose is to provide special needs youth the opportunity to participate in a livestock show experience at the county fair. Each child is paired with a "buddy" exhibitor (4H or FFA student). This allows them to do something that they never thought possible to participate in.

Conroe Unit 411 Held a Valentine's Day Party for residents of a local nursing home. They selected a king and queen for the day. Everyone got a gift along with cupcakes and punch.

Unit 297 Benbrook donated supplies for a "butterfly garden" at an elementary school. A Pre-K teacher and loves to share her love of nature with her students. It is such a joy to see their little faces light up learning about butterflies.

Unit 297 also has a sewing group that makes items for their community. Items like heart pillows for chemo patients, carry-all bags for the homeless stuffed with goodies and snacks, Fleece scarfs and blankets for local patient center. Also, members work making "tied" fleece blankets that are delivered to local chemo and dialysis centers. During the year 2024-2025 Unit 297 donated over 400 blankets.

Harlingen Unit 205 spends a day collecting funds for Camp Corral, a non-profit 501(c) (3). This is a program thru Golden Corral restaurant and is a free one of a kind summer camp for children of wounded, injured or fallen military.

At the beginning of the school year Abilene Unit 61 recognizes the School Bus Drivers by providing breakfast at their first day of training. Our bus drivers carry the future to and from school and events. They are sometimes the only normal and comfort from a crazy world at home and at school. They handle traffic, unruly kids, teacher's demands, parents and so many rules and regulations. They are unsung heroes.

Midland Unit 19 does a huge community program, but I found this particular activity as a standout. They distribute "Blessing Bags" filled with hygiene and comfort items for homeless women at the Midland Soup Kitchen. Also "Blessing Bags" with socks, winter caps and gloves to the Salvation Army Homeless program.

Another fun activity that Unit 19 did this year was to give a "SURVIVAL KIT" for First Responders. The kit consisted of various candies.

LIFESAVER-- to remind you of the many times you've been one. STARBURST-- for the burst of energy you need.

PAYDAY-- since you're not doing it for the money. HERSHEY'S KISSES-- to show our love for you GUM-- to help everyone stick together

TOOTSIE ROLL-- you have to roll with the punches PEPPERMINT PATTY— helping you keep your cool SNICKERS-- to help keep your humor

**MOUNDS--** for the mounds of courage you show.

There is so much more that the Texas Units do for community service. Food banks, volunteering at numerous activities within their towns. I only scratched the surface with this report.





## *CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS*

### *Rosie Cherry - Chairman*

The committee communicated via e-mail regarding the Program Engagement Plan. The Chairman sent expectation of committee members as to their duties. We encouraged all units to review their Constitution and Bylaws with Standing Rules, if changes were made the Committee Members from their Division was to review and assist the Unit to prevent conflict with Department of Texas and the National Constitution and Bylaws with Standing Rules

We lost one of our committee members mid-year, she is very much missed. Our Department Secretary sends out bi-monthly Bulletin's via e-mail to all unit president of information from all committee chairman that wish to communicate information.

All Chairmen prepare a Program Action Plan at the beginning of year with information provided by the National Chairman to be posted for entire year on the Department website. There is also a copy of the National Constitution and Bylaws, and the Department as well. To help the units with organizing their Constitution and Bylaws there is a sample one also posted.

The Chairman was the only one able to attend Midwinter Conference. All chairman participated in a Program Fair on Saturday afternoon. We used tables around the wall of our meeting room. Each one chose a table and decorated it with information pertaining to our committee. For Constitution and Bylaws, I prepared a tri fold poster decorated with butterflies and a copy of the sample Constitution and Bylaws with Standing Rules. Questions were prepared with answers for members to test their knowledge, if they answer was correct, they got candy, each member was collecting signatures from all tables they visited. Attached are the questions used. Each year at Department Convention if changes are needed that is when we present them. We did not have any virtual meetings or webinars.

Members during the year made suggestions of changes need with the many that were made. Each member of the Committee was asked to read thru the Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules for what they felt needed changing and we came up with a list and what the change should be. They will be emailed out 30 days prior to Texas Department Convention in July.

Due to postal rates going up we use Email which saves money and is quicker for review and response between units and Committee member. To date the 3 members have reviewed 1 District Policy and 35-unit Constitutions and Bylaws, with each one to receive a certificate in July at our Department Convention.



*DISTINGUISHED GUEST*  
*Vicki Pollard - Chairman*

As a Distinguished Guest Chairman, a member must be prepared at all times to be called upon by the Chair for the purpose of introductions of guests not currently known to the body and the leaders of the organization being represented including by not limited to leaders of this great State of Texas.

It is the responsibility of the Distinguished to make all guests comfortable and at home with friends. When guests from other locations are visiting it will be the Distinguished Guest Chairman's duty to see that the guest is escorted to the various meeting locations, restaurants or any other locations available or planned for. A guest of an organization (invited) should not be expected to purchase raffle tickets or purchase meals for themselves. However, there are those guests who would be offended if not given the opportunity to purchase a raffle ticket or purchase their own cup of coffee. The purchase of a raffle ticket should always be the idea of the guest.

As Distinguished Guest Chairman, this member had the opportunity to meet and visit with members from other areas, what a wonderful way to gain knowledge and friends from other areas of this great nation. Each State has their own way of accomplishing the same goals as Texas and it is always fun to hear about the fun ways to assist our veterans.

It is my hope that our Southern Division National Vice President enjoyed her visit to the great State of Texas.



## *EDUCATION*

### *Linda Malsbary - Chairman*

Their year began with the formation of a committee that came together to formulate ideas for fund raisers and the famous Program Engagement Plan. After they trained them at the Department of Texas Convention, they met and “brainstormed” ideas for the year.

Fundraising ideas that they adopted were throw blankets with butterflies sold at conventions- a bargain at \$10 to stay warm! A wine basket with 6 bottles of wine and other goodies raffled off at conventions- in case someone needed to relax!, and a handmade crocheted butterfly blanket to be auctioned off at Department Convention 2025- why not take advantage of Madame President Sharon’s theme.

When it came to the Program Engagement Program, they adopted the slogan “Education Transforms Lives” (like a caterpillar transforms to a butterfly). For the Fall DEC their table was pretty and pink, full of butterflies and educational too. One member having the fun idea of the game #Culture Tags, where they educated Auxiliary members on the new communication of the much younger generation by showing them cards with initials and words and guessing what it really meant. They also wrote several wonderful articles for the Bulletins.

Finally, the committee had to really work at their job, and judge scholarships for the National level, followed by the Department of Texas Scholarship applications. It took them many hours of evaluation, but in the end the team all felt good about their accomplishments and their ability to award scholarships that truly help students “Transform their Lives through Education”

They want to thank the following members of the Education Committee for an outstanding job: Kathy Richeson, Betty Heedly, Mary Lee Waddell, Nancy Webb and Linda Malsbary.



*FINANCE*  
*Christine Trahan - Chairman*

The Finance Committee was like a butterfly and came out of our cocoon preparing a budget for the Department of Texas.

The Committee works diligently to Creating a budget, saving for future goals, investing wisely, and making conscious spending choices, and funds are available for the operation of the Department. The Finance Committee is the Stewardship if the Department funds using resources wisely, ensuring they are not wasted or used irresponsibly, adhering to regulations and guidelines related to the use of funds.

The Finance Committee held two Fundraiser to help cover the cost of the 2025 Department Convention, 50/50 Raffle and Sponsorships. The Committee would like to thank all the members of the American Legion Family for your support. Thank you to all Units that donate to our General Fund to help the operations of the Department.

A finance committee is responsible for overseeing the organization's financial health and well-being. The committee review budgets, track financial statements, ensure proper audits, and make recommendations to the DEC. The Committee volunteers many hours on a weekly basis; it's not a 9-to-5 job the committee is on the job seven (7) days a week.

Christine would like to thank the Committee for tireless volunteer hours; this is a committee that never gets credit for volunteer hours given to make sure all operations of the Financials are not at risk. Thank you, Michelle, Kami, Colene, Robin and Tiffany for all your personal time given to the Finance Committee. Your work has not gone unnoticed.

The committee would like to give a big shout out to our Department Secretary Tiffany Troxclair for your dedication and working late hours with the Finance Chairman you go above and beyond your job duties.

Madam President Sharon the Committee thanks you for the appointment serving the Department and entrusting us with the Department Finances. it was an honor serving you and the members of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas.

The Committee emphasizes the importance of stepping outside of our comfort zones, embracing challenges, and ultimately achieving beautiful results, like a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis.



*TEXAS BLUEBONNET GIRLS STATE*  
*Ann Doan - Chairman*

A staff of approximately 90 Auxiliary members and former Texas Girls State Citizens are preparing to offer the young women of Texas an outstanding educational opportunity to experience the basic ideals and principles of government through a “learn by doing,” mythical 51<sup>st</sup> state! The Texas Girls State session will take place at Texas Lutheran University in Seguin, Texas, from Sunday, June 15, 2025 to Saturday, June 21, 2025.

During the 2024 session, 105 ALA Units, 21 AL Posts, and 37 high school registrations were represented by 297 high schools across the state of Texas. The session opened with 605 Citizens (the largest number of citizens in Texas Girls State history).

The 2024 Elected State Officials:

Governor: Adhia Da Silva Agostinho (Katy #164)

Lieutenant Governor: Contessa Barron (Rockwall Post #117)

Attorney General: Bareera “B” Saif (Victoria Post # 166)

Comptroller of Public Accounts: Reagan McDonald (Lufkin #113)

Land Commissioner: Daniela Laing (Houston #77)

Agriculture Commissioner: Harper Mau (LaGrange #102)

Railroad Commissioner: Carly Krothe (Lake Travis HS)

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals: Mary-Claire Finch (Dallas #453)

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court: Addie Shelton (Lake Travis HS)

2024 Girls Nation Delegates:

Alex Hant (The Woodlands 305) and Contessa Barron (Rockwall Post 117)

1<sup>st</sup> Alternate: Anjy Fadairo (Dallas 453)      2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate: Saanvi Mylavarapu (Frisco178)

The 2024 Samsung American Legion Scholarship National Finalist from Texas is Nicole Namy. At the national level, Nicole was named one of the 20 Regional Finalists and received a \$5000.00 scholarship.

The 2024 Cindy Mae Scholarship recipient is unavailable at this time.

Each year before the session begins, Texas Girls State counselors and staff participate in a well-planned 3-day orientation program. During this time our counselors and staff bond and learn the expectations of their positions.

During the 2024 week at Girls State, citizens participated in formulating city, county, and state government. They elected officials at all three levels and functioned in their respective positions. The citizens were also exposed to political parties. Party officials were elected as well. Every citizen was assigned to the House of Representatives or the Senate. They had the opportunity to write bills, debate them, and increase their knowledge of appropriate procedures. In preparation for their legislative sessions, the citizens were able to access current Texas law through databases on electronic tablets that were provided for their use. Electronic voting/filing for office was implemented during the 2015 session of Texas Girls State. In 2022 Texas Girls State presented a Career Fair. Both were so successful and well-received that they became part of the standard procedures at Girls State. Unfortunately, the 2024 Citizens of Girls State did not get to visit the Capitol because the House and Senate chambers were closed. Also, during the week at Girls State, the citizens gathered to hear guest speakers on various subjects, learned about ALA programs/membership, and participated in this premier program known as ALA Texas Bluebonnet Girls State.

The Girls State Committee is grateful to the dedicated efforts of the local units and schools who continue to actively support the Girls State Program. The success of the program begins at the unit level.



## *JUNIOR ACTIVITIES*

*Nicole Ebner - Chairman*

Juniors from across the state have been “Advocating for Change, One Veteran at a Time” this year. At our Department Convention the Juniors collected health and beauty goods to be sent to the YMCA in Killeen and the VA hospitals. The girls went to Top Golf for the fun activity and enjoyed their annual Pool & Pizza Party. Due to scheduling conflicts the juniors did not hold a meeting at the Mid-Winter Conference this year.

Junior members stay busy within their districts, units and communities. It is amazing to watch these girls honor our veterans and watch them grow through this organization. Abilene Unit 61 had junior members help shop for items for the Standdown, help with APD Trunk or Treat, made ornaments for Adopted Veterans

to go with the Units gifts they gave them, and they had juniors help assist in obtaining pet supplies. Willis Unit 618 had juniors raise money with a 50/50 raffle at the President's Parley Cook-off. For the Halloween Carnival they helped set up,

dressed in costumes, and helped run some of the games. At the We Care Cook-off they worked the silent auction and helped make plates at the Thanksgiving Dinner. In December they helped decorate the hall for Christmas, placed wreaths for Wreaths Across Willis and passed out gifts at the Christmas Party. At Easter they helped stuff Easter eggs and worked several other cook-offs throughout the year.

Missing Man Unit 667 reports that while they have 18 junior members, many live out of town or are young and are not active locally. Their juniors are lucky to have their dues paid after their first year of membership until they turn 18. The Woodlands Unit 305 has 13 junior members and have one very active member who attends their meetings and events. She passes out poppies, helps with the craft booth and places wreaths on Veterans' graves. She also earned three patches this year and was able to put them on a sash that an auxiliary member sewed for her. Moulton Unit 392 junior members helped out at local events at the post, collected items for Department Service Projects, attended Department meetings, and helped at the Memorial Day Service. They also collected toys and canned goods for the Deputy Santa Program.

Dallas Unit 511 is working on growing membership by holding a membership drive at every event. Juniors wore R.E.D. on Fridays and helped with the Back-to-School Drive filling over 250 backpacks for military children. They raised over \$500 participating in the Cancer Awareness Walk to send to the Department of Texas. Juniors sold food to raise money for toys for children at Christmas during the Dallas Cowboys games, and participated in the Health Fair where they learned to perform CPR. They partnered with Soldier Angels to collect over 25 pounds of candy for the Treats for Troops event. They worked the arts and crafts table and hid eggs during the Easter Egg Hunt and participated in the Veteran's Day essay contest.

Carrollton Unit 597 has young members, but they are very active. They attend the Senior Auxiliary meetings and lead the Pledge of Allegiance, assist the Sergeant-at-Arms in the draping the POW/MIA chair. They have been busy earning patches this year and assisted the senior members during fundraising activities. They hosted a Lemonade Stand and a Hot Cocoa Stand. They led the Military Child Table Setting Ceremony, handed out Poppy stickers at the Medal of Honor Museum event, and helped in placing over 500 flags at the Carrollton Veterans Memorial for Veterans Day and Memorial Day. They helped with Wreaths Across America, helped serve over 1,000 Thanksgiving meals at a local Soup Kitchen, and participated in the Blue Santa Program.



We have units throughout the state who do not have active junior members, but they willingly support our junior projects on the Department level. We have over 1500 Junior members spread throughout the State of Texas and elsewhere. I know there are many more things these members are helping our Veterans and their units with that just does not get reported. Many do not realize they are even helping out or their units do not know what they have done.

We are gearing up for our Department Convention and preparing to watch these girls continue to grow in our great organization. It is amazing to watch the junior members grow up in our organization with many of them now having daughters who have followed in their footsteps and become members.



## *LEADERSHIP*

### *Holly Heatly - Chairman*

Texas started off the 2024-2025 administrative year and we hit the ground running. It all began at the 2023-2024 Department post-convention meeting with a mini workshop for our incoming Committee Chairs as well as incoming District and Division Presidents.

We then followed it up reaching out to our district and division presidents to establish contact. The department uses various methods to reach out to our members in masse such as bulletins, web sites, social media and conventions and conferences. In each of these opportunities we highlighted the many tools available to our members on our Department Website as well as our national website. The Department promoted the opportunities for mission training and had members who were in attendance. Another fun project suggested was the On-Line ALA academy and the many aspects of the ALA it covered with new subjects always coming soon.

The next project was a program fair held at Fall DEC. The Committee had a leadership table set up with all the other programs and had personal interaction with members and had the opportunity to share vital information.

The committee was able to travel to many Districts and Division Conventions this year and conducted workshops catered to the needs of that specific area. On a more personal grassroots level the committee visited many of our units and held workshops in whatever format that unit and members needed. Very good



questions were presented as members enthusiastically soaked it up. At Fall conference, the leadership committee has a more formal setting with members where the committee has skits, projects, ask “jeopardy type” questions in games and allow for Q & A. At this conference we also had a moment where we discussed bullying and the difference between being a mentor and being a bully. Throughout this year the committee often included this same message in our format and sadly, too many of our members could relate to this.

Unit 230 in Hallettsville, TX highlights different programs of the ALA at each of their monthly meetings as well as celebrating unit members who complete courses in the ALA Academy.

Unit 84 in Madisonville, TX has mini classes at every meeting to teach subjects such as protocol, parliamentary procedure, and Flag etiquette to name a few.

A new unit, Conroe Unit 411 promotes attendance at different conventions and conferences BY using every opportunity as a “teaching moment.”

Unit 164 in Katy, TX utilizes a mentoring program to help build stronger and more confident members. The unit has orientation sessions where the responsibilities of the unit officers and chairs are provided. The unit also invites guest speakers to meetings from support groups.

Unit 205 in Harlingen, TX reports conducting training for new members to highlight the rights of members and the importance of responsible membership.

Midland Unit 19 provides new members with a notebook containing Preamble, Vision and Vision Statement, an annual calendar of events, meeting agenda, etc. The unit provides copies of the Unit Management Guide. Unit 19 also promotes the ALA Academy and Be the One training in the unit and encourages attendance of Conventions and Conferences.

Dallas Unit 511 has many members attending all levels of Conferences, Conventions and Mission Training events. The unit has monthly team building excursions encouraging members to reach out and volunteer in the community promoting the ALA and programs. Unit 511 provides members with a New Member Handbook as well as a Unit Management Guide. The Department Leadership Committee has dedicated significant effort to promoting respect among members, valuing individuality, embracing kindness, and fostering diversity. The committee strongly emphasizes empowering and educating members to cultivate a community of stronger, more confident, and actively engaged individuals, ensuring their continued commitment and contributions for many years to come.



## *LEGISLATIVE*

### *Candace Wicks - Chairman*

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas is not merely a volunteer organization; it is a vibrant entity driven by a profound sense of duty to support veterans and their families. One of the most pivotal facets of the ALA's mission is its Legislative Committee, a dedicated group that continually advocates for policies affecting the lives of those who have bravely served our country. The importance of this advocacy cannot be overstated, as it plays a critical role in shaping the future for veterans in Texas and across the nation.

At its core, the purpose of the Legislative Committee is to ensure that the voices of veterans and their families are heard in the halls of legislation. The committee actively engages with lawmakers, urging them to prioritize veteran-related issues such as

healthcare, education, and job training programs. With many veterans facing significant challenges after returning from service—such as mental health crises, unemployment, and inadequate healthcare access—the need for legislative advocacy is urgent and undeniable.

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas has become a crucial bridge between veterans and policymakers, providing crucial information and insights into the unique challenges veterans face. By staying informed about current legislation and emerging issues, the Legislative Committee has mobilized its grassroots members to advocate for effective solutions. This grassroots involvement is vital; the collective voices of members can lead to meaningful change. When local citizens unite and urge their representatives to support veterans' initiatives, the potential for legislative action increases significantly.

Moreover, the American Legion Auxiliary's Legislative Committee actively participates in national advocacy initiatives, collaborating with other veteran organizations to amplify their voices. Initiatives such as "Legionnaires on the Hill" allow ALA members to meet directly with lawmakers, ensuring that veteran issues are prioritized at the national level. These personal interactions are powerful and give legislators the human story behind the statistics, reminding them of the sacrifices made by veterans and the ongoing struggles they endure.

One of the key issues currently at the forefront of the committee's advocacy efforts is ensuring comprehensive mental health support for veterans. With the alarming rates of PTSD, depression, and suicide among veterans, it is imperative that mental health resources remain funded and accessible. The ALA is tirelessly working to influence policies that will allocate resources towards innovative mental health programs and promote awareness of these critical issues within communities.

Additionally, education and workforce development for veterans and their families is a focal point of advocacy efforts. Many veterans seek to reintegrate into civilian life but face barriers when pursuing education or job opportunities. The Legislative Committee supports policies that enhance educational benefits and vocational training programs tailored to veterans' unique skills and experiences. This approach not only helps veterans successfully transition into civilian careers but also strengthens the workforce as a whole.

The ongoing advocacy efforts of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas Legislative Committee are essential for ensuring that our veterans receive the care, support, and recognition they rightfully deserve. The commitment to hold lawmakers accountable, foster community engagement, and collaborate with fellow organizations exemplifies the strength of grassroots advocacy. It is imperative that we all recognize the importance of supporting these efforts.

As Texans, we must take an active role in advocating for our veterans by engaging with the ALA, reaching out to our legislators, and raising awareness about veterans' issues in our communities. It is our collective responsibility to empower organizations like the American Legion Auxiliary to continue their essential work in advocating for those who have given so much in service to our nation. Together, we can ensure that our veterans are not just honored in rhetoric but supported in reality.

Thank you to all of the ALA members and especially Units 84 Madisonville, 453 Dallas, 230 Hallettsville, 75 Mineral Wells, 539 St. Hedwig, 511 Dallas. To our Department of Texas President, Sharon Phelps thank you for the opportunity to serve.



## *MEMBERSHIP*

### *Shay Kuehner - Chairman*

Shay Kuehner was appointed Department Membership Chair at the 2024 Department Convention by President Sharon Phelps. She was soon to learn just what an undertaking this is!

Shay previously served on the Membership Committee during Diana King's term 2010-2011. She had only been a member for 5 years and this was her first committee. She has said many times over the years that it was a huge learning experience and definitely helped her in the years to come as she would pursue the high office of Department President. Taking all her past experiences with her, this was still a challenging job but she was determined to see it through and help the

ALA continue its legacy for many more years to come with the help of her committee members Gillian Woodstrom, Shelli Creech, and Shawna Dunlap. The fun started at the Fall DEC with a "round robin" set up where each committee had a table of information, games, and fun. By visiting each table, members received door prize chances. The Membership Committee held a "Do You Know" board with questions about the ALA. They were told that some of the questions were hard, but everyone learned a little something new. The Membership Committee raffled off a large basket of Bath and Bodyworks items to help pay for awards and incentives. The winner was drawn at Mid-Winter Conference in January, where Shay joked that she couldn't wait to announce the winner so she didn't have to carry that large (and heavy) basket home, but as luck would have it the winner was in her own Unit, and not present, so Shay happily took it home to Barbara Stykes!

In keeping with the Auxiliary's theme of Recruit, Retain, Renew, the Membership Committee switched that up a little this year to Retain, Renew, Recruit. While the goal is always new members, Shay felt it was incredibly important to have a hard focus on RETENTION. So many Units are losing members due to conflict, lack of enthusiasm, communication problems, etc. Many ideas were shared throughout the year by the Units who implemented phone calls and cards to members they haven't heard from or seen in a while, newsletters with a spotlight on a different member each month, asking members to stand up at a Unit meeting and tell the members a little about themselves, and other ways to keep our members engaged and motivated.

The Department also focused on getting the zero Units back in business. Division Presidents were tasked with reaching out to each of their zero Units to provide assistance. Happily, the Department of Texas went from 18 zero Units to 5 at the time of this writing! Way to go Division & District Presidents! Additionally, five new Units were chartered this year and have been very enthusiastic to work the programs.

In keeping with President Sharon's theme, the "Butterfly Effect Transformation Story" was an opportunity for members to tell us of their 'transformation' in the Auxiliary. We all started out in that cocoon stage, - not sure what all these terms meant, "how long can one meeting last?", and reluctant to vote or ask questions.... soon moving upward to the eventual beautiful butterfly who is knowledgeable, confident, attending conventions, and running for office. The committee received quite a few stories and will have a prize for the most motivational and inspiring story.

Communication continued to be an issue but with the visual revision of the emails and reports, many members noted that they were more appealing and easier to read. The committee held several zoom meetings together to discuss ways to help the Units who were struggling and keep everyone motivated. Another incentive concept was to divide the Units into small, medium, and large based on the number of members – the Unit in each group that reached the highest membership percentage would receive a plaque.

Shay has expressed that this opportunity was, once again, a learning experience showing that we can never stop reaching out for more knowledge, training, and resources. Though Texas has not quite reached the 100% goal by this writing, Shay is confident that it can be done! She is grateful for the amazing Units who kept the fires burning by sharing the word of the ALA through branding, community events, and so much more. She is also grateful to the members of this committee who came with so many ideas, actions, and communication within their division – but most importantly, they worked together as a team to get the job done. It could not be possible without their input and patience! It takes a village....



## *NATIONAL SECURITY*

### *Marty Peters - Chairman*

Texas Department National Security Chairman is both inspired and challenged by the amazing unit National Security reports received from the Texas units. Chairman Peters is impressed by the efforts put forth by the units to support the military, their families and the first responders and she is challenged to convey adequately the full measure of the unit members' dedication to this program.

During the Department Executive Committee meeting, a program fair with booths for every program was presented. National Security provided information on all aspects of the program including photographs, a Blue-Star banner, a miniature POW/MIA table, sample proclamations, quilts of valor, and other ideas.

The Department of Texas continued the use of Poppy Funds to support military families again this year donating \$5,000.00 to the Armed Services YMCA for military stationed in Killeen Fort Cavazos and \$5,000.00 to TAPS specifically targeted towards children of active-duty military families.

In a joint effort with the Detachment of Texas Sons of the American Legion, the Texas American Legion Auxiliary participated in both the Backpacks and School Supplies distribution with the ASYMCA and in again by providing the turkey or ham for the Holiday meal distribution effort.

Three Texas Department meetings provided opportunities for units to bring School Supplies; Paper products; and Personal Hygiene products to be delivered to the ASYMCA in Killeen to serve the military families at Camp Cavazos.

At the unit levels many units report donating to:

- Armed Services YMCA     \$2,900.00
- Birdwell Foundation \$5,000.00
- Camp Hope               \$2,700.00
- Family Readiness     \$925.00 (Goodfellow AFB)
- Fisher Houses           \$1,000.00 (plus meals & supplies)
- Purple Up Camp       \$200.00
- The Long Road           \$1,000.00
- USO                       \$750.00

Units reported participating in:

- Red Fridays
- Be the One
- POW/MIA – ceremonies; resolution at meetings; table displays
- Military Spouse programs
- Supporting First Responders
- Airborne Cadet Projects
- Overseas Coupons to Commissaries
- Goody boxes to deployed troops
- Interacting with local Recruiters
- Military Child Table and Certificates to children

This report will highlight four units that reported outstanding activities in the National Security Program this administrative year.

In Benbrook, Texas, Paul Mansir Unit 297 is located near Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth. They have established a relationship that provides frequent and regular opportunities to interact with the military and their families through the Family Readiness Group. Their report details their unique and innovating ideas including crafts, food, and activities for:

Month of the military child

Armed Forces Day

National Native American Heritage Month

Military Spouse's Day

Gold Star Mothers

PTSD Awareness

Veterans Day

Black History Month

Thanksgiving

Christmas

Earth Day

School Supplies "Stuff the Bus"

POW/MIA Remembrance Table

Winter Clothing & Food Drive

Honoring Women in the Military

Family Fun Day

Holidays & Heroes

Birthday Celebrations for each branch of the military

Airmens' Closet

Marshall-Scott Jamar ALA Unit 61 in Abilene, Texas, participated in a Block Party for the Military Child at the Youth Center at Dyess Air Force Base. They hosted a carnival game: "Drop the Disc" (like Plinko). The children dropped a disc and received a prize including paddleballs, puzzles, pens, notebooks, bubbles, pencils, yo-yos, necklaces and bracelets, patriotic bookmarks and stuffed animals. The table was visited 260 times.

Unit 521 in Pasadena, Texas, promoted Military Kids Day in conjunction with American Legion Family Day. 212 Children received flyers through the Pasadena Independent School District inviting them to attend the Post home celebration. Each child received a certificate; played games enjoyed hot dogs, snow cones, popcorn and McDonald pies. Additionally, Wal-Mart provided a \$10 gift card and Golden Corral gave a free meal and drink coupon. Door prizes were given away throughout the event. Ten members worked 25 hours as the Unit spent \$200 and in-kind donations totaled \$2,500.00. This report wishes to recognize the great idea to combine these two activities. This unit also displays the current year POW/MIA poster in the activity and meeting room which is free for the asking from the government.

Located over 150 miles from the nearest military base, Woods W. Lynch Unit 19 in Midland, Texas has found ways to work the National Security program and support the military regardless of the distance. This unit has a strong presence on their face book page and keeps National Security information frequently posted. Their unit members wear red on Fridays, they wear Be the One shirts, and they are branded at all their functions and in their action activity photographs. Their various

National Security program donations exceed Twelve thousand dollars as they additionally donate in-kind and sponsor many fund-raising activities and events for scholarships and other ways to support military families. This chairman commends Unit 19 for their innovative ideas and continued efforts to work the National Security program.

It came to this chairman's attention that Texas units participated in "10,000 cards to the Troops" prior to the Christmas season. Units 511 Dallas, Unit 597 in Carrollton, were two units that reported participating in this activity.

It is reported that proclamations were issued and presented to several Texas Units for National Security activities by City, County and State entities.

Texas is proud to have 15 active-duty military installations within the Lone Star State and an estimated 111,061 personnel from the Army, Air Force, Navy,



Marines and Space Force as well as the National Guard and Reserve. With a current membership of 12,633, each ALA member in Texas can serve eight active-duty military sometime during the year so that every serviceperson stationed in Texas is touched by the American Legion Auxiliary somewhere, sometime by someone.

This Chairman wishes more than twenty units had provided reports to more accurately convey the great work performed in the National Security program by Texas dedicated and hard-working ALA volunteers. It is likely that these reports may reflect only one tenth of the National Security program efforts actually performed in Texas.



*PAST PRESIDENT'S PARLEY*  
*Teresa Copeland - Chairman*

The Presidents Parley is a committee made up of Past Department Presidents. It was established to share the knowledge and the experience of past American Legion Auxiliary leaders with all members.

The primary purpose and goal of this year's committee, was mentoring, training and fundraising for medical scholarships. The committee also encouraged Units to nominate outstanding members for Unit Member of the Year, a prestigious award which includes an invitation to the Unit Member of the Year luncheon held

annually at the National Convention. The committee also asked former leaders to give back, to stay active and to continue their service to the organization through mentoring.

Each year the Past Presidents Parley committee awards \$1000.00 medical scholarships to deserving Texas students who wish to continue their education. With this in mind, the committee immediately began working on their goal to raise enough money through donations and fundraisers, so that all applicants could receive a scholarship.

During the DEC meeting held in September, the PPP Committee participated in the "KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR." Dressed in butterfly covered nurses'

uniforms and butterfly wings, the committee decorated a table, printed out "Donation Request" template letters, gave away candy and writing pens that looked like hypodermic needles, all while quizzing members on their PPP knowledge. They also sold raffle tickets for a large Flag afghan to raise money for the scholarships. It was a lot of fun!

During the Midwinter Conference in January, hoping to raise more money, the committee continued to sell raffle tickets for the Flag Afghan along with a raffle for a Kureig Coffee Maker. Both prizes were given away at the conference.

During the year, the PPP Committee put information in the Department bulletin and sent out mass emails, reminding District Presidents to include Past Department, District and Division Presidents in their District conventions. They also put out a Christmas challenge for Units, Districts or individuals to donate a minimum of \$100 before Christmas day to be placed in a drawing for a \$50 gift card.

As of the cut-off date for medical scholarships applications, May 1st, enough funds had been raised that all applicants would receive a scholarship.



*POPPY*  
*Janie Arista - Chairman*

The Poppy Program is an amazing program that helps our veterans and their families. Units were busy throughout the state of Texas, setting up displays, making poppies out of felt, crepe paper and even yarn. We received 14-unit year-end reports. We also received one poppy poster which won locally and was forwarded to southern division and then sent to national.

Let's take a trip around Texas and see what has been going on throughout the year. Here's what they were doing! Some units were written up in the local newspaper and one unit was on the local news station where the audience learned about the importance of the Poppy Program and how the donations collected from poppies helped veterans and their families.

A lot of units were busy around Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Valentines Day and any other holiday that can honor veterans. There were dinners, parades, air shows, even Easter egg hunts and Family Day where the poppy program was visible and poppy color books were available. Poppies were handed out to the veterans at hospitals and senior citizen homes. Local stores often had booths set up with unit members setting up poppy information as well as displaying a table full of poppies. One unit got a new member when they were set up at a local store. One unit asked a few veterans to sit with them when they distributed poppies; the unit members believed it made it easier for those from the community who approached the table to visit, share stories and remember their loved ones (veterans) who passed.

One unit reached out to the community to help make poppies. Girl Scouts volunteered to help and when the project was complete, they received a badge from the Girl Scouts.

Many units set out poppy cans in the Post where they were available throughout the year for collecting donations. A unit entered the annual chili cook off and included raising funds for cancer research; they wanted to promote both programs. ROTC visitors were in attendance with the unit members.

Units used social media (especially Facebook) to get the word out about poppies and the Poppy Program, promoting who we are, what we do and why we matter.

A unit set up for a bicycle run and handed out lapel pins of flags and poppies when they stopped at the unit's canopy to be refreshed.

There were a lot of poppy parties and paint and sip parties. It was a great time to get better acquainted with unit members and to make new friends. The junior members were involved with distributing poppies. Some handed out poppy stickers at the grand opening of the Medal of Honor Museum.

Many creative ways were shared on how to promote the poppy program--yard stakes for a poppy memorial garden, a poppy table with veteran thank you cards, posters with the poppy story and the "In Flanders Fields" poem, poppy cupcakes and cookies, Lolli Poppies, poppy coloring books with crayons and poppy donation cans. Poppy Day seemed to be every day all year long! Thank you to all the unit members who dedicated their time to promote and educate others about the Poppy Program.



## *PUBLIC RELATIONS*

### *Misty Jeffcoat - Chairman*

The American Legion Auxiliary Units across the Department of Texas have actively and creatively promoted the mission, programs, and accomplishments of our organization throughout the year. Their commitment to public relations has strengthened community connections and increased visibility for the Auxiliary's initiatives.

Abilene Unit 61 led the way as the first to submit its Public Relations narrative this year, setting an inspiring example for other Units. Many Units successfully built relationships with local media outlets-including newspapers, television stations, and radio-to share news, promote events, and announce meetings. Notable examples include Weatherford Unit 163, Abilene Unit 61, Hallettsville Unit 230, La Grange Unit 102, Madisonville Unit 84, Midland Unit 19, and Moulton Unit 302, all of which utilized local newspapers for press releases and event promotion.

Further expanding their media presence, Units such as Abilene Unit 61, Hallettsville Unit 230, Madisonville Unit 84, Dallas Wynnewood Unit 511, and Midland Unit 19 shared the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary via radio broadcasts, television appearances, and podcasts.

Social media has become a cornerstone of Auxiliary outreach efforts. Platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, and official Unit websites have been widely used to promote meetings, share photos and videos from events, and engage with the public through live content. Units that demonstrated exceptional use of social media include San Leon Unit 291, Conroe Unit 411 (a newly chartered Unit as of September 2024), Dallas Units 511 and 424, Midland Unit 19, The Woodlands Unit 305, Benbrook Unit 297, and Carrollton Unit 597. These Units consistently posted content, created event flyers and newsletters, published calendars, and effectively used Facebook Events to raise awareness.

Public-facing events have also played a major role in public relations. Many Units hosted community events such as vendor fairs, Easter egg hunts, and "Breakfast with Santa" gatherings. These events provided opportunities to distribute information about the American Legion Auxiliary and recruit eligible individuals. Carrollton Unit 597 created a professionally designed rack card featuring information about their Legion Family and eligibility requirements to join the American Legion. These rack cards are distributed to Post visitors and at community events, helping increase awareness and interest in membership.

Outreach extended into schools, where Units distributed *Star Spangled Kids* kits and shared messages of citizenship, kindness, and academic encouragement. Dallas Unit 511 spoke with students about good deeds, while Willis Unit 200 presented a scholarship during a school awards program.

To ensure visibility in the community, members proudly wore branded apparel, ALA pins, and identification badges during events. Some Units, such as Madisonville Unit 84, Wallis Unit 200, and Benbrook Unit 297, enhanced their community engagement by joining their local Chambers of Commerce, yielding valuable promotional opportunities. Carrollton Unit 597 was presented with a proclamation for the Month of the Military Child by the Mayor at a City Council Meeting.

Dallas Wynnewood Unit 511 formed partnerships with other community organizations, presenting thank-you plaques in recognition of support and hosting a Legion Family Play Day, open to the public. Midland Unit 19 collaborated with other Posts and Units on larger community events, demonstrating the power of teamwork within the Legion Family.

Participation in local parades and community festivals was widespread. Dallas Unit 424 made a strong impression with a booth at a major Irish Festival, inviting other local Units to join them.

They took the opportunity to speak with festival goers about the Legion Family and encourage visits to nearby Posts. Both Dallas Unit 424 and Carrollton Unit 597 creatively engaged the public through the "Adopt a Duck" program, drawing attention to their booths and opening conversations about ALA and Legion programs.

Benbrook Unit 297 hosted several events at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, inviting members of the military and local residents to learn more about the Auxiliary. Abilene Unit 61 proudly presented the colors at a Special Olympics event, while Weatherford Unit 163 distributed free Veterans Day meal vouchers from Texas Roadhouse to local veterans.

In summary, the Units of the Department of Texas have demonstrated outstanding dedication and innovation in promoting the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. Their efforts have elevated the visibility of our programs, strengthened community ties, and furthered the goals of *Service Not Self*.



*VETERANS AFFAIRS AND  
REHABILITATION  
MaryAnn Paul - Chairman*

The purpose of the VA & R program is to promote programs and services that assist and enhance the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring and/or transition to normal operational lives.

We strongly believe in rehabilitation and healing through arts/crafts and music therefore the Department of Texas is a major contributor to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival making an annual donation of \$7,868.00. Units hosted painting parties to aid healing through arts, crafts and hobbies. Many units also purchased art supplies needed by veterans.

Fourteen VA Medical Centers and/or Clinics are staffed with 22 Representatives and Deputies (and we are in the process of recruiting several additional Reps & Deps). Some are there daily with coffee carts and snacks. Every holiday you will find our Reps & Deps and Unit members serving up special treats. Whether it be cupcakes, ice cream or lap blankets. Our ALA members host pizza parties & bingo. Christmas Gift shops are also held at several of the VA Medical Centers. Every veteran hospitalized during Christmas receives a small monetary gift and/or item. We make sure no veteran at a VA Medical Center during Christmas goes without a Christmas gift.

For Christmas, members of ALA Unit 411 brought all the supplies needed for a Christmas Feast at Camp Valor, a residential treatment center for veterans and first responders with PTSD.

ALA members also take homecooked meals to our Fisher Houses. They make sure that the houses are supplied with dish soap, laundry soap, paper products and groceries. Unit 19 Midland donated \$500.00 to the Fisher House in El Paso. Unit 19 partnered with Meals on Wheels, with over 80 veterans in their programs, donating 27 fans, 52 heaters, 28 wheelchairs and delivering meals. Our Meals on Wheels veterans are not forgotten at Christmas; Units 96 & 110 make sure their wish lists are fulfilled. A member from Unit 61 Abilene attended a "We Honor Vets" meeting to discuss the meal program to open to all veterans in July.

Many units partner with Wreaths Across America ensuring that most veteran graves have a wreath at Christmas, this includes private and national cemeteries. Standdowns are held throughout the State. Distributing socks, underwear, thermals, coats, and misc. personal hygiene items. Unit 802 Dallas has their annual "Socks for Veterans" with thousands of socks collected and taken to our VA Medical Centers.

We support The American Legion's "BE THE ONE" program to destigmatize asking for mental health support, encouraging peer-to-peer support and resources and educating everyone on how they can help prevent veteran and military suicide. We had several members in our department complete the training. Member's wear "BE THE ONE" shirts and post awareness information on Facebook. District 4 held a joint "BE THE ONE" training at their Spring Convention.

Units work with the West Texas VA Homeless Program and local agencies to help veterans with rent, groceries, utilities, transportation, dental work, and funeral expenses, among others. \$6,000 was raised by Unit 19 Midland for their Post 19 Veterans Assistance Fund. Units hosted community events "Veterans Night Out" dinner and dance, "Real American Idols" Veteran Karaoke contest, Veteran Chili Cook Off, and American Legion Family Days.

Contest, Veteran Chili Cookoff and four different American Legion Family days. Monies were raised and donated to "We Are Not Forgotten" women's veteran organization to sponsor a retreat. Members were active with the Texas Patriot Guard Riders, offering an escort and flag line for veteran funeral services. Unit 19 had 6 members serving as volunteers on the Permian Basin Honor Flight.

Unit 33 Beaumont donated ten laundry baskets full of kitchen items for homeless veterans for their new apartments, along with clothing.

Every Thursday (50 times a year) from 8:00-10:00 A.M. approximately 100 veterans and their caretakers/spouses come to the Earl Graham 159 American Legion Post where coffee, donuts and kolaches are served by the Auxiliary members. Attendance continues to grow as the veterans find comfort and friendship at this event. Approximately 14 doz. of donuts are eaten, and 495 cups of coffee are consumed every Thursday. A grant from Brazos Valley Cares helps support this event.

Unit 164 Katy sponsors "Pies for Hope" to raise awareness for Camp Hope (a PTSD Foundation) and provided 125 pies for their Thanksgiving meal plus a cash donation of \$500. Unit 164 Katy's Women Veterans Day is an annual event under the leadership of our dual members recognizing our Women Veterans. They celebrate their service through their stories and this year our keynote speaker was 105-year-old dual member Thelma Williams.

The Department of Texas is proud to report that many of our unit members purchased Challenge Cards from our National Organization that benefit the Veterans Projects Fund.

Unit 297 Bedford has been working with the Patriot House and Liberty House for many years. These transitional living facilities provide counseling, social & life skills training, and other services to help veterans who lack permanent housing to reintegrate back into the workforce and provide a stable home for themselves. We deliver monthly donations of household items, food, linens, holiday favors, and more. The residents are always happy to see us, and it is incredibly heart-warming to feel their happiness for the little things we are blessed to do for them.

March 29<sup>th</sup> is National VietNam Veterans Day; Unit 297 Bedford held a special event at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NASJRB) where local VietNam veterans were honored for their service during the VietNam War. The Base Commander gave each veteran a commemorative pin and special gift. Of course, we had cake! That evening we sponsored a special meat loaf dinner to honor our VietNam veterans at Post 297 as well.

The Department of Texas VA & R Facebook page has daily activities posted. We are happy to report that our unit members take to heart our mission in assisting our veterans and their families every day.





*WAYS AND MEANS*  
*Cathy Perry - Chairman*

President Sharon's pin is a rectangular pin, with a white background and gold border. The state of Texas is in the middle of the pin, divided into three parts in red, white and blue. The lone star in white in the blue really stands out. A beautiful purple butterfly covers the white part of Texas. In the top left corner, written in gold, is our new American Legion Auxiliary emblem. Going across the bottom part of Texas is Sharon's theme "Advocating for Change, One Veteran at a Time" written in gold; below that is her name, ALA Dept. of Texas and her term 2024-2025, all in gold. To go with Sharon's theme this year, is her membership theme, "Transforming Lives Through Our Membership".

Sharon's pins are \$4.00 each. At Department Convention last year, several hundred pins were held on consignment. This is something that has been done for many years. It enables Division, District and Unit presidents to take the pins back home to the groups / individuals that are unable to come to conventions. The Division, District, and Unit Presidents can use these pins for awards, incentives or just to sell back.



*BIG SPRINGS VA MEDICAL CENTER*  
*Shawna Dunlap - Representative*

The George H. O'Brien, Jr., Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Big Spring is part of the West Texas VA Health Care System, which also includes a West Texas VA Homeless Veteran program, the Midland Vet Center and the Wilson and Young Medal of Honor VA Clinic in between Midland and Odessa.

The VA Hospital provides primary care and specialty health services, including mental health services, treatment for spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain injury, suicide prevention, women's health care, dental/oral surgery, audiology, caregiver support, and more. They currently support around 26 patients in the main hospital and around 30 residents in their new Community Living Center for rehabilitation from addiction, depression treatment, community re-entry from incarceration, job training, life skills development and education.

The VA Clinic offers primary care and specialty health services, including mental health care, physical and occupational therapy, treatment for addiction and substance abuse, women's health services and more. We are working on getting a monthly snack and information station in partnership with Midland Unit 19 and Odessa Unit 430.

The Midland Vet Center offers confidential help for Veterans, service members, and their families at no cost in a non-medical setting. Their services include counseling for needs such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma. The West Texas VA Homeless Veteran program is based out of San Angelo. Both of these organizations contact me or officers of Unit 19 in Midland when they have a veteran in need of assistance with food, rent, utilities, clothes, gas, etc.

Partnering with Unit 19 in Midland, we made several trips to Big Spring to the VA Hospital to deliver snacks and soft drinks for the residents. At Christmas, Unit 19 donated piles of Christmas gifts, clothing, socks, 26 Old Spice gifts sets, 20 3-in-1 body wash, shampoo and conditioner, games, snacks and soft drinks. All 46 patients and residents at the VA Hospital got a \$10 Gift Card from Unit 19. For Valentine's for Veterans, we delivered cookies, boxes of chocolates, and bags of gummie bears, along with cards from local school kids given to the veterans by Little Miss Poppy Aspyrn Beeson with a hug. Unit 19 members gave all veterans a Thank You Card with a Poppy attached to the cookie bags.

We are currently recruiting 2 Hospital Deputies to the program, with the intent that one of them will move up to the Representative position should it become necessary.



*DALLAS VA MEDICAL CENTER*  
*Theresa Hill - Representative*

Theresa accepted the responsibility of being Hospital Representative at the Dallas VAMC along with her Deputy Evelyn Lopez, she reported this has been a very eventful year.

For the year 2024-2025 Theresa reported ALA was able to help Chemotherapy patients, we were able to give handmade tote bags filled with blankets, handmade pillows/caps, snacks and word fine books. Also provided a beautiful Chemo bell for the clinic to have for patients to ring and celebrate them completing there last day of chemotherapy.

This year the ALA has continued to support the Poly Trauma area by providing juices and snacks for all patients. Some of our amputees and Traumatic brain injuries Veterans are there most of the day with little funds, the snacks made a difference for these Veterans and family members.

Theresa's Deputy Evelyn delivers comfort items to 5th floor as well as the 7th floor to patients.

ALA was able to deliver to 3 out of 4 of our ICU areas comfort items Toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorants, combs and razors. Comfort items are provided for the mammography area with soothing music as well as bottled water and snacks.

ALA supported the Breast Cancer Awareness month providing cookies, cupcakes, punch along with pink beads and stickers.

This year ALA participated in National Salute three full days hosting events and distributing over 400 boxes of chocolates, cupcakes, cookies and snack items for Veterans.

American Legion Riders were allowed to show 4 motorcycles in the Atrium of the hospital. Veterans enjoyed their time admiring the bikes and chatting with riders.

ALA supported the POW program with cakes, punch, plates and napkins to help make the event successful.

ALA supports the CLC year-round with decorations and snacks for inpatient events.

This year the Our Pre-Veterans Days celebration was held giving out 1,000 hot dogs chips drinks and pies. ALA provided all pies.

The ALA was able to host the ALA Gift Shop by providing gifts for our Veterans families wrapped and mailed to their family address this year.

Theresa reported donations were made from several Units of socks and underwear to be distributed to in-patients along with lotions.

ALA participated with the **Packing of Bags** at the Dallas VA- for our Veteran inpatients. Provided canteen books for the event. This year a Junior ALA member and her school assisted with the event and provided so much help in the delivery and assembly of bags.

Theresa attended the monthly VAVS Executive Committee meetings held every first Monday of the month. Theresa and Evelyn attend VAVS Quarterly meetings. Theresa reported she provided/stocked her Auxiliary Kiddie Kart to deliver coloring books and snacks to children in the Clinical waiting rooms at the hospital (All items donated by Auxiliary Unit members).

The American Legion Auxiliary volunteers donated thousands of volunteer hours to the Dallas VA Hospital.

Theresa concluded by saying this has been an exciting year and she is thankful for having been given the honor of serving our Veterans.

Theresa expressed her thanks and appreciation to all the individuals and Units for their continued support.

A humble Thank you to my deputy Evelyn Lopez for her continued service to our Veterans.



*KERRVILLE VA MEDICAL CENTER*  
*Nancy Webb - Representative*

This lovely hospital is actually no longer a hospital and has only been a clinic, with long term memory care, palliative, hospice and geriatric long-term care. The clinic side has 7 primary teams that do outpatient care.

This past year the American Legion Auxiliary was able to conduct in person visits. The ALA hosted bingo once a month, took first place, again, in the most money raised at the annual car show event. The fundraising for the Auxiliary was for bake goods. The annual Veterans Christmas tree again brought an amazing turn out and no angel was left on the tree, sounds like the movie where we should ring a bell for all the angels that go their wings. The annual easter egg hunt for the family members of the AMAZING nurses and in patient clients did not see as great a turn out as our stuffing 2000 eggs warranted, BUT it was all due to lack of communication from our exhausted nurses so we TOTALLY forgave them for that.

The long-term care side houses 154 beds, but has not seen full capacity for a few years. The inpatient clients always enjoy the delivery of Halloween candy, visits and gifts from the Auxiliary. Then there are cookies at Christmas, with gifts from Santa, of course. Easter is the egg hunt, with fruit and cookie trays. Veterans' days are cards from children around the 221st district and visits from the Auxiliary. Let us not forget Valentines Day with lots of hugs and kisses, chocolate of course and again cards from kiddos and local auxiliary units.

The Auxiliary also participated in salute to Veteran's week in February with coffee, snacks, cards and goodies for those coming in and out of appointments. So even though Kerrville is small we have a lot of fun with the Veterans and very good working relationship with the staff.



*WACO VA MEDICAL CENTER*  
*Mary Hueske - Representative*

Mary Hueske, Representative and deputies Tone Mahon, and Ruth Beers continued to serve the Veterans at the Waco VA campus with activities and treats. But it is with great sadness that they reported that the Waco VA has lost a 30-year volunteer with the passing of deputy Hilde Neumann, she is truly missed. This year they had 18 occasional Volunteers, with 81 volunteer hours. Included in the occasional volunteers was a SAL member.

They attended all the VAVS quarterly meetings, and they made it their goal to help Volunteer Services every chance they could. They helped on all the joint VSO activities, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Halloween, Veterans Day, Salute to Veterans, Thanksgiving and Christmas, etc....

Every month, they hold 7 Ice Cream Socials, and 2 Bingo parties. They also have a "Greeters" program on the Medical Bldg, greeting all the Veterans coming in for lab work and doctor appointments. They hand out free items, cold water and a snack. Some of the items they hand out are activities kits from the "Help Heal Veterans" Org. They have information packets on hand to tell the Veterans about the American Legion and Auxiliary. They love it, and get to tell them thank you for what they have done for them.

They have traveled over 4,126 miles and received approx. \$24,427.21 in donations for the Waco VA and the homeless Veterans in the Waco area. The donations they received were way too numerous to list, but here is some of the things donated this year: One Unit gave \$7,000.00 to support the Homeless Veterans program; another Unit has given 370 Non-perishable lunches valued at \$1,383.29 for the homeless program, and a Unit is sponsoring a 100-gallon fish aquarium in the relaxation room in the RISE Unit, paying for the food and cleaning of the tank.

They have received \$1,069.00 in donations, designated for the women's RISE Unit to purchase anything they may need, and there was so much more.

For the Veterans Christmas Gift Bags this year, they reached out to the District, Units and Post asking for donations for the Veterans gifts. They received donations totaling \$570.00 which were used to purchase hats, puzzle books, combs, and blankets for the Veterans Christmas gifts. These items were added to the donations from the other VSO Groups.

They held their second annual Gift Shop in 2024 and are now working on next year's Gift Shop. The gift shop event was attended by the Department President Sharon Phelps and 2<sup>nd</sup> Division President Licia Kim, and members from Unit 159 and Unit 84. After the event, it was so wonderful to hear everyone saying they couldn't wait till next year. In 2024 they handed out the \$10.00 Christmas Assessment in person.

Mary said they know they make a huge impact on the Veterans they come into contact with every day. Here are a couple of those times. 1) While doing an ice cream social they noticed a woman veteran in the Women's Lockward that was sitting by herself, not smiling, and definitely sad. They took her a bowl of ice cream and spoke briefly. A few minutes later she came up to them and said she was having the worst day and their kindness, smile and wonderful treat has made her day better. When she went back to sit down, she was smiling! 2) While delivering Non-perishable lunches for the homeless program, they were told that there were 3 veterans that come every day to get a non-perishable lunch and then ask for one to take with them when they leave. The staff told them; these lunches are the only thing these Veterans have to eat all day. 3) And then there was the veteran in the Men's Lockward that colored a beautiful drawing and made an Origami bird and asked if he could give these to them as a thank you for cheering up his day. They all love working with the Veterans and appreciate all the help they get, to be able to do the things they do.

*PRE-CONVENTION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING*  
*Department Convention*  
*July 11, 2024*  
*Austin, Texas*

Meeting was called to order by President Holly Heatly at 2:00 pm. Advancement of colors by Donna approved by Penny Honaker, Yolanda M. Garcia, and Nancy Webb and filed as approved. President Heatly appointed Irene Szwarc, Denise Yanus and Nancy Cobb to read and approve the 2024 Patterson, Sgt-at-Arms and Lupe Barrera, Chairman of Pages. Janey Arista, Chaplain gave the Invocation.

Call Letter and Roll was read by Secretary Tiffany Troxclair. 2023 Pre-DEC Minutes were read and Pre-DEC Minutes.

Tiffany read the minutes from the motions made and approved between meetings via email.

**Remove Unit 817 from Suspension:**

1/2/24 - Motion by Denise Yanus and a second to remove Unit 817 from suspension effective February 1st. Motion Carried.

**Remove Unit 408 from Suspension:**

1/30/24 - Motion by Linda Dorsett and a second to remove Unit 408 from suspension effective February 1st. Motion Carried.

**Accept Unit 493 Charter:**

2/2/24 - Motion by Irene Szwarc and a second to accept the charter of Unit 493 Nederland and cancel their charter. Motion Carried.

**Place Unit 817 on Suspension:**

6/7/24 - Motion by Leigh-Anne Stewart to suspend Unit 817 for 30 days so that the Department can appoint someone to look into these allegations and report back to DEC before any further action is taken. The motion carried.

**Employee Policy Changes:**

6/7/24 - Motion by Leigh-Anne Stewart and a second to accept the proposed Employee Policy changes. The motion carried.

7<sup>th</sup> District President Beverly Sloan moved to accept the minutes as read. The motion was seconded and carried.



Christine Trahan, Finance Chair, gave the report of the audit. The audit is almost complete. Due to some personal issues our auditor is delayed in the final report. However, everything looks great. The 990 will be filed on time.

1<sup>st</sup> District President Stephanie Herrera moved to cancel Unit 45,92 and 248. The motion was seconded and carried.

17<sup>th</sup> District President Nancy Cobb moved to cancel Unit 423. The motion was seconded and carried.

14<sup>th</sup> District President Denise Yanus moved to place unit 547 on suspension for 6 months. The motion was seconded and carried.

17<sup>th</sup> District President Nancy Cobb moved to place unit 109 and 181 on suspension for 6 months. The motion was seconded and carried.

A list of units who have not turned in their certification of officers was read. After Past Department President Myra Cooper reported on her investigation of reports against Unit 817, Division 2 President Leigh-Anne Stewart moved to continue Unit 817's suspension for 3 months pending leadership training. The motion was seconded and carried.

Announcements were given including a call for Division caucuses. Janey Arista, Chaplin gave the benediction and Donna and Lupe retired the colors. The meeting was adjourned by President Holly Heatly at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tiffany Troxclair  
Department Secretary

*DEPARTMENT CONVENTION*  
*July 12 - 14, 2024*

**Friday, July 12, 2024**

Candy Zavala, called the 105<sup>th</sup> Department Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary to order. Following the processional, Candy presented President Holly Heatly her gavel. Chaplain Janey Arista gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance and Star-Spangled Banner were done in unison. Sgt at Arms Donna Patterson placed the POW/MIS Empty Chair, and the Preamble was repeated in unison.

President Holly asked for permission to deviate as needed and permission was granted. Welcome was given by Vice President Sharon Phelps and response was given by Kimberly Wheeler-Smith President of Unit 511, the unit with the highest percentage of Membership in Texas (183.12%).

Convention call and roll call were done by Secretary Tiffany Troxclair. The 2023 Department Convention minutes were read and approved by Cecilia Mendiola, Shay Kuehner, and Hilda Kruml and will be filed as approved.

Holly appointed Kami Kemp Unit 504, Beverly Sloan Unit 618 and Teresa Copeland Unit 37 to read and approve the minutes for this convention.

Greetings were brought by Department Commander Gene Toohey and Marty Peters La Chapeau, Departmental.

The Juniors were excused to go to their meeting.

President Holly announced her convention committee appointments. Michelle Muth, Credentials Chair, gave the first credential report with 74 registered units, a voting strength of 392, 47% of accredited delegates.

Kami Kemp, Chair of the Rules Committee and her members presented the Convention Rules. The rules were approved as distributed with no changes.

Division Presidents were introduced, and they introduced their District Presidents.

Committee Reports were given.

Americanism, Candy Zavala Chairman

Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Shelli Creech Chairman

Cancer Research, Ann Nicholson Chairman

Children and Youth, Gillian Woodstrom Chairman

Education, Nancy Webb Chairman

Girls State, Martha Collis Division 4 Committee Member

Leadership, Carlene Ashworth Chairman

After announcements, the meeting was recessed until 1 pm. At 1 pm the meeting continued.

Community Service, Myrtle Johnson Chairman

Legislative, Brenda Towers, Chairman

National Security, Christi Barnicle, Division 1

Past Department Presidents, Myra Cooper, Chairman

Poppy, Ann Pugliano, Chairman

Public Relations, Misty Jeffcoat, Chairman

Department Vice President Sharon Phelps gave the Convention City Report.

SAL Detachment Commander Roy Fowler brought greetings and presented the National SAL Commander JR Hall Jr who also spoke.

Constitution and Bylaws Chairman Bertha Torres read the proposed changes to be voted on Saturday afternoon.

Secretary Tiffany gave the announcements with Chaplain Janey gave the benediction.

The meeting was recessed until 9 am Saturday by President Myra.

### **Saturday, July 13, 2024**

President Holly called the meeting to order at 9 am.

Chaplain Janey gave the invocation.

Secretary Tiffany did roll call for all officers.

Distinguished Guests Chairman Carlene Ashworth introduced our distinguished Guests.

Committee Reports continued.

Junior Activities, Nicole Ebner Chairman and Honorary Department Junior President Brealy Nieto.

President Holly introduced our VA&R Speaker Bobbie Scoggins Dallas VA Director of Voluntary Services.

VA&R, Tonia Ison Chairman

Michelle Muth, Credentials Chairman gave the second credentials report. 100 registered units, a voting strength of 481, 58% of accredited delegates.

President Holly turned the chair over to Vice President Sharon and went to visit the SAL.

Finance, Christine Trahan

A blanket was donated to be auctioned off with proceeds going to the Birdwell Foundation and \$1000 was raised.

After announcements, the meeting was recessed until 1 pm.

At 1 pm the meeting continued.

Cancer Research did their parade of Hats

Membership, Kami Kemp Chairman

PDP Skit

Beverly Sloan announced the winners of the Scrapbooks.

Michelle Muth, Credentials gave her 3rd and final report with 101 registered units, a voting strength of 501, 60% of the accredited delegates.

Resolutions Chairman Teresa Copeland and her committee read the resolutions.

Constitutions & Bylaws Chairman on behalf of the committee moved to approve the proposed change to Standing Rules Section XIII Department Committees, paragraph 4f to read "The Department Finance Committee shall be comprised of five members. The elected Department Treasurer will automatically be appointed as a member-at-large. This does not pertain to an elected Department Secretary/Treasurer, only the elected Department Treasurer. Each committee member shall serve a single term, not to exceed the term of the Department President that appointed them, with the exception of the Department Finance

Chair. There shall be a limit of six years of service on the Finance Committee for all appointees. The Finance Committee Chair must have two consecutive years of experience on the Finance Committee and cannot be the Elected Department Treasurer. The only exception is if the Finance Chair becomes incapacitated, and no one on the Finance Committee meets the Chairman requirements, (two consecutive years' experience) in this instance, the President must do their due diligence to fill this position with a qualified member, excluding the elected Treasurer." The motion carried.

Constitutions & Bylaws Chairman on behalf of the committee moved to approve the proposed change to Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Texas Section V. MEMBERSHIP DUES, #2 to read "For Senior members, Units shall remit to Department Headquarters the annual Department per capita dues of thirteen dollars (\$13.00) plus the annual National per capita dues of eighteen dollars (18.00), a total of \$31.00. 3. For Junior members, Units shall remit to Department Headquarters the annual Department per capita dues of two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50) plus the annual National per capita dues of two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50), a total of five dollars. 4. From the thirteen dollars transmitted to the Department, eighty cents (\$.80) shall be transferred to the Department Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Fund. A minimum of ten cents (\$.10) of every paid Senior membership shall be transferred into the Department of Texas Future National Officer Leadership Development Fund to help finance the candidacy of a Texas member seeking a National Office. 5. The membership dues for Senior members who join the Department Headquarters Unit shall be forty-five dollars (\$45.00) per member, and dues for Junior members shall be fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per member. Both shall be paid annually. 6. Any amendments regarding dues shall be by action of the Department Convention delegates." The motion carried.

Constitutions & Bylaws Chairman on behalf of the committee moved to approve the proposed change to Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas Article VIII section 1 to read "As provided in the Department Bylaws, there shall be the following Core Standing Committees: Americanism, Children and Youth, Constitution & Bylaws, Finance, Membership, National Security, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. There shall be the following Mission Outreach Committees: Community Service, Education, Girls State, Junior Activities, Legislative, and Poppy. In addition, there shall be the following Member/Organizational Support Committees: Auxiliary Emergency Fund,

Leadership, and Public Relations. There shall also be the following Special Purpose Committees: Cancer Research, Past Presidents Parley and any other ad hoc/ Special Purpose Committees the incoming President deems necessary.” The motion carried.

Constitutions & Bylaws Chairman on behalf of the committee moved to approve the proposed change to Article VIII. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES Section 4 a. to read “Article VIII. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES Section 4 a. No Department Officer or Committee Chair or Committee member shall hold more than one Department Office or Committee Chair or Committee member appointment at the same time except that of those serving as; 1) Hospital Representatives and Deputies; 2) Special purpose committees that perform special tasks; 3) The National Executive Committee person shall be allowed to serve on a committee as deemed desirable by the incoming Department President. 4) The elected Department Treasurer shall automatically be appointed as the member at large of the Department Finance Committee, with one stipulation, they may not serve as Chair. This does not apply to an elected Secretary/Treasurer. When necessary, a current Department Officer, Committee Chair or Committee member may be appointed to serve as the Chair of the Department Convention Committee 5) District Vice Presidents shall be allowed to serve on Department Committees as deemed desirable by the incoming Department President. If the office of District President in their District becomes vacant during this time, they will be required to step down from their committee position to fulfill the office of District President till the next regularly scheduled District convention, at which time a District President will be elected.” The motion carried.

Secretary Tiffany read the National Convention call.

Secretary Tiffany read the list of delegates and alternates to National Convention. Four alternates are needed to complete the delegation for Texas. Those nominated were Pam Birkett, Lori Doctor, Shawna Dunlap and Janie Inglehart. Christine Trahan moved to close nominations. Motion was seconded and carried.

Leigh-Anne Stewart moved to accept the delegates and alternates as read. Motion was seconded and carried.

President Holly recognized the pages and Sgt-at-Arms.

Secretary Tiffany gave the announcements with Chaplain Janey gave the benediction.

Meeting recessed until 9 am Sunday morning.

### **Sunday, July 14, 2024**

A joint memorial Service was held with the Legion and Auxiliary Chaplin's presiding prior to the opening of the meeting.

President Holly called the meeting to order at 9 am.

Chaplain Janey gave the invocation.

Secretary Tiffany did roll call.

Distinguished Guest Chairman Carlene introduced Southern Division National Vice President Christine Trahan. Christine talked about PTSD and the importance of supporting those suffering from this illness.

President Holly gave her report.

Ways & Means Cat Perry Chairman

Drawings were held. A Poppy hat was auctioned off raising \$725 for the Poppy Fund.

Secretary Tiffany read the list of the newly elected District and Division officers for confirmation. Teresa Copeland Unit 37 moved to confirm the newly elected District Presidents, Vice Presidents and Division Presidents as read. Motion was seconded and carried.

President Holly presented Nicole Ebner, Jr Auxiliary Chairman to announce the results of their elections.

Secretary Tiffany talked about voting procedures and did the roll call of units.

The election of the Department officers for 2024-2025 After President Holly introduced the election judge and committee members, the following nominations were made:

Department President Sharon Phelps, nominated by Christine Trahan

Sharon was elected by acclamation

Department Vice President Leigh-Anne Stewart, nominated by Carlene Ashworth

Leigh-Anne was elected by acclamation

Department Historian Sharon Shumate-Elam, nominated by MaryAnn Paul

Sharon was elected by acclamation

Department Chaplin M'Lisa Nieman, nominated by Cat Perry

M'Lisa was elected by acclamation

Department Sgt-at-Arms Lupe Barrera, nominated by Janey Arista

Lupe was elected by acclamation

History Book winner was announced by Historian Kathy Wons.

2025 Membership was turned in.

After a brief recess Teresa Copeland conducted the Installation of officers. After the installation, newly elected President Sharon Phelps addressed the convention, and then returned the gavel to Holly.

There was no further business. After announcements and benediction, President Holly adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tiffany Troxclair  
Department Secretary



*POST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
DEPARTMENT CONVENTION*

*July 14, 2024  
Austin, Texas*

Immediately following her installation and adjournment of the Department Convention, newly elected President Sharon Phelps called the Post Executive Meeting to order.

Lupe Barrera, Sgt-at-Arms and Vera Berry, Chairman of Pages posted the colors. Chaplain M'Lisa Nieman gave the Invocation. Secretary Tiffany Troxclair read the Post DEC Call Letter and called the roll.

The 2023 Post DEC minutes were read and approved by Hilda Kruml, Penny Chandler and Denise Yanus.

President Sharon appointed Beverly Sloan, Michelle Birkett and Sandra Ramirez to read and approve the minutes of this meeting.

Department President Sharon announced her Parliamentarian for the coming year would be Teresa Copeland.

Department Vice President Leigh-Anne Stewart assumed the Chair and asked for nominations for Department Secretary. President Sharon nominated Tiffany Troxclair as Department Secretary. As there were no more nominations, Tiffany was declared Secretary for 2024-2025.

Department Vice President Leigh-Anne asked for nominations for Department Treasurer. President Sharon nominated Robin Alva as Department Treasurer. As there were no more nominations, Robin was declared Treasurer for 2024-2025.

President Sharon returned to the chair. Copies of committee appointees were distributed. President Sharon asked ratification of the appointments and permission to fill in any blank appointments if necessary and to add or make changes to these appointments as possible and when necessary. Hilda Kruml, District 21 President moved to ratify the appointments. Motion was seconded and with no further discussion, the motion carried.

Finance Chairman Christine Trahan and the committee move to be allowed to purchase President pins for 2025-2026. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

Finance Chairman Christine Trahan and the committee move to be allowed to purchase membership shirts for 2025-2026. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

Finance Chairman Christine Trahan and the committee move to be allowed to hold fundraisers for the General Fund 2024-2025. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

Finance Chairman Christine Trahan and the committee move to be allowed to move funds and open and close accounts that benefit the American Legion Auxiliary. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

The Finance Committee has the following requests:

1. The Historian gets 3 bids for the History book and it needs to be turned in to the Finance Committee by August 3, 2024. It is requested that the Historian attempt to get sponsors to cover the cost of the book.
2. The VA&R and Membership committees are requested to try and get sponsors for the breakfast and luncheon for the 2024-2025 Convention.
3. Requests that the committees solicit funds to cover any incentives they wish to give for the 2024-2025 year.
4. New Incoming President for 2025-2026 try to get sponsors to help with the cost of their membership shirts and pins.

Membership Chairman Shay Kuehner introduced the membership committee and stated they were here for everyone.

District 4 President, Susie Frizzell moved to accept the charter and cancel Unit 100. The motion was seconded and carried.

District 10 President, Randi Weeks moved to accept the charter and cancel Unit 455. The motion was seconded and carried.

Division 4 President Nancy Webb moved to place unit 54 on suspension for 90 days. The motion was seconded and carried.

President Sharon announce that Camp Hope would be her personal project for the year.

There was no further business, Secretary Tiffany gave announcements.

Chaplain M'Lisa offered the Benediction and the meeting adjourned.

Read and approved by

Approved via email  
Beverly Sloan, 7th District President

7/27/24  
Date

Approved via email  
Michelle Birkett, 12th District President

7/27/24  
Date

Approved via email  
Sandra Ramirez, Americanism Chm

7/27/24  
Date

*FALL DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING*  
*September 21 - 22, 2024*  
*Austin, Texas*

**Saturday, September 21, 2024**

The Fall DEC meeting was held at the Austin SouthPark Hotel in Austin Texas. President Sharon Phelps opened the meeting at 9:00 AM. Advancement of colors by J Lupe Barrera, Sgt-at-Arms and Lupe Barrera, Chairman of Pages. Vera Berry, Chaplin M'Lisa Nieman gave the Invocation.

President Sharon introduced the head table and her personal page. She then called for a closed session and asked for the room to be cleared except for the DEC and PDP's.

Secretary Tiffany Troxclair read the call-in letter and roll call. President Sharon appointed Stephanie Herrera 1<sup>st</sup> District President, Beverly Sloan 7<sup>th</sup> District President and Denise Yanus 3<sup>rd</sup> Division President to read and approve the minutes for DEC Minutes.

Lori Swann, Director of Girls State presented the 2025 Girls State budget.

Lori moved to approve the budget as presented. Since the motion came from the committee no second was needed. Motion carried.

The finance committee presented the 2024-2025 Budget. Christine Trahan Finance Chairman, moved to approve the budget as presented. Since the motion came from the committee no second was needed. Motion carried.

Christine moved to approve the Financial Operations Guidelines. Since the motion came from the committee no second was needed. Motion carried.

2023-2024 Department President Holly Heatly gave awards from National.

Announcements were made by Secretary Tiffany.

M'Lisa, Chaplin gave the invocation and Lupe and Vera recessed the colors.

Break for lunch at 11:30 am.

Program Fair "**KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR**" at 1pm.

**Sunday September 22, 2024**

President Sharon called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Sgt-at-Arms Lupe Barrera and Chairman of pages Vera Berry advanced the colors. Chaplin M'Lisa Nieman gave the invocation.

Secretary Tiffany Troxclair read the roll call.

VA&R chair, MaryAnn Paul read the list of Reps and Deps for ratification. The VA&R committee moved for ratification of the Reps and Deps. Motion carried.

Vice President Leigh-Anne Stewart gave a convention city report with dates of upcoming meetings.

Guest entered the room to bring greetings:  
Tom Marty, American Legion Department Commander  
George Alva, SAL Detachment Commander

Shay Kuehner, Membership Chairman introduced her committee and gave a report.

Finance Chair Christine Trahan gave a report of funds raised Saturday afternoon.

Ways and Means chair Cat Perry gave a report on sales at this meeting.

Division Presidents were introduced and introduced their District Presidents.

There were no units to add or remove from suspension or close.

M'Lisa, Chaplin gave the invocation and Lupe and Vera retired the colors.

President Sharon adjourned the DEC meeting at 11:10.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tiffany Troxclair  
Department Secretary

Read and approved by

Approved via email

Stephanie Herrera, 1<sup>st</sup> District President

11/20/24

Date

Approved via email

Beverly Sloan, 7<sup>th</sup> District President

11/22/24

Date

Approved via email

Denise Yanus, 3<sup>rd</sup> Division President

11/20/24

Date

*DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS  
SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS*

Sponsoring Unit	Student Name	University Name
Hallettsville 230	Mia Joyslin Witherwax	Blinn College
	Jesse James Acker	West Texas A&M University
	Harley Michelle Wilson	University of Houston Victoria
	Heather Leann Wilson	Wharton Junior College
	Brady Alan Masur	Texas A&M University
Odessa 430	Jack Kenneth Freeman	UTPB
Ganado 346	Hannah Diane Gonzalez	University of Texas-Austin
	Jenna Goedken	Texas State University
	Shiloh Peckham	McMurry University
Frisco 178	Alexia Taylor Harrer	University of Oklahoma
	Margaret Troxclair	Texas A&M University
Georgetown 174	Jacob Michael Kohn	University of North Texas
San Angelo 572	Madeline Nicole Stephens	Texas A&M University
	Reagan Lynette Tyson	Texas Tech University
Pasadena 521	Enrique Esteban Segura	Texas A&M University
	Ruby Catherine Gundrum	Clemson University
	Issac Stephen Krause	Texas Luthern University
Beaumont 33	Malerie Duke	Texas A&M University

*DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS  
PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY  
MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS*

Sponsoring Unit	Student Name	University Name
Midland 19	Isabella Marie Garcia	Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
Beaumont 33	Israel Trey Beverly	Texas Women's University
	Malerie Duke	Texas A&M University
Brenham 48	Addyson Chase Voelkel	Texas A&M University
Katy 164	Erin McDaniel	Texas A&M University
Frisco 178	Jiselle Alexa Garcia	University of Texas Austin
Hallettsville 230	Heather Leann Wilson	Wharton County Junior College
	Harley Michelle Wilson	University of Houston Victoria
Rockport 363	Mackenzie Christine Cooper	Lamar University
Odessa 430	Jack Kenneth Freeman	University of Texas Permian Basin
South Houston 490	Jason R. Fisher	University of Houston (Honors College)
Pasadena 521	Enrique Esteban Segura	Texas A&M University
League City 554	Jack Evan Baldwin	Texas A&M University
San Angelo 572	Madeline Nicole Stephens	Texas A&M University



*JUNIOR MEMBER  
NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS*

Tiffany Lowry ..... Unit 164, Katy

*National Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship*