



## American Legion Auxiliary

# The Auxiliary News Hub

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

## Mission Statement

In the spirit of *Service, Not Self*, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

## Vision Statement

The vision of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion while becoming the premier service organization and foundation of every community providing support for our veterans, our military, and their families by shaping a positive future in an atmosphere of fellowship, patriotism, peace and security.

## Purposes

In fulfillment of our mission, the American Legion Auxiliary adheres to the following purposes:

- To support and advocate for veterans, military, and their families
- To support the initiatives and programs of The American Legion
- To foster patriotism and responsible citizenship
- To award scholarships and promote quality education and literacy
- To provide educational and leadership opportunities that uphold the ideals of freedom and democracy and encourage good citizenship and patriotism in government
- To increase our capacity to deliver our mission by providing volunteer opportunities within our communities
- To empower our membership to achieve personal fulfillment through *Service, Not Self*

## *Poppies to Remember*

**From Flanders Fields in WWI,  
The Poppy's work is not done,  
May we never forget; not even one.**

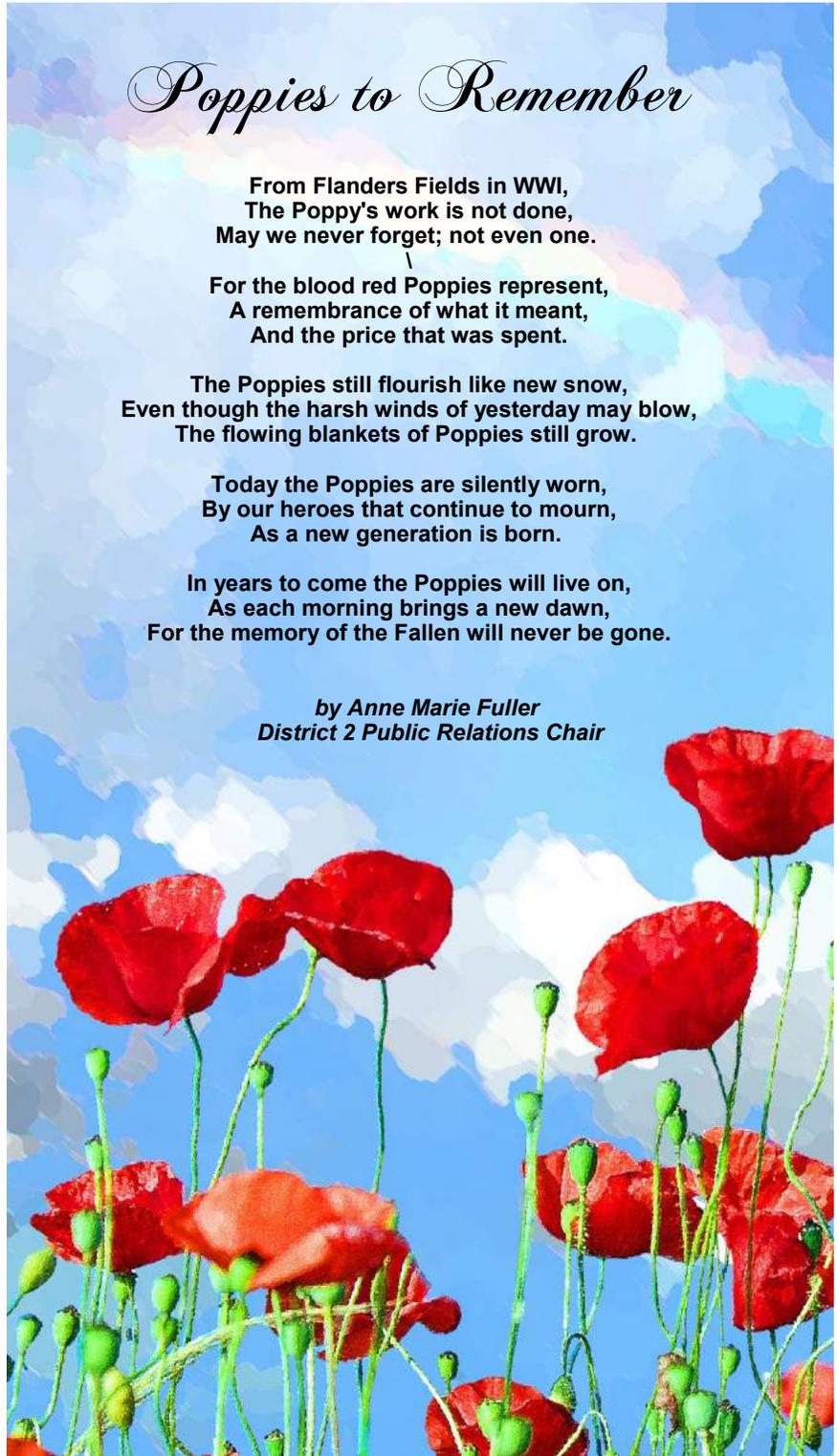
**For the blood red Poppies represent,  
A remembrance of what it meant,  
And the price that was spent.**

**The Poppies still flourish like new snow,  
Even though the harsh winds of yesterday may blow,  
The flowing blankets of Poppies still grow.**

**Today the Poppies are silently worn,  
By our heroes that continue to mourn,  
As a new generation is born.**

**In years to come the Poppies will live on,  
As each morning brings a new dawn,  
For the memory of the Fallen will never be gone.**

*by Anne Marie Fuller  
District 2 Public Relations Chair*



### 2023-2024 Officers

- President Glenda Schultz
- Vice President Linda Hayes
- Secretary Liz Doidge
- Treasurer Katherine Tellyer
- Chaplain Patty Martinez
- Historian Erika Hernandez
- Parliamentarian Anita Biggs
- Srgt-at-Arms Jean McGinnis
- Asst. Srgt. Melise Munroe
- Finance Linda Workman
- Teresa Lugo-Nunez
- Brenda Ternullo
- NEC Kathie Martinez
- NEC Alt. Dee Ann Graham
- Advisory Linda Workman
- Joan Cannon
- Kathie Martinez



### 2023-2024 Chairmen and Committees

- Americanism Cindy Rogers
- Aux. Emergency Linda Karnstedt
- Children and Youth Maureen O'Brien Sacco
- Community Service Patricia Galatioto
- Constitution/Bylaws Sharon Moore
- Convention Chm. Dee Ann Graham
- Convention Co-Chair Terry Oclary
- Conv. Com. Chair Anita Biggs
- Credentials Madeleine Reed
- Distinguished Guest Linda Workman
- Editor Nancy Heinisch
- Education Linda Hayes
- Elections Rebecca Glennly
- Girls State Advisor Nancy Brown-Park
- Girls State Chairman Allyn Kau
- Junior Activities Martha Romano
- Junior Conf. Director Jackie Cleveland
- Leadership Donna Mattox
- Legislative Donna Smith
- Membership Suzanne Winters
- Music Stephanie Huff
- National Security Liz Doidge
- Past Presidents Parley Kathie Martinez
- Poppy Robin Falkenberg
- Public Relations Joan Cannon
- Resolutions Linda Fercho
- Rules Linda Karnstedt
- UD&R Tracy Varnell-Fercho
- Veterans Affairs Susan Baker
- Ways and Means Arlene Smith
- Ways and Means Com. Marcia Munroe
- Webmaster Lyle Workman

# President's Message

## Glenda Schultz



Photo Henry Sanchez

*National American Legion Auxiliary President Lisa Williamson with Madame President Glenda on tour in California*

What a delightful visit we had with American Legion Auxiliary National President Lisa Williamson! Lisa had only the highest praise for all the effort and hard work that went into planning her trip to California. It was a heartwarming and uplifting experience that I will treasure forever. My personal thanks to everyone who helped organize the tour and to all those who attended the scheduled events.

To each and every one of you who have made my term as president so memorable: my deepest appreciation to all of you for your commitment and dedication. I feel so blessed to have gotten to know many of you personally and treasure your friendship. Words do not do justice as to how impressed I am with your enthusiasm, determination and remarkable generosity.

Thank you officers, chairmen, and members for this opportunity to serve this exceptional organization. May it continue to grow and thrive with your continued efforts.

*Glenda*

## Proper Parliamentary Procedure and Practices

*Department Parliamentarian Anita Biggs helps answer your most perplexing questions*



**Q** Is it necessary to call for additional nominations when a nominating committee has suggested nominations?

**A** Yes. It is necessary. If you have nominations collected by the Nominating Committee, at the time of nominations the Chair does ask “Are there any other nominations?”.

### ALA Academy Live:

The ALA Academy has been expanded to include live virtual webinars. The courses change and are offered a few times to accommodate different schedules and time zones.

Watch ALA National Headquarters’ social media channels @ALAforVeterans for the most up-to-date course registration information.

*“If we could look into each other’s hearts and understand the unique challenges each of us faces, I think we would treat each other much more gently, with more love, patience, tolerance, and care.”*

Marvin J. Ashton



*Interior decor and architecture of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.*

## District 22 Held its First Legislative Day with American Legion Family Event

The Washington Conference was held Sunday, February 25 through Wednesday, February 28 in Washington, D.C. American Legion Post 365 in Vista hosted the Legislative Commission Meeting which allowed the Legion Family to view this event together as the events unfolded online. It was a wonderful experience for us to watch the Legion-supported assembly bills explained and placed on the floor, hoping that soon the bills would be signed into law.

Here are a few highlights from this conference:

- **Suicide Prevention & Mental Health:** Suicide remains a top issue in the veteran community.
- **Safeguard Veteran Benefits:** Veterans are facing a growing threat from exploitative entities aiming to capitalize on the benefits rightfully earned through military service.
- **Military Quality of Life:** The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation to expand access to affordable childcare, increase appropriations for military construction projects, and ensure timely access to mental healthcare.
- **Protect the American Flag:** The American Legion urges Congress to approve an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the U.S. flag.

I would like to thank Post 365 in Vista for allowing the Legion Family use of their post for this event, and for providing coffee and treats. Especially helpful were Linda Sundberg, Past Post Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, and Treasurer of Unit 434; Javier Collazo, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and District 22 Executive Board member; and Colleen Collazo, Unit 365 President.

***“Together we legislate, together we progress”***

*Donna L. Smith, Department Legislative Chair*

# ALA Department of CA Candidates for 2024-2025

Linda is a lifetime member of the Palmdale American Legion Auxiliary Unit 348. Her eligibility is through her father's service as a US



**Linda Hayes: Candidate for ALA President**

Marine during World War II. Her husband served during the Viet Nam era in the US Army. She and her husband

are 32-year members of the Legion family. Linda is currently the Vice President of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of California, and the Department Education Chairman. She served as the Representative to the Lancaster CalVet Home until recently.

Besides her Department duties, she is editor of the award winning District 20 "Chatterbox" newsletter, the Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, and Public Relations Chairman. She is also the secretary of her unit.

Linda served as Unit President for multiple years. She served as District 20 President in 2011-2012. She has held nearly all positions and chairmanships at both the unit and district levels. Her husband is currently serving as the District 20 Commander and as Post 348 Adjutant.

After graduation from high school, she went to business school in Bakersfield. Linda was later employed by the Acton-Agua Dulce Unified School District

where she retired after 28 years; her job titles included school secretary and administrative secretary to the Superintendent of Schools for 22 years. Upon her retirement, she and her husband were co-owners of Screenmobile of the Antelope Valley and Victorville/Apple Valley areas. Linda also worked weekends as a bartender at Post 348.

Linda is the mother of two sons (both SALs) who were avid baseball players all through school; they also played in the American Legion Baseball program in Palmdale. Richard and Linda have a combined family of three more sons, four granddaughters, two grandsons, two great-grandsons, and a great-granddaughter. A fifth great-grandchild is due in mid-April.

Linda enjoys cooking, reading, jig-saw puzzles, Sudoku, traveling, and camping. She especially enjoys a good game of Scrabble with her granddaughter.

Upon her retirement after 32 years in public service, Susan Baker joined the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 694 (Monterey Cypress) in 2003 as a way to honor the military service and sacrifices made by her veteran family and give back to her community. Her eligibility is through her father, a World War II US Army veteran and Pearl Harbor survivor. Her uncle served in the US Navy during World War II, her brother is a US Air Force Viet Nam veteran, and her husband Jon is a US Marine Corps veteran.

Susan has two daughters, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Her daughter Catherine is an Auxiliary member. The Baker's blended family includes an additional daughter and a son who served in the US Navy in the Global War on Terror, and three grandchildren.

In her spare time Susan enjoys reading, gardening, crafting and traveling with her husband.

Susan's work history includes 12 years as an administrative secretary with the Pacific Grove Unified School District, and 13 years as the office manager for

the City of Pacific Grove Recreation Department. She also served as the administrative assistant to the Monterey County Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Monterey County Board of Education for seven years.

Susan's volunteer service in her community includes 20 years with the ATT Pro-Am Golf Tournament, seven with the Salinas Rodeo and five years with the Salinas Air Show. Susan is a regular volunteer at American Legion Post 694 assisting with special events, meal service, and organizing celebrations of life for deceased Legion family members.

Susan is very active at all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary, having served as Unit President three times and District 28 President twice. She has held several Department chairmanships including Chaplain, Education, Membership, Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. At the Unit and District levels Susan has held all major chairmanships.

Also included in Susan's achievements are the 2019-2021 National Western Division Award for Best Department

Education Program, and the 2022-2023 Award for Best Department Children and Youth Program.



**Susan Baker: Candidate for ALA Vice President**

In April 2023 Susan received a Lifetime Achievement Award from President Joe Biden and the AmeriCorps to celebrate her 32,000 hours of volunteer service with the American Legion Auxiliary.

## ... ALA Department of CA Candidates for 2024-2025 (cont.)



**Sharon Moore, Candidate  
for Jr. Member of  
Finance**

Sharon Moore is a 34 year member of Jackie Robinson Unit 252, 23rd District. Her eligibility is through her late father, Willie James Moore, Jr., who served in the U.S. Army.

On the Department level, she has served as Chaplain and Sgt. at Arms. She has also served as chairman for the following programs: AEF, Credentials, Rules, Community Service and is currently the Constitution & Bylaws Chairman.

On the District level she has served as President, First Vice, Second Vice and

is currently the Treasurer.

She has held numerous offices and chairmanships in her Unit including President, First Vice, Second Vice and is currently the Unit Secretary.

Sharon retired from AAA in 2019 after 40 years of service, has three adult daughters and five grandchildren who are all members of the American Legion Family.

## *Candidates Reception*

**Come and meet your Candidates!**

***Department President  
Linda Hayes***

***Department Vice President  
Susan Baker***

***Jr. Member of Finance  
Sharon More***

Thursday, June 27, 2024  
6:30—9 pm  
Lobby outside the Kings Canyon Room  
Marriott Hotel  
300 S. Court Street  
Visalia



# “District 28 is Always up to Something!”

*by ALA District 28 Historian Rosemary Barron*



## Financial Event Benefiting Education

District 28 was able to coordinate a fantastic fundraising event benefiting educational scholarships in February. Education Chair Molly Smith (pictured lower right) put many hours of work into this event, which is why it was so successful.

In addition to the raffle and food tickets (all donated), many donations came in from local businesses and organizations from the area, such as District 28 Legion Riders, Starbucks, and Smartwash Solutions to name a few.



## Joining with Blue Star Moms and District 28 Riders

American Legion Auxiliary District 28, American Legion District 28 Riders, and the Girl Scouts all joined forces with the Monterey County Blue Star Moms Chapter 40 to pack up care boxes for the for deployed military service members on March 3. It was a systematic process involving all to work together as a team!

Auxiliary District 28 Second Vice and Blue Star Mom Liz Guzman coordinated the event.

## Supporting Vets

The turnout was great for a delightful District 28 flapjack fundraiser to support veterans. The event featured a scrumptious spread of eggs, sausage, pancakes, juice, and coffee on March 9.

All units were invited to participate and sell tickets. The event featured outstanding raffle prizes!



# Member Spotlight

Meet Dana Johnston, a ten year auxiliary member of Unit 291. Dana joined through her grandfather who was a navy deep-sea diver in WWII. Her father served in the Marines in the late 50's. She is a proud Blue Star mother of her son Garrett who is currently an air crewman in the Navy.

From the very beginning, Dana exemplified the spirit of "service before self" by volunteering for as many events as she could. Troop shipping, baby showers, children holiday parties and veteran events. She also served in numerous leadership positions including Sgt-at-Arms, our Executive committee, and First and Second Vice.

As Second Vice Dana oversaw fundraising organizing several Holiday boutiques with 30 to 40 vendors at each event. All Post families look forward to this event as it kicks off the holiday season. And all the Legion families look forward to annual spring dance and raffle.

This year she added Bunco and Quatermania. Every other week, she teaches line dancing at the Post. Oh, did I forget to mention she is also a full-time educator.

Dana says the best part of fundraising "is knowing the money we raise goes to support those who supported us in keeping our freedoms." As a bonus, Dana said she has made lifelong friends in both the Auxiliary and the Post Legionnaires and definitely feels she has extended her family by belonging to our Post.

*Cindy Edes, Past President, Newport Harbor*



## March 30, 2024: National Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day

Chino Mens Institute Warden Travis Pennington and Chief Deputy Warden Eric Mejia took time out of their busy schedules to paint a sign reading "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" with the Juniors of American Legion Auxiliary Allied Unit 302, Samarah Hernandez and Rebeka Avila.

Fifty-one years after the last American troops returned home from the Vietnam War which claimed the lives of more than 58,000 U.S. service members (including 5,822 Californians), California paid tribute to the courageous men and women who served and sacrificed in one of our nation's most challenging wars.

*Erika Hernandez, Department Historian*



ALA Unit 507 President Christie Marks is delighted with the replacement charter.

### Missing Unit Charter?

Contact ALA Department Secretary Liz Doidge for information on how to obtain a unit charter if yours has gone missing.

# What Being a VA Hospital Deputy Means to Me



When I first started volunteering at the VA Community Based Outreach Clinic (VA CBOC) in Oceanside, I did not know what to expect. My first thought was I now had a chance to give back to our communities. I felt that I was doing something worthwhile for our nation's heroes, which provided me with a natural sense of accomplishment, and a sense of pride.

As it turns out, volunteerism doesn't just help the VA or the community on the receiving end. Volunteering can have amazing benefits for you, too. The happiness that many people get from volunteering may be related in part to the increased sense of purpose and self-confidence experienced when one is generous with their time and energy.

My duties go way beyond showing our veterans to their appointments. For example, I had a veteran ask for my assistance in retrieving voice messages from his cell phone. He pulled out his flip phone and I thought to myself, I didn't know flip phones were still around! To my amazement, I was able to figure it out and retrieve his messages. He told me that I made his day! FYI, his mailbox was full, and I emptied it. I

am sure I will be seeing this veteran again once it fills up anew.

I hope you noticed my new VA Volunteers shirt - VA Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE). We, as volunteers, are encouraged to engage with our veterans, and to say it's a great success would be an understatement. The veterans come in for their scheduled appointments and have a cup of coffee, hot chocolate, or tea. I now know how to make a Cadillac, which is hot chocolate and coffee mixed (which I was told the Marines love). Don't get me started on a loaded Cadillac! Veterans also have access to books in the lobby and can take any that they would like to read.

Most of the veterans at the VA CBOC call us volunteers "Angels". I am sure that I will soon discover additional hidden benefits from volunteering. Right now, I know that helping others helps me as well.

Veterans have served us, so we need to serve them.

*Donna L. Smith  
Hospital Deputy San Diego,  
Oceanside CBOC*

# Unit 835 Honors Female Soldiers

Unit 835 honored the female soldiers of the 330th MP and RCP National Guard Units. Everyone wore fancy hats and the soldiers were given tea cups and candy gifts.

Regarding the soldiers: one is a surgeon, one is Miss California, one is a missile specialist, two are Captains, one is a Lieutenant Colonel and three are single mothers. All have been deployed.

*Tami Bell, Unit 835 President*



# ALA Juniors Rock!

## Our Youth in Action: Little Miss Poppy Emma Lehman



Have you met Unit 519's Little Miss Poppy Emma Lehman? Emma has been a member of Unit 519 for five years.

Throughout the years, Emma has participated in many community service events. Emma and her grandmother ALA Unit 519 Secretary Venna O'Farrell do mobile runs where they hand out food, clothing, and blankets to needy homeless veterans and community members.

During National Poppy Day Month Emma is highly involved in baking poppy cookies with her grandmother, passing them out on National Poppy Day, as well as helping sell raffle tickets. She also strolls around with her poppy basket, filled with pins made by our ALA members. She helps her grandmother make baggies of love containing soaps, lotions, shampoos, toothpaste and brushes.

During the holidays, Little Miss Poppy walks in the 5K Santa Paws parade. Afterward the walkers do face painting and talk on a two-way radio to Santa at the North Pole. Next they participate in Wreaths Across America where wreaths are placed on the grave sites of the veterans at the Palm Springs Cemetery.

She's been on stage at the American Legion in Palm Springs and can recite the Pledge of Allegiance by heart.

All in all, Little Miss Poppy stays very busy throughout the year. She always has a very pretty smile on her face and is willing to participate in any events with a positive, cheerful attitude. What a trooper she is!

*April J. O'Neil, Unit 519 Second Vice President*



### Happy Birthday!

ALA Unit 299 Juniors and ALA Unit 302 Juniors helped celebrate the American Legion's 105th birthday on March 15.

*Erika Hernandez  
Department Historian*



# Watch out for These Scams that Target Unsuspecting Citizens

Report scams to the Federal Trade Commission (877) 382-4357 or online [www.reportfraud.ftc.gov](http://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov). For Medicare fraud, call (855) 613-7080 or visit: [cahealthadvocates.org](http://cahealthadvocates.org).

**A**t this time of year, people can be particularly vulnerable when they're told via a phone call that they are about to lose their "Social Security funds" or that their water/electricity will be cut off because of "lack of payment."

These are flat-out scams, whereby criminals prey on good people, people who would never do anything evil. Those good people, including many auxiliary members, do not understand why someone would want to take advantage of them.

Below are a few scams that are targeting unsuspecting citizens.

## **WINNING A CONTEST ONE DIDN'T ENTER**

"It says I've just won a million dollars," one person said, who didn't even remember entering a contest. "I'm going to take my family on a trip and pay for my grandson's college education."

But when urged to read the fine print, the person had to send \$600 to claim the prize.

Do people actually send money to a contest they never entered? Yes. A reminder, if you have to pay for it, it's not a prize.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY SCAM**

One may receive a call that is supposedly from the Department of the Social Security Administration:

"The reason for this call is to inform you that your Social Security number has been suspended for suspicion of illegal activity. If you do not contact us immediately, your account will be deactivated. For more information about this case file, press 1 or call immediately our department number 326—"

**Hang up!** This is a scam. Social Security Administration employees will never threaten. In most cases Social Security will mail a letter if there is an issue. Also, don't trust the number you see coming up on your caller ID. Criminals are able to spoof numbers to make it appear that calls are from a government agency.

## **MEDICARE/DNA TESTING**

This is one of the more recent scams. A provider shows up at a local church, library or senior center, or calls a senior on the phone and offers free DNA/genetic testing to Medicare beneficiaries. Medicare only pays for tests prescribed by doctors. The people running this scam are just trying to collect Medicare numbers.

In the wrong hands a senior's Medicare number could be used to commit Medicare fraud and abuse.

Seniors are reminded to review Medicare statements: looking for charges for something you didn't get; billing for the same services or supplies twice; and for services that were not ordered by a doctor. (For more information about healthcare fraud visit: [cahealthadvocates.org](http://cahealthadvocates.org)).

## **OBITUARY READERS**

A scammer may have read the obituary of a wife/husband and then with a simple search on the internet, finds an address. They stop by the widow/widower's house to commiserate with the loss. The scammer may claim to have been in one or more of the same organizations that the deceased was in, such as a garden club, opera guild or other charitable organization.

Once the widower lets down his/her guard, and because they're lonely, the scammer can move in (literally or figuratively) and eventually bilk the senior out of money and property.

Elder abuse is difficult to stop because it goes unreported. Experts think that only one in 25 cases are reported.

## **BANKS AND UTILITY COMPANIES:**

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is warning residents about a phone scam where imposters tell customers they are past due on payments and if they don't pay immediately, they will have their services shut off.

**Hang up!** Utility companies won't call customers for past due payments. Customers will typically receive any shutoff notices through the mail. Once again do not believe the number that shows up on the phone ID, because scammers have figured out a way to clone a number that makes it appear if it is a genuine utility number.

According to the utility's scam flyer: their employees will never ask for personal payment information over the telephone. They will never ask you to purchase a pre-paid cash card from a convenience store to pay a utility bill.

If you receive a call asking for a cash card, credit card, person-to-person cash payment, or a request for any other personal information, hang up immediately and call your utility company.

## **YOU HIT MY CAR**

In this scam, a person will follow a senior out of a mall parking area, a gas station, or a parking lot and wave for them to pull over, claiming the senior hit his/her car.

The senior citizen will be told that they indeed did hit the car and are warned by the scammer if they don't pay up, usually a sum under \$1,000, the senior's insurance will go up and their license taken away.

Sue Pascoe  
Past President Unit 283



# Still time to Continue Children and Youth Activities

**A**pril is Children and Youth month. Please wear purple on April 15 Purple Up Day to show our support for military children.

The children’s military table is a great way to show others how much sacrifice military children endure on a regular basis. Please include your juniors as well.

If you have not held a baby shower there is still time. This department has raised a tremendous amount of baby items for our military families and new moms to be. I am so very thankful to you all! I am very excited to think about the supplemental reports I will be receiving. I know there has been some great things happening.



*Madison Atkinson receives the Youth Hero Award.*



*Maureen O’Brien-Sacco explains the children’s military table.*

There is also time to still present those youth hero awards and good deed awards. We, as a department, have passed out one youth hero award and 30 good deed awards. Fantastic! Don’t stop now - we need to show everyone what the Department of California is made of!

Please donate to the Child Welfare Foundation. There is a form on the department website regarding this. Every Unit that donated \$1 per member will receive a banner from the CWF.

A huge thank you to all our members for their hard work this year. We have been sharing our successes on all the National Facebook pages and have received great comments from around the country.

*Maureen O’Brien-Sacco  
Department Child and Youth Chair*



## Historian Contest Winner Announced

**C**ongratulations to District 28 Historian Rosemary Barron who has been declared the winner of both the District and Unit Mid-year Historian Archiving Contest.

Rosemary submitted the most consistent and regular pictures, flyers and history of events at both levels.

Her work was exceptional!

As a result, Rosemary received a total prize package of Mary Kay merchandise valued at over \$250.

Watch for details on more contests.

*Erika Hernandez  
Department Historian*

## Dating Quilts: It’s not Rocket Science

Quilt expert Nancy Bavor spoke at the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) meeting held at American Legion Post 558 in March. The lively lecture taught some of the basics that experts use to date vintage quilts. Attendees were encouraged to bring their quilts for dating.

*Cindy Newman, Unit 558*

## Guest Columnist PDP Bonnie Christner Looks to the Future

**W**OW! 51 years in the American Legion Auxiliary—that’s a long time. When I think back on these past years, I’m filled with so many memories. Memories of ladies I have had the privilege of knowing and loving who have served and who are still serving our great organization. Some who are no longer with us but were the pillars of our organization. They are truly missed. But one thing they all taught me was to be a mentor to those new members, just like my mother was to me. *So ladies be a mentor to others.*

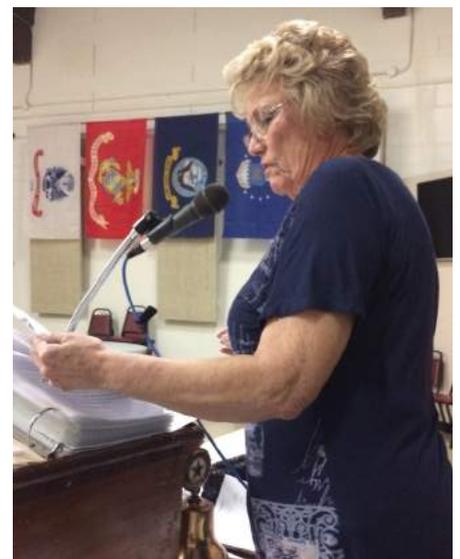
Being installed as the Department President in 2005 was certainly one of the highlights of my life, especially because my mother who was also a past Department President installed me. My theme was the 1950’s and being the Prom Queen that year was so amazing, you are actually treated like a Queen. Traveling and meeting all the wonderful women in our organization who volunteer so much of their time taking care of our veterans, children and our communities has always amazed me. I salute each and everyone of you.

We have many programs in our organization, but I have to say one of my favorites was always Junior Conference. I chose to be a counselor for the 10 and 11-year-olds because I love children and I wanted to make sure that our young juniors got the attention they needed and the right answers to all those questions that they were going to be asking. And let’s face it: there’s no

better feeling in the world than waking up at two o’clock in the morning with a 10-year-old crying hysterically and telling you that she wants to go home. Well, my answer to her was “Oh no sweetheart, you can’t go home. If you go home the whole bus has to go home.” So after about 30 minutes of trying to calm her down we finally called mom who told her to knock it off and go back to bed. By the end of the phone call all she was worried about was if her mom paid for her horseback riding! I am still friends with this young lady and her family, and I wouldn’t change that for anything in the world. Great memories from Wonder Valley. After all, these young ladies are our future!

I could go on and on about my experiences in the ALA, but we don’t have room for that so I will just say without my auxiliary members beside me, I would not have made it through losing my father while serving as your Department President, or losing my mother just two years later. These wonderful ladies are my rock, and I will cherish them forever.

*Also, I am so looking forward to supporting our Department Vice President Linda Hayes as she gets ready for her year as our Department President. After all, isn’t that what we do. We support our fellow sisters in whatever endeavors they wish to pursue.*



# High School Students Speak on the Constitution

Asked to be a judge for The American Legion Oratorical Contest that began in 1938 was an honor. As an auxiliary member and a member of the press, I have judged on the post and district level, and this year I was one of six judges for The American Legion Department Oratorical Contest on February 25.

If an auxiliary member has never attended a contest, I urge you to do so next year. Students must write an eight-to-10-minute speech on an aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with some emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to the government.

The students must memorize the speech and present it without note cards or other aids. They are timed on the presentation, and there are penalties if the speech is less than eight or longer than ten minutes.

Judges are tasked with listening to the historical examples and quotes students use and see if those examples support the topic of their speech.

And it isn't enough to have great content, contestants are also judged on presentation, speaking style and appearance.

After their initial speech, contestants must also speak three to five minutes on one of four amendments. This year copies of Amendment II, Amendment XXIII, Amendment XXV, Section 3 and Amendment V were placed in a sealed envelope. One amendment was chosen at random five minutes before the contestants were required to speak on the chosen amendment.

Although they have to be prepared to speak on whatever is drawn, at this contest, the five spoke on Amendment XXIII.

These contestants had won locally at different posts in California, made it through the district contests and now were vying to be top in the department (state) at the contest held at the Ronald Reagan American Legion Post 283 in Pacific Palisades.

Each contestant had a unique style and, in their speeches, chose different parts of this country's history to emphasize the importance of the constitution and the role it plays.

In judging, points were awarded in different categories. The contestants were only known by a number, no names were given.

The judges then ranked the contestants and handed in scoring sheets. There was no collaboration among the judges. Waiting for the final tallies and who would emerge as the state champion was nerve-racking not only for candidates, but for judges as well.

One judge, while waiting for the results, said he was a lawyer and felt like he was back in law school listening to a class on the constitution – that the students were that knowledgeable.

When the results were announced first place went to senior Mahee Haswani (Oak Ridge High School) whose speech was titled "A Piece of Paper." She received a \$1,200 prize.

Taking second and \$1,000 was junior Ahsan Suhail (Clovis North High School) with his speech titled "Look on the Works."

Third through fifth place each received \$700. Third place was senior Samson Rakhshani (Edison High School), whose topic was "Truth Found in Our Constitution."

Fourth went to sophomore Ricardo Torres (Loyola High School) who spoke on "Don't Become Silent about Things that Matter." He had won the initial Post 283 contest before moving onto the

district and then competing in this contest.

Fifth was freshman Maya Panchal (Los Altos High School) whose topic was "Responsibilities, Rights and Civic Duties of a U.S. Citizen."

By taking first, Haswan qualified for the national finals contest which will be held at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan, on May 17.

At the national contest the winner will



receive a \$25,000 scholarship. Second place takes home \$22,500 and third gets \$20,000.

Each department (state) winner who is certified into and participates in the national contest's first round receives a \$2,000 scholarship. Those who advance past the first round receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship.

The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships which can be used at any college or university in the United States. Visit [legion.org/oratorical](http://legion.org/oratorical) for more information.

*Sue Pascoe  
Past President Unit 283*



Photo DOD

## American Legion Family Day: April 27

Community Service has been a major outreach program of the American Legion Auxiliary since 1926. Given our history and reputation, we are known for putting in that extra care and support for Veterans, service members and their families. In a special unique style, we stand out in our communities encouraging patriotism as we acknowledge Veterans and their families who have sacrificed for our freedoms. Community Service brings people together, making our communities a better place to live.

Below are suggested projects for Community Service:

- Health:** aid to our communities from assisting in blood drives to holding fund-raisers for needed medical equipment for Veterans, such as walkers, canes, or wheelchairs.
- Recreation:** sponsoring, cooperating, maintenance of public playgrounds. We could join in public park clean-ups, or each ALA Unit or District could adopt a road and keep it clean.
- Safety:** sponsor or cooperate in safety prevention programs. We could team up with another organization in our community and promote anti-bullying programs in our local schools.
- Beautification:** conduct or take part in a clean-up campaign in your local area. Our Units or Districts could join a community garden and plant fruits or vegetables for Veterans.
- Libraries:** aid to public library. We could hold a book drive, collect, and donate books to libraries or nursing homes, be sure to include ALA's magazines.
- Community Councils:** District and Unit Community Services Chairman, try to attend your local City Council meeting for the betterment of working together in your local community.

I implore you to take the initiative and take a stand in our communities for the American Legion Family Day which includes the "Be the One" initiative to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. The American Legion Family Day is on the last Saturday of April and inspires Posts to open their doors to citizens and Veterans in their communities for a day to commend the accomplishments of Legionnaires, Sons, Legion Riders and the American Legion Auxiliary and to bring awareness to the "Be the One" program.

*Patricia Galatioto*  
Community Service Chairman

# Save the Date

## April

### Children and Youth

- 01: April Fool's Day
- 05: Gold Star Spouse's Day
- 14: Air Force Reserve Birthday
- 15: Tax Day
- 15: Purple Up Day
- 22: Passover Begins
- 22: Earth Day
- 23: Army Reserve Birthday
- 27: American Legion Family Day
- 26-28: Junior Conference
- 30: National Military Brats Day

## May

### Poppy

- 01: National Loyalty Day
- 01: Silver Star Banner Day
- 02: National Day of Prayer
- 05: Cinco de Mayo
- 10: Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- 12: Mother's Day
- 13: Children of Fallen Patriot's Day
- 18: Armed Forces Day
- 27: Memorial Day

## June

### Department Convention

- 12: Women Veterans Day
- 14: Flag Day
- 14: Army Birthday
- 14: Father's Day
- 19: Juneteenth
- 27: National PTSD Awareness Day
- 27-30: California annual Convention



Photo Judy Evridge