

**Minutes of the  
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
FALL CONFERENCE  
(October 16, 2021 at 9:15a.m.)**

The meeting began with a Joint Opening Ceremony at 9:02 a.m. involving all members of the American Legion Family.

When the Joint Opening Ceremonies were completed, members went to the cemetery to participate in a “Flying Flags for Heroes” Ceremony by the SAL. Individual meetings begin after lunch.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Jane Larson at 1:03 p.m.

**OPENING CEREMONY**

**MOTION** by April Sinclair (Unit 57) and seconded by Ann Robinson (Unit 33) to dispense with all opening ceremonies as they had been done during the Joint Opening Ceremonies this morning.

The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:**

*NATIONAL OFFICERS*

Alternate National Executive Committee Member Sue Diaz

*OFFICERS*

President Jane Larson  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Anarene Robinson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President April Sinclair  
Secretary Barbara Nath  
Treasurer Diana Estrada  
Chaplain Colleen Newman  
Historian Lori Fruhwirth  
Executive Committee Member Robyn Downs

## ROLL CALL

### PRESENT (continued):

#### *STANDING COMMITTEES*

Alaska Girls State Lori Fruhwirth  
Audit Sue Diaz  
Auxiliary Emergency Fund Zona Gregg  
Constitution and ByLaws Sue Diaz  
Junior Activities Nina Ketelson  
Membership Anarene Robinson  
Past Presidents Parley Jane Larson  
Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation April Sinclair

#### *UNITS*

Jack Henry Unit 1  
Joseph T. Craig Unit 3  
Merlin Elmer Palmer Unit 6  
Dorman H. Baker Unit 11  
George H. Plumley Memorial Unit 20  
Peters Creek Unit 33  
Susitna Valley Unit 35  
C. Russell Huber Unit 57

#### *PAST DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS*

Sue Diaz  
Lisa Williamson

### EXCUSED

#### *PAST DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS*

Sharon Cherrette

### ABSENT:

#### *NATIONAL OFFICERS*

National Executive Committee Member Penny Mazonna

#### *OFFICERS*

Sgt.-at-Arms Frances Bedel  
Executive Committee Member Sheryl Howe

## ROLL CALL

### ABSENT (continued):

#### *STANDING COMMITTEES*

Americanism (Vacant)  
Children and Youth Sheryl Howe  
Community Service Kathy Moore  
Distinguished Guests Penny Mazonna  
Education and Scholarship Lisa Boyles  
Finance (Vacant)  
Leadership Delores "Dee" Stokes  
Legislative Penny Mazonna  
National Security Frances Bedel  
Poppy Christine Calabrese  
Public Relations Beverly Eads

#### *UNITS*

Seward Unit 5  
Lynn Canal Unit 12  
Sitka Unit 13  
Matanuska Valley Unit 15  
General Bucker Unit 16  
Robert G. Blair Unit 17  
Ninilchik Unit 18  
Gladys M. Heintz Memorial Unit 27  
Spennard Unit 28  
Muldoon Unit 29  
Con Miller Unit 30  
Chappie James Unit 34  
Peter Heyano Unit 442

#### *PAST DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS*

Eva Aulston	Lynn Bash	Marge Blankenship
Ruth Brown	Betty Bumala	Susan Caswell
Jean Clayton	Lavonne Collier	Beverly Eads
Lori FitzSimons	Rehta Foster	Francisca Guilford
June Haas	Laverne Kearns	Debbie Lowndes
Penny Mazonna	Carolyn Null	Evelyn Oliver
Jill Pawson	Betty Porter	Linda Schmitt
Jean Shandy	Etta Singleton	Wilma Stokes
Sue Waldhaus	Barbe Wolkoff	

## **ICE BREAKER**

President Jane Larson held an icebreaker with all members present. The icebreaker was about team work. No one could say a word. They were to build a tower with the objects provided and it must be self-sustaining. The tallest would win. Not being able to talk required team work among the groups' members in order to succeed. Members thought about who in their group took charge, how she asserted her leadership and how others fell in with the leader.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Vacant Committee Chairs – There are committee chairs to be filled. These include the Americanism Committee and the 1<sup>st</sup> Year (chair) of the Finance Committee. Debbie Ervin has agreed to fill the Chair of the Americanism Committee. There is no one selected for the Finance Committee Chair. President Jane Larson had a possibility for the Finance Committee 1<sup>st</sup> Year (chair). She will be contacting that person and if they agree, will bring that person forward at the Executive Committee on Sunday.

VA&R / VAVS Deputies – April Sinclair (Unit 57), VA&R Chair explained that there is a VAVS Representative and four VAVS Deputies. They are all appointed by the Department President. Currently these are:

- Representative – Anarene Robinson
- Anchorage Deputy – Sharon Cherrette
- Fairbank Deputy – Brenda Fiddick
- Southeast Deputy – Melissa Snell
- Kenai Peninsula – Tonya Halliday

Tonya Halliday and Melissa Snell will need to be replaced. If we could find someone to fill these two positions, we would be able to ratify them at the DEC on Sunday. Deputies can be anywhere within the region being represented. If anyone is interested in serving in those two regions, please talk to the Department President. The committee meets quarterly and attendance can be by telephone. April Sinclair (as the VA&R Chair) should be included in any invitations to these quarterly meetings. There is also a national orientation on Tuesday. Anyone who expresses interest and is ratified by the DEC will be invited to attend the Zoom meeting orientation.

Sue Diaz (Unit 20) asked if there was a specific day and time for the quarterly meeting. Ann explained that it was every three months. People who are in Anchorage usually attend in person. The help staff (Director up to the Chief) are also usually present. When the minutes are distributed, they will include the date and time for the next meeting. Be sure that you are present for the attendance, or you will not be counted. If you have questions, you can stay after the meeting to get answers. The next meeting is January 12, 2022.

The Deputies are there to support our veterans (some of whom may be homeless). When the VA has something to be distributed or information about someone needing help (like a yard to be mowed, they are being evicted, etc.). Ann distributes the information to our deputies who then distribute to the units in their area and tries to get the need met.

VAVAS is a sub committee of VA&R. If you are a Unit chair, reports go to the Department Chair. The Department Chair consolidates reports from all Units. They are sent to the Western Division Chair who sends a report to the National Chair. April is also the Western Division Chair. She is responsible for 10 states. She is putting out a newsletter. It is April's intent that we are 100% in all reports. Since Lisa Williamson is our National VA&R Chair, we want to support her by showing complete reports.

In addition, all Representatives and Deputies will need to come to Anchorage for their testing at the VAMC. Because of the costs involved, the possibility of providing travel assistance will be brought up at the DEC for a decision.

VA&R information will go to April and VAVS information goes to Ann who keeps April informed. It is important that we have all our positions filled.

### **INFORMATION SHARING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

- There will be no Girls State meeting tomorrow.
- The DEC meeting on Sunday will start at 9:15 a.m.
- NOTE: There are NO mid-year reports this year. However, please feel free to send information into your Department Chairs as things occur. Also, be sure to keep a record so you can include it in your year-end reports
- President's Retreat – Jane shared information she received at the President's Retreat held last week. They asked a lot of questions about our constitution and bylaws, as well as our Facebook pages. They reviewed constitution and bylaws. If our governing documents are in conflict with National, they need to be changed. Unit governing documents are not approved by Department and Department governing documents are not approved by National. Be sure to check for gender equality (i.e. women's organization) wording in the documents. We are no longer just a female organization, we accept both male and female members. She encouraged people to read their constitution and bylaws. There are probably things to change. Be sure that new members get a copy of governing documents. If we are expecting people to follow our governing documents, they must know what is in there. She spoke about the absence of trust. A lot of times people feel that they might make mistakes, but don't want to ask for help. People hold grudges. We need to offer and accept apologies and move on. She used her goldfish and how they go round and round in the bowl. They can't hold grudges. We can agree to disagree. You might not care for someone, but you have to let it go and work beyond it. They talked about building trust and that communication is necessary. Members were asked to be mentors to others. Pick someone and help them along. Be honest. Admit your mistakes. Don't hide them. Take responsibility seriously. If you are asked to do something and you can't do it, be honest that you can't do it. Accept people's ideas and see if they will work. Jane will send out ideas that she received so units can use them.
- President's Poppy Project – The President's Poppy Project for the next year will be a celebratory birthday hat. Next year is Alaska 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. All member attending the Department Convention in April are sked to bring a hat for this purpose. Because it is our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, she would like everyone to make a poppy birthday hat with at least one poppy, more than one is better. At the Department Convention, your Unit will pick one hat from all those brought by your Unit to represent your Unit. There will be a parade of hats to celebrate at our Department Convention in April.
- Ann Robinson (Unit 33) thanked everyone for working so hard on membership. Last year was fun. She would like to be #1 in membership when Lisa is president. Sue Diaz (Unit 20) thanked Lisa Williamson, April Sinclair and Barb Nath for paying dues for Juniors to make sure we reached the 100% mark. She suggested building our Juniors this year.
- Unit goals for 2022 will be sent out next week.
- Diana Estrada (Department Treasurer) noted we are still working with National to get items to the right person (her or Barb).

- A lot of people don't realize that if you send in dues for 2022, they have to be used to pay 2021 unpaid dues first. You must be current in order to renew.
- Ann Robinson (Unit 33) noted that a lot of time we wait to submit a transmittal. Don't wait. Send them in as you get them.
- It was requested that we make our goals the same as National. (Department goal comes from National).
- You have to have 10 paid members to be a current Unit. Only one Unit has to work on that at this time. Diana is working with this Unit.
- It was noted that if applications for membership are incorrect or not complete, they will be returned for corrections. The Auxiliary cannot sign at the bottom, it must be signed by the Post. In addition, training can be provided. April Sinclair (Unit 57) also offered to provide assistance. She concurred with not waiting on transmittals for membership. Do them as they come in.
- It is the member that loses out when they go to apply for things that require membership (sometimes more than one continuous year). New applications asks if you have ever been a member. If it is answered yes, then call the person and find out when, at what unit and in what department they were a member. Also, check to see if their membership was under a different name. Their membership number is the same forever – even when they change from a Junior to a Senior or they change names.
- We are not all using ALAMIS. If your Unit is not utilizing ALAMIS, please have a Unit meeting and vote on who you will have as your Unit's ALAMIS representative. Once that occurs, you should submit a letter and a copy of the minutes to the Department Treasurer. Diana will then schedule training with that person.
- Nina is Junior Activities chair for both Unit 35 and for the Department. The Junior members are putting together care packages. There is an Alaska unit to whom they can send the care packages. There are a list of items needed. She challenged each Unit to do a \$100 donation to the Juniors. She does all the shopping. It is a Department project with Unit 35 Juniors spearheading the project. The first will be sent to Syria the week of October 25<sup>th</sup>. She hopes to also send packages from the Juniors for Christmas. There are many different areas to receive them (i.e. Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, etc.)
- April Sinclair (Unit 57) asked if the challenge was for the Department or the Unit. Nina responded it is for the Department.
- We have over 50 members – one member was injured at a blast in Afghanistan. The National Guard will take the packages overseas for us. They are going to be sent where we have Alaskans serving.
- The Department Convention will be held April 21-23, 2022 at Spenard Post 28 in Anchorage. As usual, there will be a Pre—Convention Department Executive Committee on Wednesday (April 20<sup>th</sup>) as well as both a Girls State Board Meeting and a Post-Convention Department Executive Committee meeting on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Jane noted she had tickets to sell to support her activities throughout the year. Ann will take care of collecting money.
- Poppy Orders are due November 12<sup>th</sup> to Barb.

*The Fall Conference went into recess at 2:25 p.m.*

*The Fall Conference came back from recess at 3:04 p.m.*

- Auxiliary Emergency Fund – Zona noted that if awarded, no money goes directly to a member. It will be sent to the companies needing to be paid. Zona also reminded everyone that if they are doing an AEF donations (either for our Department or for National), they should be sent to the Department. That way, Alaska will get credit for donations made to National. She reminded everyone that year-end reports are due in April. She challenged each Unit to raise \$1 per member for this program.
- Post 3 is doing a raffle tonight for a number of items (including a quilt and a shawl). Deb Davis will be selling tickets and collecting money.
- There will be a live auction during the dinner tonight.
- The Auxiliary has a lot of programs. We know that units cannot always be a part of all programs. It was requested that if your Unit doesn't take part in one of the programs, at least send in a report stating there is nothing to report. That way we will show 100% reporting for the year.
- The end of year is April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- This year, there were no action plans sent out from National. Each department had to create their own. The old ones are on the web site. Chairs should send in their plans to the Department Secretary and the President. April stated they should be specific to Alaska and to try to piggy back with Kathy Daudistel's theme of caring for others. Send Program Action Plans to Barb and Jane for review who will then send them to Lisa for posting.
- Ann stated that Unit 33 decided to throw an old fashioned party as a fundraiser for Lisa Williamson. They did a silent auction and collected items from around the community and the Post. They raised just over \$5,000 for Lisa's quest to be 2022-2023 National President. Ann challenged each Post/Unit to meet or beat that.
- National is no longer doing the Past President's Parley, but each Department can choose to continue it. The Service Woman of the Year will be under National Security and the Woman of the Year will be under Leadership. There are no changes to requirements for these awards.
- If you have an event going on for your Unit, forward it to Lisa to post. It can be any program.
- Jane wants a big celebration for Alaska's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with balloons etc.
- Constitutions & ByLaws – You don't need to change these every year. However, if National makes changes to the constitution and bylaws then the Department and Units need to change theirs. Sue Diaz is the Constitution and ByLaws chair. Call her with questions.
- Those who are already members and their eligibility is affected by the National eligibility changes (such as grandchildren) can retain their membership as long as their dues are kept current. However if they let their dues lapse, they cannot rejoin under their current eligibility, they will have to rejoin under the new eligibility requirements.
- Due to errors found in the Department Directory, they will be mailed out after corrections are made.

## ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** by Diana Estrada (Unit 35) and seconded by Sue Diaz (Unit 20) to adjourn.

There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.