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AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

DEPARTMENT of NEBRASKA
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DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT VICKI'S MARCH MESSAGE

March is the month of District Conventions! By the end of the month there will have been nine of the thirteen District Conventions! I am going to use this month's newsletter to hit the highlights that are being shared at those conventions so all members receive the messages.

DISTRICT 2 CONVENTION begins with registration at noon and the meeting at 1:00 pm on Sunday, March 12. The time was incorrect in last month's newsletter.

DISTRICT 3 will be attended by myself as I failed to change the officer attending when another District changed their meeting date.

2024 MEMBERSHIP DUES MUST BE AT LEAST \$30.25 We have received word from National Headquarters that a unit's dues cannot be less than the \$30.25 that must be paid to National. Even if your Unit is willing to pay the difference, your dues must be at least \$30.25. As an example, if your Unit dues are \$30 and your membership has voted to leave them at that amount and pay the 25 cent difference when submitting to Headquarters, this will not be acceptable. When we submit our 2024 Unit's dues amount to National, their program is set up to automatically set a Unit's dues at \$30.25 if what is submitted is less than that. Therefore, we have extended the deadline for the 2024 Membership Dues form to April 1. PLEASE NOTE: If your dues are above \$30.25 AND you have submitted your form, YOU DO NOT need to resubmit it. If your dues are less than \$30 and you have submitted your form, YOU MUST call Roxanne at Headquarters so she can change the amount. If you have NOT submitted the form, please get it submitted by April 1. Make sure to use the one included in the February Newsletters. DO NOT USE the one marked "SAMPLE."

TIME TO WRITE narratives for awards.

- Most Outstanding Unit Americanism Program, page 18 ABC Book (June 1)
- Best Unit AEF Narrative, page 19 (April 20)
- Best Utilization of Our Juniors Narrative, page 28 (June 1)
- Most Outstanding Unit Leadership Narrative, page 31 (April 20)
- Unit Member of the Year, page 31 (April 20)
- Legislative Unit Award, page 33 (April 20)
- Most Outstanding Unit National Security Program, page 43 (April 20)
- Salute to Servicemembers Award, page 43 (April 20)
- Poppy Posters, pages 48-49 (April 15)
- Poppy Centerpieces, page 51 (your District Convention)
- Public Relations Department Awards, page 53
- Publicity Book, February Newsletter (your District Convention)
- Unit Narrative History, December STAR (June 1)

TIME TO PREPARE YOUR END OF YEAR REPORTS that are due to headquarters by APRIL 20. You can find the easy-to-complete form on the website. It was mailed out in the October Newsletter.

UPCOMING DEADLINES include:

- March 15 – Americanism essays due to Tina Nelson, Chair
- March 15 – Scholarships due to Headquarters
- April 15 – Resolutions due to Headquarters
- May 1 – Prayers to Chaplain Ruth for President's Prayer Book

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION is rapidly approaching. You can make your reservations by calling The Ramada at 308-237-3141 and request the Legion block for the \$84 rate. Dates are June 22-25.



A PLACE SETTING OF AUXILIARY CHINA, made by W. C. Bunting Co. of Wellsville, Ohio, will be part of a fundraising event for the Department General Fund. Watch for details in the April/May STAR. The setting will include a 9-inch dinner plate, 6-inch dessert plate, and cup.

DO YOU KNOW how much you are appreciated? Headquarters receives numerous thank you notes and letters thanking us for our many ways we contribute to the Veteran Homes, Medical Centers, Stand Downs, Food Pantries, etc. What we do DOES matter in the lives of our Veterans!

REMEMBER TO CELEBRATE The American Legion's Birthday this month. Do something special for your Legionnaires.

Patriotism is not forgetting the soldiers in your prayers. . .even after the war is long over.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Deb Albers dalbers727@gmail.com

Did you host a Halloween or Christmas party or are planning an Easter egg hunt for children? Did you donate to a special program for children in your community? Did you donate to the Child Welfare Foundation? After calling several Units at Christmas, I learned that many Units do not necessarily consider all the things they do "report worthy." Be sure to record hours and money spent.

Please list the things you do in your Unit for children on the handy reporting form, and submit it to Department Headquarters (PO Box 5227, Lincoln NE 68505) by April 20, 2023.

Most Outstanding Unit Children and Youth Program Award.

- Submit your narrative to me by email along with good quality pictures in jpg. or jpeg format by May 15, 2023.
- The Most Outstanding Children and Youth Award entry for Nebraska will be submitted to National electronically and be recognized at the Department Convention in June.

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Jacki O'Neill

As your acting secretary, I get to tell you about the 2023-2024 deadlines and rules that apply to Nebraska American Legion Auxiliary from the National level.

The rule on the 2024 membership dues is the most recent item that may upset a few units; but as mentioned above, the rules come from our "mother" on the National level. The absolute lowest dues amount you can set for your members to submit to the Department is \$30.25. The National portion is \$18.00 and Department portion is \$12.25. You can add more for your unit to keep to help with expenses or set the dues at \$30.25 and your unit receives no extra support from the members.

I have heard from many members that a dues increase will cause a financial burden to many of our members on fixed incomes. I also know that many units did not want to force any increase on their member; but the National Membership System has three areas to tabulate: National portion \$18.00; Nebraska portion \$12.25 and Unit portion \$_____. The total of these three areas will be your dues for 2024.

Deadlines relating to 2023-2024 membership. These dates are the **last day National will allow any changes to be made.** That being stated, I would need this information long before the date!

1. **April 1, 2023** – Last day to make changes to member information for the 2024 printed rosters.
2. **May 1 – August 1** - Departments can update Remit to Individuals and Addresses in ALAMIS.
3. **May 1 – May 5** – Departments report Department rate changes for 2024 to ALAMIS.
4. **May 8** – Departments report any UNIT rate changes for 2024 to ALAMIS.
5. **May 22** – National will ask Departments to review the 2024 dues rate report on ALAMIS and confirm they were entered correctly. (*I made some errors last year, so I need plenty of time.*)
6. **June 5** – Dues are locked for 2024 membership year.
7. **In early July** - Membership dues will be available for renewal. (*Make 4th of July your date.*)
8. **August 4** – Report Units that need to be cancelled.
9. **August 11** – All renewed members not paid by midnight will get a renewal notice.
10. **September 1** – New members for the 2024 membership year can be added to ALAMIS.
11. **September 15** – 1st renewal notice mailed out from printer (*see number 9*).

WHAT NOW FOR NEBRASKA STATE LIFE MEMBERS (SLM) ???

Beverly A. Neel, Membership Chair
402 369 0152 bbneel1912@gmail.com

For those Unit members who bought into the State Life Member (SLM) program between 1976 to 1998, please read carefully and respond accordingly to myself as the Department Membership Chair.

The National organization does not recognize our Department's SLM program; thus, the Department is required to pay into National annually its portion of per capita dues. For the current 2023 membership year that is \$12.00 per SLM. Beginning July 1, 2023, the Department will need to send \$18.00 per SLM member to National because of the \$6.00 dues increase approved at the 2022 National Convention.

Presently, the National organization has received applications from our SLMs for the Paid Up For Life (PUFL) memberships, which is the National version of our SLM. National's question is **“Does the Department intend to have SLMs become PUFL members and eliminate our Department SLM membership plan?”** At this point, there is no discussion to that effect; nor plans to do so. Those Unit members having SLM membership have the only voice in how we address National's question.

It is an individual, voluntary decision of each SLM to determine whether to stay a SLM and do nothing **or** make an \$18 donation to the Department annually **or** switch back to a regular dues-paying Unit member with annual dues **or** buy into the PUFL program.

What would a PUFL membership provide for the Department that our SLM membership does not? It provides the funding for the Department to meet its obligation to pay National's per capita dues. Thus, the Department would not need to dip into the General Fund to cover that cost. Those of us who bought into the SLM program should understand that those dues have long ago been spent and there are no funds to cover the nearly 725 (plus or minus) SLMs annual payments into National.

Each SLM has to decide how would you like to proceed:

- (1) Stay as a SLM and do nothing;**
- (2) Stay as a SLM and make an annual donation of \$18.00 to the Department;**
- (3) Switch back to a regular dues-paying member with annual dues;**
- (4) Buy into the PUFL program, which will be a lump-sum payment based on your current Unit dues rate and your age.**

In order to avoid the dues increase in 2024, any SLM wanting to buy into a PUFL membership are encouraged to complete that process by May 31, 2023 to ensure the process is complete before July 1, 2023 on the Unit, Department and National levels.

Please consider your preference as a SLM and let me know by April 1, 2023. Thank you for your years as an ALA member and for being a SLM. Unfortunately, times have changed, and we need to consider ways to help meet the Department's financial responsibility for National per capita dues concerning SLMs.

POPPY PROGRAM REMINDERS

Marla Furrow, Department Poppy Chair

Poppy Poster Contest:

- Your deadline is approaching. If you contacted your school with the information to participate, you should be following up to make plans to get their entries.
- If schools do not participate, you can directly supervise the contest for other youth groups including your Junior members.
- The Contest Classes are listed in the ABC Book
- Poster requirements, including wording, using the Flanders Field poppy, poster size, media, judging criteria, etc. are also listed in the ABC Book
- Closing date for submissions to Units is March 15, 2023
- Each Unit will judge their posters and may submit one entry per class. Follow the guidelines in the ABC Book.
- Please submit the winning posters to Marla Furrow by April 15, 2023
- Do not roll or fold them when mailing

National Miss Poppy Contest:

- WHAT A FUN CONTEST FOR YOUR YOUNG JUNIORS!!
- Participants must be between 6 and 12 years old and be a Junior member.
- The selection of Little Miss Poppy is at the discretion of the unit.
- Scrapbook requirements are listed in the ABC Book—including the report, essay, Poppy activities, cover page, pictures, neatness and creativity
- Entry rules and judging criteria are listed in the ABC Book
- Please send entries to Marla Furrow by April 15, 2023

Poppy Centerpiece Contest for Juniors and Seniors:

- Please see the ABC Book for contest guidelines
- Seniors use Dept President Vicki Ozenbaugh's theme—**Never Forget, Ever Honor**
- Juniors use Honorary Dept Junior President Carly Raines' theme—**Games and Food make a Happy Veteran**
- Judging will be at your District meeting
- Each District will be responsible to have their winning centerpiece at Department Convention for Department judging.

Please call or email me with your questions: marlamae58@yahoo.com or 402-587-0927.

My mailing address for poppy posters and Miss Poppy is 57105 Hwy 8, Fairbury NE 68352. Deadline to me is April 15, 2023.



Leadership Award

Unit Member of the Year

Requirements

- Open to senior members who are not currently, nor have ever been, in an elected or appointed leadership role higher than unit president
- Units must submit a narrative of 1,000 words or less describing the nominee's accomplishments and activities together with the nominee's name and address
- Due by April 20th to Justina Birkel, Leadership Chairman by email to jrbirkel@gmail.com or PO Box 64, North Loup NE 68859