



SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

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

**August 22-28, 2014
Charlotte, North Carolina**

**American Legion Auxiliary
National Officers
2013-2014**

National President

Nancy Brown-Park, Department of California

National Vice President

Janet Jefford, Department of Connecticut

Division National Vice Presidents

Central: Donna Ray, Department of Ohio

Eastern: Margaret McMahon, Department of New Jersey

Northwestern: Patricia Steranka, Department of Colorado

Southern: Angela Kilcrease, Department of Mississippi

Western: Ginger Cox, Department of Arizona

National Chaplain

Shelley Riggs, Department of Ohio

National Historian

Sharon L. Doran, Department of Arizona

National Secretary

Mary "Dubbie" Buckler, Department of Indiana

National Treasurer

Marta Hedding, Department of Indiana

PRESENT

Pre-Convention National Executive Committee Meeting Saturday, August 23, 2014

National Officers

National President.....	Nancy Brown-Park
National Vice President.....	Janet Jefford
Central Division National Vice President.....	Donna Ray
Eastern Division National Vice President.....	Margaret McMahon
Northwestern Division National Vice President.....	Patricia Steranka
Southern Division National Vice President.....	Angela Kilcrease
Western Division National Vice President.....	Ginger Cox
National Chaplain.....	Shelley Riggs
National Historian.....	Sharon L. Doran
National Secretary.....	Mary “Dubbie” Buckler
National Treasurer.....	Marta Hedding

Past National Presidents

Pearl M. Behrend
Linda Newsome
Phyllis Sickmond
Barbara Kranig
Virginia Hobbs
Kristine West
Carol Van Kirk
JoAnn Cronin
Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan
Miriam Junge (Honorary)
Rita Navarreté
Carlene Ashworth
Kris Nelson
Peggy Thomas

National Executive Committeewomen

Alabama.....	-
Alaska.....	Susan Diaz
Arizona.....	Kathleen Medalen
Arkansas.....	Wanda Honeycutt
California.....	Terry Mikesell
Colorado.....	Karen Boehler
Connecticut.....	Nancy Hansen
Delaware.....	Carol Feeley
District of Columbia.....	-
Florida.....	Peggy Hearlson

Georgia.....	Edna “Susie” Mash
Hawaii.....	Josephine Keanu
Idaho.....	Barbara Gehring
Illinois.....	Patricia Sienkiewicz
Indiana.....	Nancy Gunning
Iowa.....	Mary Lou Littrell
Kansas.....	Cherie Thomas
Kentucky.....	Jane McKnight
Louisiana.....	Monique Batiste
Maine.....	Mary Jane McLoon
Maryland.....	Ivy Christoffers
Massachusetts.....	Judith Hall
Michigan.....	Mary Anne Yuncker
Minnesota.....	-
Mississippi.....	Sarah Edwards
Missouri.....	Laura Mosby
Montana.....	-
Nebraska.....	Cheryl Vap
Nevada.....	Pat Salmen
New Hampshire.....	Claudia Vatcher
New Jersey.....	Leila Newell
New Mexico.....	Mary Heiligenthal
New York.....	Barbara Corker
North Carolina.....	Mary L. Ward
North Dakota.....	Linda Juntunen
Ohio.....	Victoria Buck
Oklahoma.....	Debra Densmore
Oregon.....	Pam Seelye
Pennsylvania.....	Patricia Carnes
Puerto Rico.....	Hilda Soto
Rhode Island.....	Dianne Winston
South Carolina.....	Barbara Stoffer
South Dakota.....	Barbara Vetter
Tennessee.....	Geneva Pettitt
Texas.....	Marty Peters
Utah.....	Ellen Nathan
Vermont.....	Candace Huseman
Virginia.....	Thelma Starke
Washington.....	Hanny Elston
West Virginia.....	-
Wisconsin.....	Diana Sirovina
Wyoming.....	Joyce Menke

**Post-Convention National Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, August 28, 2014**

National Officers

National President.....	Janet Jefford
National Vice President	Sharon Conatser
Central Division National Vice President.....	Laura Mosby
Eastern Division National Vice President	Sandra Neylon
Northwestern Division National Vice President.....	Lori Skallerud
Southern Division National Vice President.....	Sue Heil
Western Division National Vice President	Sue Diaz
National Chaplain	Karen Boehler
National Historian	Lorraine “Rani” Gray
National Secretary.....	Mary “Dubbie” Buckler
National Treasurer	Marta Hedding

Past National Presidents

- Linda Boone
- Linda Newsome
- Phyllis Sickmond
- Barbara Kranig
- Virginia Hobbs
- Elizabeth Stewart
- Kristine West
- Carol Van Kirk
- Desireé Stoy
- Miriam Junge (Honorary)
- Rita Navarreté
- Carlene Ashworth
- Kris Nelson
- Peggy Thomas
- Nancy Brown-Park

National Executive Committeewomen

Alabama.....	Carole Reid
Alaska	Susan Diaz
Arizona.....	Karen Smith
Arkansas.....	-
California	Anita Biggs
Colorado.....	Debbie McBride
Connecticut	Helen Goewey
Delaware	Carol Feeley
District of Columbia	-
Florida	Geraldine Bailey
Georgia.....	Nancy Grist

Hawaii	-
Idaho	Joann Rasmussen
Illinois	Patricia Kranzow
Indiana	Carol LaGard
Iowa	Ann Crawford
Kansas	Karon Cook
Kentucky	Patricia Reynolds
Louisiana	Patricia Doucet
Maine	Georgine Butman
Maryland	Anselma Obremski
Massachusetts	Ruby James-Saucer
Michigan	Nancy Knox
Minnesota	Shirley Frederick
Mississippi	Margaret Blanchard
Missouri	Laura Mosby
Montana	Leah Ellwein
Nebraska	JoAnn Ward
Nevada	-
New Hampshire	Lisa Rojek
New Jersey	Doreen Gallagher
New Mexico	Janet Romero
New York	Barbara Corker
North Carolina	Sharon Neville
North Dakota	Marlys Aubol
Ohio	Victoria Buck
Oklahoma	Debra Densmore
Oregon	-
Pennsylvania	Marva Price
Puerto Rico	Hilda Soto
Rhode Island	Donna Rivet
South Carolina	Linda Smiley
South Dakota	Janet Hurlbert
Tennessee	Charlotte Connors
Texas	Christine Trahan
Utah	-
Vermont	Theresa Christie
Virginia	Cindy Kokernak
Washington	Terri Angell
West Virginia	Debra Fox
Wisconsin	Joyce Endres
Wyoming	Shareen Johnson

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**PRE-CONVENTION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2014**

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. So it's me.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And before we get started, we have to have a selfie this morning. Okay? Okay, ready? Everybody wave. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for indulging me.

VOICE: You didn't get our side of the room.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I did. I did it from the corner. I'll get you later. How's that?

So the National Executive Committee meeting will now come to order. Please disable all electronic devices or place them in the silent mode.

So please rise, remain standing for the opening ceremonies.

Shelley Riggs, National Chaplain, will lead us in our invocation and moment of silence for our fallen heroes and those serving our nation today for the protection of our freedom.

Following the prayer, Americanism Chairman Martha Lee Thatcher will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem, followed by the Constitution & Bylaws Chairman, Kathy Dungan, leading us in the Preamble to the Constitution.

Shelley.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Let us pray. As we gather today to use your gift of peace and understanding, that we may approach the matters we must handle with sincere and just hearts. May you watch over and guide us so that we may not hurt our friends with whom we work for the betterment of this organization.

Keep us always true in the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy. Keep a watchful eye on our servicemen and women. Keep them safe. This we ask in your most holy name, Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

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

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

For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism; to

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

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you, Kathy.

Thank you. Be seated.

It is hard to believe that we are here in Charlotte about to begin our 94th annual National Convention.

We have so much to celebrate this year and it was so great to see each one of you again. It's really fun to look out and see everybody's faces that I saw during the year. And each one of you, as I look at you, it reminds me of a story of what I did when I was there to visit your departments.

I can't thank each of you enough for the hospitality and everything that you did for me and for the American Legion Auxiliary and the Legion family. So thank you.

Before we begin our business, I want to remind you that anyone wishing to speak is first asked to make their way to the microphone in the center aisle as this is the only way your remarks can be heard for recording by our reporter for the transcripts of the meeting.

As many of you will remember, attendance at a previous NEC meeting -- at previous NEC meetings was each member's responsibility. However, thanks to our amazing convention team and National Headquarters' office, we can now track your participation via the QR codes on your name badge. Did you love that? Did everybody get scanned? Were you all scanned when you came in this morning? It's a little like --

VOICE: No.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: No? Stephanie? Somebody -- somebody didn't -- said they didn't get scanned.

MS. ABISI: Just come back to this table after the meeting.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. So if you didn't get scanned, then you need to go back to that table at the end of the meeting to be sure you get scanned. There's a little QRS code on your name tag, so we're actually able to scan to see what events you attend, what you do while you're here.

So it will give us a really good idea as we plan for the future. Makes it a little bit easier, so we're not shuffling papers and passing them around. So it is the first time, but I think it will be a really great thing as we move forward.

So some introductions. So I'm pleased to introduce the head table. So if you'll just stand, ya'll, and -- oh, so I love the south, by the way. I've learned a whole new way to greet people. It's called hey.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Every time I meet somebody, they go hey. I love it. I absolutely love it. I think it's so cute. And it's really cute in the southern.

It's not as cute on the west coast, but it's really cute in southern.

So I'd like to introduce Janet Jefford, National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Donna Ray, Central Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Margaret McMahon, Eastern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Patricia Steranka, Northwestern Division Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Angela Kilcrease, she's over here, Southern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I think they packed the house today.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Is that because we're in the South? Ginger Cox, Western Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And Shelley Riggs, our National Chaplain.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sharon Doran, National Historian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Mary "Dubbie" Buckler, National Secretary.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Marta Hedding, National Treasurer.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Chris Dickey, our Convention Parliamentarian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And my pages, where are they? Are you all here? Oh, there they are.

Okay. So this is Linda Workman. She is Thing One.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sherry Schneider, Thing Two.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Tammy Sollazo is Thing Four.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And Valerie Hardy, Thing Three.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So they have really cute little hats that say Thing One, so in case I don't remember their names, I guess.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So thank you. Thank you.

Would the Past National Presidents please stand and be recognized at this time.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I will tell you after this year, I know exactly what they went through. So I used to see them stand and I'd go, oh, yeah. Now I know.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. We will be utilizing a consent agenda to handle the basic business items. Those items are listed on your agenda and include the unit charter cancellations since March 2014, Resolution request, The American Legion, including obtaining the American Legion Auxiliary federal charter on renewed legislative priorities, Resolution gratefully acknowledging D-Day Memorial Events Committee in France, National Finance Committee policy renewal.

You received information on each of these items prior to this meeting with any updates on your chair today. Information about the consent agenda and how it works was circulated in advance along with the items listed on the consent agenda.

Please note the following correction on the list of charter cancellations. Does everybody have that?

So under the Department of Texas, please update their list at the bottom by striking the Emanuel L. Young Unit 838 and adding George Washington Carver Unit 835.

Does anyone wish to remove anything from the consent agenda?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair will now entertain a motion to adopt the consent agenda.

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz from Alaska.

I so move.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We need a second.

MS. MENKE: Joyce Menke, Department of Wyoming.

I second it.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

Is there dis -- we don't -- do we need discussion? No, no discussion. Okay.

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

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, say no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The ayes have it and the consent agenda is adopted.

The Chair is happy to report that the Minutes Approval Committee met and approved the minutes of the NEC meeting from March 2014. So thank you. Can you stand, please that were on that committee? Nancy Hansen, she's the third one, right? Third?

Diana Sirovina, are you here?

MS. SIROVINA: I'm here.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, there she is. So thank you for -- thank you for that. We -- we appreciate it. Thank you so much.

Okay. The Chair now calls on Nicole Clapp, Chairman of the National Finance Committee. There she is.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Madam President, good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: On behalf of your National Finance Committee which is Vice Chair Kris Nelson, committee members, Desi Stoy, JoAnn Cronin, and Jenny Hobbs, I am pleased to share with you a brief summary of our financial activity through our fiscal year to date as of July.

The financial performance of the national organization for 2013-2014 has been a year of positives, \$7.9 million in revenue versus \$6.5 million in expenses.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: But can anybody tell me what our biggest expense each year is?

VOICES: National Convention.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: The National Convention. So we'll just ride that wave for a little bit longer.

With sufficient revenue stream from the dues increase that was adopted at the 2011 National Convention and became effective in 2013 membership year, plus having a positive performance in our investments, we were able to enhance the new department National Leadership Conference by continuing to underwrite the cost for three department representatives to attend, maintaining department visits by the National Division Vice Presidents, and fund the National Public Awareness Campaign.

The successful fund raising efforts by our direct mail vendor -- vendor -- excuse me -- continue with their financial year of three campaigns designated for the ALA and one campaign for the Foundation.

Fiscal year donations through July have totaled \$303,000. So thank you, ladies.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: That is actually \$78,000 greater than our net guarantee from the direct mail vendor.

As we look at the 2013 direct mail donations, there were 212,000 gifts received, half of those gifts from ALA members which means the other half came from non-ALA members. So we have tremendous support for our organization from the external body.

In this fiscal year 2014, the number of people applying for the USAA Auxiliary credit card does continue to increase. As of June, 4,278 credit cards have been issued. And the drum roll of \$10.4 million have been spent on our USAA credit cards. That's a lot of, lot of money.

So based on our growth in the number of cards issued and the card holder usage, the credit card royalty program that is shared between the National and the departments is expected to be about \$12.5 thousand dollars coming back. So we're very excited.

But I will tell you if you have a USAA credit card, please continue to charge. If you don't, consider getting a USAA credit card, but remember charge responsibly.

So on behalf of the Finance Committee, I want to thank you for your dedication and commitment and generous support of the ALA's tireless efforts to fulfill our mission.

Are there any questions regarding this report this morning?
(Whereupon, there was no response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: All right. In conclusion, I want to wish and thank the NEC for their financial deliberations this past year and the support that you offer this committee. Please know that it is our continual goal to make decisions that are in the best interest of our organization, its mission, and we appreciate your efforts to maintain our organization's financial viability.

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

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: You're welcome.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Nicole, and the Finance Committee. Great job. Thank you so much.

And they work really hard to protect our money and to do the best for our organization.

So the first item to come under new business is the handling of Resolutions previously distributed. They will not be read unless a request is made to do so. If a request is made, the maker will read the Resolution. In order for a Resolution to come before the body, the maker of the Resolution needs to move its adoption.

Does a maker of the Resolution, recognizing the American Legion Auxiliary Department Operations Guide as best practice standards, wish to move its adoption?

MS. THOMAS: Madam President, I move the adoption of the operations guide.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Madam Past National President Peggy Thomas.

Is there a second?

MS. NELSON: Second.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

Kris Nelson seconded.

The motion is on the adoption of the Resolution as presented. Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Rita Navarreté, Past Department President from the Department of New Mexico.

I would like to encourage full consideration of adoption of this policy. I myself have read parts of the guide that impacted us at our recent State Convention dealing with subsidiaries with our Girls State program and others. And it is a fantastic guide, and I'm hoping that all departments go back home and focus on the

operations guide as printed and distributed.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Great. Thank you, Rita.

Is there any other discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All those in favor of the Resolution, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, say no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The ayes have it. The Resolution has been adopted.

Does the maker of the Resolution to ratify and confirm to The American Legion Poppy Program rules, clarification, revision by The American Legion NEC wish to move its adoption?

MS. COLLINS: Brenda Collins, Department of South Carolina.

I move it be adopted.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Do I have a second? Oh, it came from the committee, right.

The motion is on the adoption of the Resolution as presented. Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All those in favor of the Resolution, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The ayes have it. The Resolution has been adopted.

Does a maker of the Resolution to restrict American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program proceeds to veterans only require -- and require dated label wish to move its adoption?

MS. SEELEY: Madam President, Pam Seeley, Department of Oregon.

I recommend this Resolution be adopted.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Pam.

Is there a second?

MS. HUSEMAN: Candy Huseman, Department of Vermont.

I second that.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

So counsel general has reviewed this Resolution and advises that the Resolution is in conflict with the -- with the Legion Poppy rules and, therefore, the Chair rules this Resolution out of order.

Does a maker of the Resolution requesting the addition of a disabled student's category to the Americanism Essay Contest wish to move its adoption?

MS. VETTER: Madam President, Barb Vetter, South Dakota.

I ask that this be adopted.

MS. WINSTON: Dianne Winston, Department of Rhode Island.

I second that.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The motion is on the adoption of the Resolution as presented. Is there any discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All those in favor of the Resolution, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The ayes have it. The Resolution has been adopted.

Is there any other new business to come to the NEC meeting?

VOICE: No.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: No?

Dubbie. We all could have slept another hour.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Did you --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, yeah. Would you like to make some announcements? Oh, oh, wait. Wait. I have something here. Oh, sorry. That's been announced.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Well, I may need a little more time to get the announcements organized.

So hello, everybody.

VOICES: Hey.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Hey.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Some of you may know that my late mother was from Tennessee, so I have a little bit of that in me. So when ya'll say hi, ya'll, ya'll -- ya'll is -- I understand ya'll.

Okay. I have -- I have two announcements. One, all those -- this is from Past National President Peggy Thomas -- all those that have made arrangements to attend the Peggy Thomas/James Koutz reunion tonight, it will be held at Convention Center Ballroom level, Room 212, Convention Center Ballroom level, Room 212. I'll have this up here if anybody needs that later on.

Candidates for National President, National Vice President, Chaplain, and Historian will be visiting -- will be visiting the divisional caucuses this afternoon. All candidates should meet outside Ballroom CD at 3:30 this afternoon.

So if you're a candidate for National Office, the last couple of years, those visits have been to the Constitution & Bylaws pre-con meeting. This year, they're -- you're going to be visiting divisional caucuses. So 3:30 outside Ballroom CD here in the Convention Center.

Oh, and remember that the Constitution & Bylaws pre-convention meeting is today at 1:30 or -- excuse me. Oh, that would get you all started late. Correction,

1, is at 1 o'clock in this room.

So -- and I'll remind you the Constitution & Bylaws pre-convention meeting about three years ago now that time was changed so that everybody could hear the discussion about all the amendments, proposals that are coming before the -- that will be coming before the Convention body. So one o'clock in this room Constitution & Bylaws pre-con meeting.

Madam President, those are all the announcements I have. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That was record time, too. That was record time, too.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. We can tell some stories.

Okay. So just really quickly, 'cause I have a question in my mind -- that happens a lot. You know, I get up in the morning. I have a shower. I start to think and I call National Headquarters, and they go, no, are you crazy?

NECs or your departments, I understand some of you have changed your Bylaws so that your NECs will be elected for a longer period of time. How many of you have done that to date?

Wow, that's awesome, terrific. Okay. Could you stand because Dubbie can't see your hand.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: We're just curious.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yeah. That's great, awesome.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So really -- that's really --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We're going to count, so stand up again. Could you count them?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven -- so nine departments do that.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That's great. That's terrific. So thank you very much.

Question?

VOICE: Would someone please explain how they're doing the two-year deal because -- well, my department in their infinite wisdom withdrew my Resolution, the Constitution & Bylaws. And we had some discussion. How do you do it? How do -- who goes into it? How is it done?

And then my second question is, Madam Past Department President Peggy Thomas, we want to know if we have to dress formal or casual tonight, please?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Pantyhose, pantyhose.

MS. THOMAS: Casual and it's 6 o'clock.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Casual and it's at 6 o'clock.

Okay. So who would like to be a volunteer to help Wyoming out just a little bit? We have a little time, so did somebody want to share with -- okay. Why don't you -- if you're different, then share. Otherwise -- want to come to the mike?

Linda Boone said more than 20.

MS. McLOON: Mary Jane McLoon from the Department of Maine.

We put forth a Resolution this year and it was approved that we start electing -- starting next year, we will have people run for NEC. Anybody in the

department that wants to run will run and they'll be elected for a two-year position. And that's what we're doing.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That's great. So no specific qualification, just that you want to do that job and you'll do a great job?

MS. McLOON: I understand that anybody could run for any office --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You're right, absolutely.

MS. McLOON: -- no matter what. So, yeah.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Terrific.

Another department, do you have different qualifications or are you all pretty much the same?

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz from -- from the Department of Alaska.

We don't have set rules, but it's strongly recommended to be a Past Department President --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay.

MS. DIAZ: -- so that you've already gone through the chairs.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So you have the knowledge and --

VOICE: Two-year term.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Two-year term?

VOICE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Two.

Anybody have longer than a two?

VOICE: Ours is three. Actually, we're three.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow, great. Iowa, Department of Iowa has a three-year term, Iowa.

Anybody else have a different way to do it or like to share or -- here comes somebody. Okay.

VOICE: I'd just wish to add that ours is for a two-year period, but they can only run for another two-year period so that it doesn't become a life-long position.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay.

VOICE: And then -- and then after they're off once, they can, you know, run again, too.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: They can run again. So four years all together?

VOICE: Correct.

VOICE: Two-year term, two-year limit?

VOICE: Right, correct.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: About like The American Legion.

MS. HUSEMAN: Candy Huseman, Department of Vermont.

We had a Resolution and we elect our NEC for a two-year term. And they can only serve a consecutive two-year term.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So just once?

MS. HUSEMAN: Just once.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay.

MS. HUSEMAN: And we have Past Presidents need to run.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. So that's in your Bylaws?

MS. HUSEMAN: Right, because we feel that without having that experience, a member in a unit probably wouldn't understand what goes on at National Convention and what the NEC is really about. I know I didn't until I came up through the chairs, so we felt that a Past Department President was -- should be --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Great. Thank you.

MS. HUSEMAN: -- a NEC.

MS. TOLZMANN: Raleen Tolzmann from Minnesota.

We -- we did -- we go to voting. One year, we'll elect a NEC for two years. At the following year, we'll elect an alternate that will serve two years, so that we do it every other --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh.

MS. TOLZMANN: -- we aren't every year the same.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That's interesting, yeah. Great.

Anybody else have something they'd like to share?

Yes.

MS. JOHNSTON: Good morning, Madam President. Sally Johnston from the Department of New York.

I'm a little confused, and I think our delegation was, at a Department Convention -- excuse me -- at a Department Convention. How do you stipulate that only Past Department Presidents can run for this position?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It just has to be in your Bylaws.

MS. JOHNSTON: So we'd have to put it in the Bylaws to begin with?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Right.

MS. JOHNSTON: Okay. Somebody is saying no. So what the confusion is, if anyone can run for -- for the position, anyone in good standing, how do you stipulate can be just a Department President? We're not clear on that. If we could get clarification, that would be great.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Well, our Convention Parliamentarian said as long as -- it's a stipulation to run. It's a stipulation to hold the office, so qualifications. You can put that in your Bylaws.

MS. JOHNSTON: Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Kris Nelson, Past National President.

Minnesota also has that you can run three consecutive two-year terms, so you can run six years. We did not stipulate it had to be a Past Department President because we felt that maybe someone was a CEO of an organization and they would have the knowledge. So we did not want it to be specifically a Past Department President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kris.

Anybody else, something to say?

This is great. This is -- it's exciting. It's something that we need to do to move our organization forward. So it's exciting to see so many departments that have actually accomplished it, but others that are -- that are working on it right now. So that's really exciting.

So I want to say thank you to the NEC again. We have accomplished a great deal this year. I truly believe that we have set ourselves up for the next

generation. My -- one of my primary goals this year was to secure the future of the American Legion Auxiliary and I think you've done that when you passed the strategic plan in Washington, D.C.

So I can't thank you enough. I hope you'll all continue to work hard to keep our legacy alive and that's what's really important.

And in the many places that I went to visit, I think I shared that if you think about the next generation of veterans, and we all have somebody that we know or somebody in our lives or our families, that are going to need help.

We've watched the VA this year. We've seen what's gone on. It's not going to be the VA. It's going to be us that's got to be there to take care of them in the next generation.

So thank you for all your hard work. Thank you for what you've done. I hope now that you will go back to your departments, continue to be role models, continue to be mentors, because we need you to do that. We need to get rid of the bullies, right?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's true. It's true, right? I mean, we all talk about it. We all sort of sit back and kind of allow it to happen. So we need to just work for the organization. It really doesn't matter if I like the color of your coat or the color of your hair or, you know, your -- what your religion is. None of that matters. What matters is our veterans, active duty military, and their families. Those we serve, the children in our communities, that's really what matters.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I would encourage all of you to go back, be active, take on that role, but be a mentor. I know it's hard to step back and not be the President. I -- my husband is really worried about what I'm going to do. I said -- I said I'm going to wear my pin and you're going to do what I tell you.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I got a -- I have an absolutely awesome husband. And on the record, I have to thank him because I could not have gotten through this without him this year. We have a small business. He's taken on that business, and I truly believe that first husbands don't get enough credit for what they go through. They absolutely don't get enough credit.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And, you know, one day he sent me pantyhose and my camera. He's out shopping for pantyhose and, you know, he's done it all. He's done the dishes. He's cleaned the house. I did finally get a cleaning lady partway through the year because he'd say I cleaned the house and I'd go -- and I had to bite my tongue because I thought this isn't really clean, but -- so now we have a cleaning lady and I'm keeping that cleaning lady. She is not going away.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So he really truly has been there and he's -- he's been home alone. He's -- you know, you go away, you're gone and you don't see somebody for three or four weeks at a time. It's really, really hard. And I know

each one of these ladies who has shared their National Presidency with their husbands, it's a really difficult job and we all need to thank them and appreciate them a little bit more. So thank you. Thank you for everything.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So will you please stand with me as our National Chaplain offers the Benediction.

What are you walking on that for?

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Huh?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: How come you're walking?

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: I'm on my heels. What do you want me to do? You want me to scream?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Shelley broke her, by the way, broke her foot just before she got here. So she's not supposed to walk on it. So when you see her and she's walking on it, just tell her not to walk on it. You can be a bully then.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: What do you want me to do?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Pray.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Well, I am. She said pray.

Let us pray. Oh, mighty God, send us away from this session today in harmony, peace, and good will to spread the spirit of our love for our country. Be with us and guide us for the remainder of our Convention.

Thank you, everyone, who has been assembled here today, and I pray that you will bless their many works. Till we meet again, we ask this in your most holy name, Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Really quick, I just have to tell you that Shelley has pantyhose on with her boot.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So thank you, everyone, for being here.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We'll see you -- well, you know, levity is probably the best thing that we can all have in our lives, so we have to have a little bit of levity. But thank you all for being here, getting this job done.

It's been incredible, and we will see you all on the trail. No. I'll see you later this afternoon one o'clock here -- oh, really quick, Janet's handed me a note. Candidates meet at three o'clock, not at 3:30. Okay?

So have a great rest of your morning, and we'll see you later. Thank you. Adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 8:39 a.m., the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS
MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2014

ANNOUNCER: -- National Convention. Please direct your attention to the screens.

(Music.)

Mountain music, bluegrass, folk, traditional music, all add to North Carolina's rich history. And whether it's performed on stage or on the porch, those carrying on the tradition almost always were taught by their parents, and they were taught by their parents, and they were taught by their parents. In fact, the roots of bluegrass music were passed on by immigrants by England, Scotland, and Ireland, and in that spirit we gather to pass it on.

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Think a good thought, then think one a little better. Don't keep a good thought locked away. We've got to learn to share these things together, oh and give each pearl of wisdom away, yeah. Pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to a friend, pass it on to a soldier passing through. Pass it on to your daughter, pass it on to your son, pass it on, it will all come back to you.

ANNOUNCER: From the Department of California, please welcome your National President Nancy Brown-Park.

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to a friend. Pass it on to a soldier passing through. Pass it on to your daughter, pass it on to your son, pass it on, it will all come back to you. You.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I am so honored to be here today. But oh, but wait, I've got something I have to do. Are you ready?

AUDIENCE: (Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Woo-hoo.

AUDIENCE: (Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I can't go without a smiley selfie each and every day. I'm so happy to be here in Charlotte, and I'm delighted to share so many success stories that truly make my theme pass it on so meaningful. And as the song said, it will all come back to you. And from personal experience, it has.

Through my travels representing you, I have experienced firsthand countless times the results of the good work you do in service to our veterans, military and their families. American Legion Auxiliary members truly know how to pass it on.

Each day we are going to open our session by witnessing examples of Auxiliary compassion and service. This morning, travel with me to Melbourne, Florida to see how a few quarters, a little soap are making a difference in the lives of our veterans.

(Video.)

ANNOUNCER: On any given day, over 57,000 veterans are homeless. Unit 163 of Melbourne, Florida, is doing something about it. Their members not only create a way to solve an immediate need but also found a way to gain the confidence of homeless veterans so they might be helped in more permanent ways.

Project Suds is a simple program where homeless veterans are invited once a week to wash their clothes.

VOICE: This project benefits all the homeless veterans that we can seek out. It helps them to be able to get their laundry done free of charge, which they ordinarily would not be able to do.

MR. MARQUIS: The hardest thing for us to do is to get laundry done. We can have food, we can always get a shower somewhere. But trying to get laundry done each week, it can be really a pain in the you-know-where. You know, you've to hoof it five, six miles to the Laundromat. Get it, you know, probably half the time it's wet because you got stuck in a storm or something, you know, and it's been hanging out on your line by your tent. After a while it builds up and then mold starts growing in and you end up throwing away your clothes, you know?

VOICE: I used to have to do my clothes in a 5-gallon bucket. I'd get water out of a ditch or a canal. You know, running water was fairly clean. But that's one of the hardest things for us to do.

MS. PIERCE: When we started the project at 163 it was what we are meant to do. We were reaching out for our veterans, giving them the assistance that they needed. And through it all we have managed to have a, develop a real rapport with those fellows and they are our family. We have a true connection to them.

VOICE: And it's not just (indiscernible, it's all the ladies from the Auxiliary. You know, they are so nice to us. It's kind of like, like I say, we're almost like family. It's like a family here, you know? And I guess that's the way we kind of feel. We look forward to Tuesdays. I look, on Tuesday morning I wake up and I have energy. I want to get on the bus. I want to get down here as soon as possible, you know?

ANNOUNCER: Project Suds is a great way to connect homeless veterans with other agencies to receive the help they have earned.

MS. JONES: Project Suds allows the Coalition for the Hungry and Homeless veterans services program to reach out to homeless veterans and their families and acquaint them with the services and benefits that are available to bring them from their state of homelessness back into society's norm.

ANNOUNCER: The outpouring from the community has been heartwarming.

MR. NIEBLER: I'm with the local chapter of the Blue Knights Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club. We had read about Project Suds in our newspaper a few weeks ago and I took up a collection for detergent. This morning I called the facility to find out if this is where it was actually happening. And I showed up here and I could not believe how much great stuff is going on for our veterans.

MR. BAXTER: I read about Project Suds in the Florida Today and as a retired veteran I thought I would come down and meet some of the homeless vets

and see what I could do to make their life a little bit easier, to meet them. And also just to make sure that they knew that they were not forgotten.

ANNOUNCER: One of those homeless veterans was Billy Collins.

MS. KING-SMITH: Billy Collins was the wind beneath my wings. He was the first person I would see get off the bus every Tuesday morning, always with the biggest smile, always thinking of ways to promote this program and to make it work because he knew it was such a, something that was so useful to the veterans.

VOICE: Billy was, Billy was Billy. Billy was, he was a person that when you were feeling down in the morning or in the evening, he would come down and give you a big hug and tell you how much he loved you. You know? Tell you to keep your chin up, things would get better. You know? He was my hero. You know, three Bronze Stars, boots on the ground in Vietnam.

MS. KING-SMITH: Billy had finally decided he was ready to come out of the woods and he had applied for VA benefits as well as Social Security benefits. He would have been 62 years old in June and would have received benefits from the VA and Social Security.

ANNOUNCER: Billy was days away from figuratively and literally getting out of the woods.

MR. LOCKHART: I've known Billy for about ten years. And about three days prior to him passing away him and I were having a conversation about how he was excited that he was just getting ready to get the help that he deserved to get out of the woods. He was talking about how him and his best friend Frank were going to be able to hang out together at his place and enjoy life in the last chapter of his life. And he was really, really excited about that.

MS. KING-SMITH: Unfortunately Billy was trying to make his way back to the camp one evening, accidentally fell into a body of water and drowned. When we lost Billy it was like losing a family member to me, because he had become so close to me and to this program.

ANNOUNCER: At his camp in the woods the other veterans left his chair as a place to reflect. Before he died, the Auxiliary paid Billy's dues to reinstate his American Legion membership.

MS. KING-SMITH: Billy's memorial service was planned to be one of a true hero and not a homeless veteran. I wanted everybody to know that Billy had a name. I wanted them to know how proud we all were of Billy's service. And thanks to the American Legion-Heirs from our Post we gave Billy a service to be remembered by all.

ANNOUNCER: Project Suds has spread to other units because of the need and its simplicity.

MS. KING-SMITH: Project Suds has four main elements: a neighborhood laundry, quarters, detergent, and homeless veterans, not necessarily in that order.

VOICE: This project has become so important, something so simple as collecting quarters and going out and helping these guys do their laundry. There is no big mysterious thing about it. We just get together, we get the money in. The community has jumped in. Any unit throughout the United States can do this project.

ANNOUNCER: And the members of Unit 163 have benefitted, too.

VOICE: I love our guys, my guys. They are the inspiration for this project. They are the reason we smile. We have all gotten more in our hearts from our guys than we could ever do for them.

(Music.)

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please welcome three Unit 163 members involved in Project Suds. From the Department of Florida, Ann King-Smith, Pat Clark, and Billie Pierce.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

VOICE: (Singing.) Right here, right now, there is no other place I want to be. Right here, right now, watching the world go down in history.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You know, I had the opportunity to visit Florida and Operation Suds. And I think for me homeless veterans was always one of those things that was here that we knew we needed to do. But after visiting Florida homeless veterans became something that was right here, and something that I knew I had to do.

So I just found out that many of our Project Suds veterans have assembled at a local library and are watching a live feed.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So everyone together I want to say thank you for your service, and we love you. So are you ready?

AUDIENCE: Yes!

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay, let's show them.

AUDIENCE: Thank you for your service and we love you! Thank you all!

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. Another big round for this unit and what they are doing.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So pass it on. Whenever I think about the meaning of our theme, the first thing that comes to mind is the legacy of the service and mentoring from the group of women I am about to introduce. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you our attending Past National Presidents.

(Music.)

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

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Linda Boone from the Department of Oregon, National President 1992-1993.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: From the Department of Maryland, National President 1994-1995 --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: -- okay, Linda Newsome, you can come out now.

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: From the Department of New York, Phyllis Sickmond, National President 1996-1997.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'm trying to confuse them. From the Department of Wisconsin, Barbara Kranig, National President 1997-1998.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Virginia Hobbs from the Department of Kentucky, your National President 1998-1999.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

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

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

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

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

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

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, Department of Wisconsin, National President 2007-2008.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Desi Stoy, your 2008-2009 National President from the Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Also from the Department of Ohio, Honorary Past National President Miriam Junge.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Rita Navarreté from the Department of New Mexico, your 2009-2010 National President.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: From the Department of Texas, Carlene Ashworth, National President 2010-2011.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: From the Department of Minnesota your 2011-2012 National President Kris Nelson.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: From the Department of Virginia your 2013-2014 National President Peggy Thomas.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Ladies and gentlemen, your Past National Presidents. Let's hear it for all of our American Legion Auxiliary Past National Presidents.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, ladies. The poppies passed forward by our Past National Presidents during their introduction were a fitting symbol. Talk about passing it on, they have and continue to do so much for our organization and those we serve.

In our theme video you heard a song that really touches my heart. You may not know that this California girl loves bluegrass music, which means coming to North Carolina, a state known for great traditional music, so special. And speaking of special, I would like to introduce to you a unique North Carolina musical experience.

Sweet Potato Pie -- oh, did they leave? Sweet Potato Pie has been entertaining audiences for more than a decade with their classy blend of bluegrass, country, and gospel music mixed together in a style called sweetgrass. This all female band has carved out a place in the musical community with their original toe-tapping tunes, old classics, and entertaining stage show. Their unique sound revolves around their beautiful three-part harmony and dazzling picking. And they recorded "Pass It On" for our opening video especially for us. The band -- yeah, it's great. Yeah, come on. (Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The band has six CDs to their credit, which include chart-topping songs from their Traditional Pie albums, gospel CD, and their new Christmas album. This group works closely with the North Carolina Sweet

Potato Commission to promote agricultural products from around the great state of North Carolina.

Making their way from the heart of Carolina, these sweethearts of bluegrass serve up a musical treat that you are sure to enjoy. So please welcome Sweet Potato Pie.

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) I'm Carolina born, Carolina bred. When they lay me in the ground I'll be a Tar Heel dead. But rooted in my heart is the rhythm to my soul, songs from Jimmy Martin all the way to Bill Monroe. Because I'm a bluegrass girl. Its music fills my world. From the mountains to the cities or across the ocean wide, no matter where I travel to or where my body lies. I'm a bluegrass girl.

When the music starts the play by body starts to sway. I thank the Lord for bluegrass, it brightens up my day. No matter where I go, no matter what I do, it's part of who I am like the red, white, and blue. Because I'm a bluegrass girl. Its music fills my world. From the mountains to the cities or across the ocean wide, no matter where I travel to or where my body lies. I'm a bluegrass girl.

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) I'm Carolina born, Carolina bred, when they lay me in the ground I'll be a Tar Heel dead. But rooted in my heart is the rhythm to my soul, songs from Dolly Parton all the way to J.D. Crowe. Because I'm a bluegrass girl. Its music fills my world. From the mountains to the cities or across the ocean wide, no matter where I travel to or where my body lies. I'm a bluegrass girl. Yeah, I'm a bluegrass girl. Its music rocks my world. I love it when they sing. From the mountains to the cities underneath Carolina skies, I'm a bluegrass girl.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: Thank you so much. Good morning, everybody. We are Sweet Potato Pie. And what an honor it is to be with you, a roomful of women who have been doing good things throughout their lives. I want to take just a moment and introduce you to the girls in the band. We have been performing for almost 15 years. And if you can believe it or not, that makes us the longest running all female band in the nation.

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: So all of us are from places in North Carolina. Some of them you may not recognize. But if you have heard of a place that Kellie Pickler is from then you know this next lady. She plays this big dog house bass and she's from a little place called Albemarle, North Carolina. So please make welcome Ms. Sandy Whitley.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: Not too far away from Albemarle is another small place called Norwood, North Carolina. On the little fiddle please make welcome Ms. Katie Springer.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: From the pottery capital of North Carolina, it's a place called Seagrove, North Carolina. Please make welcome our banjo player, Ms. Crystal Richardson.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. RICHARDSON: All right. And ladies, I know that all of you know about hard work because this room is full of hardworking women. Well this lady right here I swear is the hardest working woman in bluegrass music. She is tirelessly keeping us busy. She started this band 15 years ago. Starting in January it will be 15 years. That's a long time to keep a group of women.

(Laughter.)

MS. RICHARDSON: Yeah, that's a long to keep a group of women together without killing each other, right? No, I'm just kidding. I'm kidding. I'm kidding.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. RICHARDSON: But anyway, Sonya is not only a great band leader. She is also a wonderful song writer. And she actually wrote that last song, "Bluegrass Girl." So --

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. RICHARDSON: So not only a great singer, bandmate, friend, encourager, just please make her welcome, from Cary, North Carolina, Sonya Stead.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: We were trying to think of something that you would enjoy this morning for the little bit of time that we had to spend with you. And so as I've already said, we play bluegrass music. We also play some old classic country. And I think there is a few of you in here that will enjoy this next little medley that we're going to of some of our favorite classic country songs. So without further ado, I'm going to turn this awesome singer, Crystal, loose on you.

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) I was dancing with my darling to the Tennessee Waltz when an old friend I happened to see. I introduced her to my loved one and while they were dancing my friend stole my sweetheart from me. I remember the night and the Tennessee Waltz, now I know just much I've lost. Yes, I lost my little darling the night they were playing the beautiful Tennessee Waltz.

Your cheating heart will make you weep. You'll cry and cry and try to sleep. But sleep won't come the whole night through. Your cheating heart will tell on you. When tears come down like falling rain you'll toss around and call my name. And you'll walk the floor the way I do. Your cheating heart will tell on you.

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Sometimes it's hard to be a woman giving all your love to just one man. And you'll have bad times, he'll have good

times doing things that you don't understand. But if you love him you'll forgive him, even though he's hard to understand. And if you love him, oh be proud of him, because after all he's just a man.

Stand by your man, give him two arms to cling to and something warm to come to when nights are cold and lonely. Stand by your man, and show the world you love him. Keep giving all the love you can. Stand by your man.

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Stand by your man and show the world you love him. Keep giving all the love you can. Stand by your man.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: Wow, I love that. You know, we got here yesterday afternoon just in time to see the parade. Wasn't that awesome?

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. STEAD: Let me just say that to be involved in something that has so many feelings for patriotism and love for country and love for our fellow man, it was just a wonderful thing to behold. And as I was watching the parade to by, and each time a flag would go, I was standing in an area where there were some older veterans that were unable to stand for very long. And they were sitting in seats. But every time a flag would come by, they would muster the strength to stand.

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: And that does something to you, as you are watching these men who have seen a lot of things that most of us will never see. And it made me think of my own dad, who served in the Vietnam War, and who has been a member of the American Legion for over 30 years.

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: I called him after I got back from the parade and I said, "Dad, I just want to tell you how proud I am."

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: Because when you see that sort of heroism and patriotism all wrapped up in one, you realize that we have been blessed to have brave and women throughout the ages of time who have been willing to serve on our behalf. And you know, thankfully there are good women who are willing to come and support them who have also served and who continue to serve for the veterans who are coming home, who are already home, and for the soldiers who are already out there. And when we were asked to sing the theme song for your group initially we weren't sure exactly what it was going to sound like. And when they sent us the song and said here's the song that we are using for our theme, and we listened to it, we immediately recognized many of the truths that we believe. Which is, you know, when you know something you need to pass it on. And the values that you are trying to share with those around you and the good things that you are trying to do are things that we all need to go home and try to do a little bit better on. So I want you to know was Sweet Potato Pie continues we're going to take this song with us that

we're about to do and we're going to perform it all over the country. So as we come to your area --

(Applause.)

MS. STEAD: -- we hope that you will come out and see us. You can find us online at sweet-potato-pie.com, or just Google search Sweet Potato Pie band and find out where we're going to be playing. Because we may be in your hometown and we would sure love to have you come out and say we saw you at the American Legion Auxiliary meeting and we wanted to hear more of you.

So without further ado, let me say what an honor it has been for Sweet Potato Pie to be part of this great event. And we urge you to continue and to pass it on.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Think a good thought, then think one a little better. Don't keep a good thought locked away. We've got to share these things together, oh, and give each pearl of wisdom away. Pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to your friend, pass it on to a stranger passing through. Pass it on to your brother, pass it on to another, pass it on, it will all come back to you.

Wear a smile when it's least expected, at the bus stop in the rain. Deep inside you're feeling cold and dejected, till someone gives your smile back again. Oh, pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to your friend, pass it on to a stranger passing through. Pass it on to your brother, pass it on to another, pass it on, it will all come back to you. You.

You've got a kindness that's full to overflowing, waiting till the right one comes. While you keep your kind side from showing there will be no room till you pass it on. Oh, pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to a friend, pass it on to a stranger passing through. Pass it on to your brother, pass it on to another, pass it on, it will all come back to you.

(Music.)

(Clapping.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to a friend, pass it on to a soldier passing through. Pass it on to your daughter, pass it on to your son, pass it on, it will all come back to you. Pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to a friend, pass it on to a soldier passing through. Pass it on to your daughter, pass it on to your son, pass it on, it will all come back to you. You.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. RICHARDSON: Thank you all so much.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, the 94th American Legion Auxiliary National Convention will resume shortly as we reset the stage and prepare for our business meeting.

(Music.)

ANNOUNCER: Welcome back to Pass It On, the 94th American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. Here to begin our business meeting is Convention Chairman from the Department of North Carolina Martha Corriher.

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Good morning, delegates and guests, and welcome to North Carolina for the special 94th Annual Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Before we begin I would like to, everyone to please take a moment and ensure that your electronic devices have been placed silent mode. Thank you. So I see you are working on it very quickly, there.

It is my honor this morning to present to you the 2013-2014 National Officers of the American Legion Auxiliary.

National Historian Sharon Doran from Arizona.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: National Chaplain Shelley Riggs of Ohio.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Central Division National Vice President Donna Ray of Ohio.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Eastern Division National Vice President Maggie McMahon of New Jersey.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Northwestern Division National Vice President Patricia Steranka of Colorado.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: And Southern Division National Vice President Angela Kilcrease of Mississippi.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Western Division National Vice President Ginger Cox of Arizona.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Your National Treasurer Marta Hedding of Indiana.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Your National Secretary Mary "Dubbie" Buckler of Indiana.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: And National Vice President Janet Jefford of Connecticut.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Ringing of the bell.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Please rise as the national colors are presented by the Color Guard from Harrisburg Post 472 of Houston, Texas. Afterwards, please remain standing for the introduction of our National President. Color Guard, please post the colors.

(Presentation of colors.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: This morning it is my privilege to introduce a wonderful lady from the great State of California. She taught us that pass it on is always the answer. From the junior message of civility and bully-free zones, to passion about the mission, every time we pass it on we give new life to our organization. Please join me in welcoming the leader of the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, our National President Nancy Brown-Park.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) Pass it on to your neighbor, pass it on to a friend, pass it on to a stranger passing through. Pass it on to your brother, pass it on to another, pass it on, it will all come back to you. You.

(Music.)

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) And you've got a kindness --

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Madam President, I present this gavel to you so that you may officially open the 94th Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Martha.

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much, Martha.

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Thank you. You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The 94th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will come to order.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay, let us begin this gathering with a prayer. Shelley Riggs, our National Chaplain, will lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, what a blessing it is for all to be gathered here today. We thank you for everything that has been accomplished so far this past year. Nancy has had an awesome year, and she has taught us to pass it on. Be with her here today and all of us as we go through the process of learning all the accomplishments that each of our programs have had. Be

with us today and always. Be with our servicemen and women. Keep them from harm's way. God bless us all, and God bless America. Amen.

AUDIENCE: Amen.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please remain standing as Martha Lee Thatcher, Chairman of the National Americanism Committee, leads us in the Pledge of Allegiance, and then remain standing for our National Anthem performed by Crystal Richardson of the award winning Sweet Potato Pie. Martha?

ALL: 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.

MS. RICHARDSON: (Singing.) 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 through 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.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow. As we prepare for the start of business our National Constitution & Bylaws Chairman Kathy Dungan will lead us in reciting our Preamble.

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

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kathy. Thank you, everyone. And welcome to the 94th National Convention. We have much to celebrate and many important things to accomplish, so let's get started.

It is my pleasure -- oop, did I miss a page? Oh, I did. We have some very important guests with us this morning. Please join me in welcoming this year's National Convention appointees. Linda Fercho, Chairman of Pages.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Linda Workman, National President's
Page.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sherry Schneider, National President's
Page.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Tammy Sollazo, National President's Page.
(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Valerie Hardy, National President's Page.
(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You can tell I need a lot of help.
(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Miriam Junge, Chairman of Distinguished
Guests Committee.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, member of
Distinguished Guests Committee.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Kendall Madsen, member of Distinguished
Guests Committee.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'm just going to correct myself. Miriam
Junge is the Chairman of the Distinguished Guests Committee. Chris Dickey,
Convention Parliamentarian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please give them all a great big round of
applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It is my pleasure to invite a few special
guests to the stage to bring greetings. Please welcome Sharon Neville, North
Carolina Department President.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. NEVILLE: Madam National President Nancy, welcome to North
Carolina. And thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve with you in the
largest patriotic service organization in the world.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: We have had an outstanding year.

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: Well, how are y'all doing this morning?

(Cheering.)

MS. NEVILLE: Welcome to North Carolina, the home of the Tar Heels.
North Carolina joined the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary in 1920 and we are
extremely proud to host the 94th National Convention. From the great Atlantic
shores to the beautiful Smoky Mountains. We are home of the American Legion
World Series Baseball. Ava Gardner, one of the most beautiful actresses of the
1940's grew up in Grabtown, North Carolina. Wilmington, North Carolina is our

Hollywood of the East, is home to one of the largest sound stages outside of California.

North Carolina is one of the top military friendly states as we are home to Fort Bragg, the largest military Army installation in the nation --

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: -- Seymour Johnson Air Force Fighter F-18's Base --

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: -- Camp Lejeune Marines --

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. NEVILLE: -- the MCAS Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station --

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: -- and last but not least the Coast Guard out of Elizabeth City Base Support and Air Station.

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: Our four VAVS hospitals, Asheville; Durham, who will be host to the 2015 National Creative Arts Festival; Fayetteville; and Salisbury. These are our first priorities.

As we assemble here this week to remember our mission, the spirit of service not self, as we extol the accomplishments, the pride, the dedication of our members to our veterans, and as Madam National President asked of us, and we passed it on.

As we say here in the South, bless your hearts for being here with us. We are so humbled to have you here in North Carolina. Enjoy your stay with us. All of the southern belles of this great state wish you the best while you are visiting. And if there is anything that we can do to make your stay more memorable, please ask. North Carolina, let them know where you are.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. NEVILLE: Now you all come back, you hear?

(Laughter.)

MS. NEVILLE: Madam National President Nancy, again, welcome to North Carolina.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Sharon. And thank you North Carolina. As they say in the South, hey!

ALL: Hey!

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'd like to introduce now to bring greetings, Martha Corriher, National Convention Chairman.

(Music.)

VOICE: (Singing.) Nothing could be finer than to be in Carolina in the morning. Nobody could be sweeter than my sweetie when I meet her in the morning

--

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Good morning, Madam President Nancy and welcome where nothing could be finer than to be in Carolina in the morning.

On behalf of the North Carolina American Legion Family, the Convention Committee, and all North Carolinians, we hope you find your stay with us filled with Southern hospitality. From our beautiful beaches to our majestic mountains and everywhere in between, we hope that you are able to enjoy some of our history, adventurous activities, shopping, and of course trying some of our southern food. For those in attendance who haven't figured out by now who I am, I am Martha Corriher, your National Convention Chairman. And I will be floating, fluttering, running all around the Convention Center to assist our local pages and you attendees at the Convention. And if there's any concerns that may arise, please let us know.

The North Carolina Department Convention Committee offices are located in the VIP suite number 105 on the concourse level. There you will be able to find the Flower Committee, the mailroom, and the local pages' information. It is my pleasure to introduce to you my local committee chairman and vice chairman. National Convention Vice Chairman Kay Hirst.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Flowers Committee Chairman Theresa Weybrew.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Vice Chairman Martha Whitaker.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Mailroom Chairman Ann Morris.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Vice Chairman Gail Jones.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: Local Page Chairman Judy Stancil and Vice Chairman Elaine Jones.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: While in the Convention Center to make it easier for you to find your way around our local pages will be easy to spot. You can look for them with this handy dandy North Carolina question sign. So if you have questions, look for the sign. They may have an answer, they may not. But if they don't, they will get the answer for you. They are excited to assist you this week, getting you from one meeting to another and to answer your questions about the Convention or anything locally to be found. If there is anything you need please don't hesitate to locate us in our office again on the concourse level VIP suite 105. And we have just recently created the lost and found section, where we have lots of items already. So if you are missing something from your badge to iPhones, iPads, shirts, earrings, glasses, come see us. They may be yours.

On behalf of the Convention Committee, thank you, Madam President, for giving us this opportunity to assist the Auxiliary members of this National Convention experience. Madam President, this concludes my remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Martha. And thank you to your team. You are all wonderful ladies. Thank you so much for everything. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Now I get to introduce immediate Past National President from the Department of Virginia, my President, Peggy Thomas.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT THOMAS: Good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT THOMAS: Madam President Nancy, what a pleasure it is to bring greetings on behalf of the Past National Presidents both here and at home. After many years of service in this organization and to your home Department of California, you assumed the position of National President to lead the American Legion Auxiliary, the largest women's service organization in the world. You have demonstrated friendship, patriotism, and service not self as you traveled the world, and it has been a wonderful year. A year filled with dreams come true. The Past National Presidents assembled here representing many years of service to this organization appreciate your contributions and wish for you a most successful and memorable convention after which we welcome you heartily to our group. Please continue to pass it on.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. With your help, I will do that.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Peggy. Okay. Now we're going to talk about those great little gadgets you all have, should have around your neck. The electronic voting pads, do you all have them? Everybody have them? Anybody not have them? Well then you'd better chat with somebody in your department. Okay, with the use of electronic voting during our 2012 and 2013 National Conventions delegates were finally able to truly vote their conscience and all the members could clearly and easily see the voting count for each item of business. I am excited to say that this year we will again be utilizing electronic voting during our National Convention.

Your delegation should have already picked up your voting key pads before today's session began. Please remember that Standing Rule #14 states that voting keypads are not to be removed from the assembly hall. Each department representative is responsible for all keypads issued to their department. Departments will be charged \$100 for each missing keypad so be sure to count them before you turn them in to the Election Committee at the end of the day. If for some reason you have a delegate missing and no alternate to take her place, votes for those keypads may be cast by the delegation. If you choose to abstain from voting simply don't press any keys. If you press the wrong key on the keypad, wait a moment and then press the correct number. The keypad will register only the last key pressed.

So let's take a minute to get familiar with our new electronic voting keypads by doing some practice votes. Would all delegates please stand. When

your vote has been cast please sit down so we can ensure everyone's vote has been counted. If this is your first time at our National Convention, please press the number one key. If you have attended a National Convention before, please press the number two key. Please make your selection now.

(Music.)

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: This is the best part. Has everyone cast their vote? Voting is now -- has everyone cast their vote? I've got two people over here that - oh, there we go. Voting is now closed. Please show the results. But we still have -- I'm sorry. We still have 11, 10, 9, 8.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I just got a little, the birdie said to me when the music stops it's closed.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Please show the results.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow. Wow. So let's welcome all of our first timers to National Convention. Wow!

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Now for our second test. So please, everybody stand up. The American Legion Auxiliary's 2014 National Convention is currently being held in Charlotte, North Carolina. Press number one for yes, number two for no, or number three if you have no clue where you are.

(Laughter.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Voting is now closed. Please show the results.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Ah. Okay, we're going to do one more question. One more. If you are a delegate from the Department of California, please press the number one on your keypad -- oh, please stand. I'm sorry. So if you are a delegate from the Department of California, please press the number one on your keypad. If you are a delegate from a department other than California, please press the number two unless you would like to move to California. Please vote now.

(Laughter.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Voting is now closed. Please show the results. I can't read it. Is that right? Yeah, that's good. Yay! Yeah, they knew where they were.

(Applause.)

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So it looks like we've got it down. That's great. How much easier was this this year than it has been in the past? So it's great.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You will be using your keypads to vote later today, so please keep them with you. Remember at the end of the day you must turn in your keypad to your department representative before you leave. Department representatives, be sure to count all of your keypads before turning them in.

Our first item of business is the adoption of the reports organizing the Convention. The Credentials Chairman will be presented by -- the Credentials Report will be presented by Credentials Chairman Elizabeth Lee and my friend from the Department of Hawaii.

(Cheering.)

(Applause)

CHAIRMAN LEE: Madam National President, the Credentials Committee met on Saturday, August 23, 2014. The following is our report. Alabama, ten. Alaska, eight. Arizona, 18. Arkansas, eight. California, 23. Colorado, 11. Connecticut, ten. Delaware, nine. District of Columbia, six. Florida, 31. Georgia, 12. Hawaii, six. Idaho, eight. Illinois, 27. Indiana, 39. Iowa, 24. Kansas, 15. Kentucky, 11. Louisiana, 12. Maine, 11. Maryland, 22. Massachusetts, ten. Michigan, 25. Minnesota, 34. Mississippi, ten. Missouri, 16. Montana, eight. Nebraska, 22. Nevada, seven. New Hampshire, 12. New Jersey, 14. New Mexico, ten. New York, 35. North Carolina, 12. North Dakota, 14. Ohio, 38. Oklahoma, ten. Oregon, 11. Pennsylvania, 49. Puerto Rico, seven. Rhode Island, seven. South Carolina, nine. South Dakota, 14. Tennessee, nine. Texas, 20. Utah, eight. Vermont, 11. Virginia, 13. Washington, 11. West Virginia, 11. Wisconsin, 25. Wyoming, eight. Total, 811.

Madam President on behalf of the Credentials Committee I move that the roll of delegates hereby submitted be the official voting attendance of this Convention.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. The question is on the adoption of the Credentials Committee Report as presented. Is there any discussion? The question is on the motion to adopt the Credentials Committee's Report as presented. All those in favor say, "Aye."

(A chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, "No."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The affirmative has it and the Credentials Report is adopted as presented. Oh, she disappeared. Oh, thank you. Thank you, Elizabeth. The Rules Chairman Anita Biggs will read the proposed rules for the Convention.

CHAIRMAN BIGGS: Good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN BIGGS: If you would like to follow along the rules are printed on page 124 and 125 of your Convention program.

Rule number one, all meetings of the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention shall be called to order at the designated time, or as soon thereafter as a quorum is present.

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

Three, the Credentials Committee shall report at such times as directed by the Chair.

Four, the audience shall remain seated during the business of the Convention. Doors shall remain open unless noise or distractions interfere with conducting of business. Delegates will be allowed to leave or enter the National Convention Hall except when balloting or elections are being held, or when a guest speaker is addressing the Convention body. Persons leaving the Convention Hall during balloting, elections, or speaker presentations will not be allowed to reenter the Convention Hall until the balloting or election is completed, or the guest speaker has continued his/her presentation. Delegates may leave or enter the National Convention Hall without an escort. Smoking is not permitted. All electronic and communication devices shall be turned off or silenced.

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

Six, only authorized photographers shall be permitted on stage during the Convention session.

Seven, there shall be no public presentation of gifts during National Convention except by prearrangement with the National President.

Eight, the chairmen of each department delegation shall be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that only accredited delegates wearing official Convention badges are seated with their delegation. If a delegate is absent from a meeting an alternate delegate shall take her place with the delegation.

Nine, only voting delegates of the Convention may make motions and address the National Convention. To address the Convention the voting delegate shall rise and one, proceed to a microphone; two, address the Chair; three, wait to be recognized by the Chair; and four, upon being recognized by the Chair shall state her name and department.

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

Eleven, debate on any question shall be limited to two minutes for each delegate. No person shall speak on the same question more than twice without the consent of the Convention. No delegate may address the Convention a second time on the same question until all delegates who desire to speak on the topic have spoken. During debate delegates, alternates, and guests are to remain seated within their own delegation or assigned seating area unless they are approaching the

microphone, completing a motion form, or entering or exiting the general session. Pages may deliver messages to the stage and to other delegations at any time.

Twelve, each delegate shall be entitled to one vote. The vote of any delegate absent and not represented by an alternate may be cast with the majority of the delegates present from her department in accordance with the current National Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules.

Thirteen, voting shall be by voice vote or by an electric voting keypad or device, except when the Chair deems it necessary to use some other method, or when a roll call is requested by the chairmen of three department delegations. Voting by electronic voting keypad or device shall be deemed to be a division of the assembly.

Fourteen, when the Chair deems electronic voting devices are to be used, packets containing electronic voting keypads shall be provided to each department. Electronic voting keypads shall not be removed from the National Convention Hall. Each department's delegation chairman or delegation secretary shall sign for the issuance and return of the electronic voting packets as instructed. Placed inside each voting packet envelope shall be A, the number of electronic voting keypads corresponding to the number of the department's voting delegates, one to be assigned to each voting delegate of the department; B, one certification sheet which shall have the number of votes to be cast as certified by the Credentials Chairman.

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

Sixteen, if and when a paper ballot is used each chairman of the department delegations shall appoint two delegates to assist her in counting the number of votes cast. The Chairman shall distribute a ballot to each voting delegate.

Seventeen, if and when a paper ballot is used the chairman of the delegation shall enter onto the certification sheet the total number of votes cast plus the absentee votes witnessed by assistants. The chairman of the delegation shall place the certification sheet and all the ballots in the ballot envelope. The name of the department shall be removed from the ballot envelope by the chairman of the delegation. The chairman shall return the ballot envelope as instructed.

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

Nineteen, nominations of candidates for National Division Vice President shall be at the division caucuses on Saturday, August 23, 2014.

Twenty, nomination of candidates for the office of National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be on Wednesday, August 27, 2014.

Twenty-one, nominations of candidates for national offices shall be made from the floor.

Twenty-two, nominating speeches shall be limited to two minutes for each candidate except for the candidate or candidates for National President, who will be allowed four minutes. There shall be no seconding speeches.

Twenty-three, following nominating speeches for national officers on Wednesday, August 27, 2014 each of the nominees for National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be introduced to the National Convention by the Auxiliary member making her nomination, said introduction to be only by name and department affiliation. In response to the introduction the nominee shall be allowed a maximum of two minutes for remarks.

Twenty-four, election of national officers shall be held on Wednesday, August 27, 2014. When there is by one candidate for any office the nominee may be elected by voice. When there is more than one candidate for a national office the election shall be by paper or electronic ballot as determined by the presiding officer. A majority of votes cast shall elect each officer. When no candidate receives a majority of votes on the first ballot a second ballot will be taken between the candidates receiving the highest number of votes with the candidate receiving the most votes on the second ballot being elected.

Now before I read Rule 25 please make a note of a change to this rule that differs from what is printed in the Convention Guide. So if you could please prepare to strike the words, these are the words to strike: "the revision considered," "the revision considered." Please strike those words and in place insert -- and I'm going to say it real slow. "Any amendments to the governing documents adopted." Everyone have that? So Rule 25 will now read: the National Convention Parliamentarian with the approval of the National President, National Vice President, National Secretary, and National Treasurer is authorized to correct article and section designations, punctuation, and cross references, and to make such technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the intent of the voting delegates in connection with any amendments to the governing documents adopted at this Convention.

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

Madam National President, by the direction of the Rules Committee I move the adoption of the National Convention rules for 2014 as just read.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The question is on the adoption of the National Convention Rules for 2014 as just read. Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The question is on the adoption of the National Convention rules for 2014. All those in favor please press the number one on your voting pad. Those opposed -- oh, please stand. Okay, all those in favor please press the number one on your voting keypad. Those opposed, please two. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Voting is closed. Please show the results. Oh, perfect. Thank you. There is a majority in the affirmative. The motion is carried and the rules for the 2014 National Convention have been adopted. Thank you, Anita. Thank you.

The National Secretary Dubbie Buckler will give the Program Report.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Madam President, a printed copy of the program has been provided to each Convention delegate. There are the following changes to the Convention schedule that can be found on page 127 of the program guide. Because -- sorry. Hold on just a second. It's secure now. It would not be good to have a poppy going flying. Because we are going to be honored with a visit from the President of the United States, these changes are necessary. The Woman of the Year luncheon starts at 1:30 p.m. tomorrow. Tuesday -- you are on page 127.

VOICES: Nine.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You're on page 129. I said that. That's what I meant.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Woman of the Year luncheon starts -- so we have that time right now. Everybody good on that? The Woman of the Year luncheon will now start at 1:30 tomorrow. National Convention session two on Tuesday will recess at approximately 10:20 in the morning for the Legion Family Joint Session. There will no recess on Wednesday, August 27th. The session will adjourn when all the business has been completed. And now there is a correction on page five. It is the vendor's fault. Rest assured we know that our National President's name is Nancy Brown-Park.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Rest assured we know that her name is Nancy Brown-Park. When the proofs came back that correction was noted, circled, initialed. It was not picked up by the printer. Those things happen. I just want you all to really know we know what her name is and we did catch that. And she hasn't thrown anything at me, so, so with that I will turn it back over to the Chair to accept these changes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's okay, Dubbie. You know, my husband always wanted to be James Brown.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: But we negotiated that, so he's not James Brown. The Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the program with the changes named.

MS. JEFFORD: Madam President, Janet Jefford, delegate from Connecticut. I move that we accept the program with the announced changes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. The question is on the motion to adopt the program with the changes noted. Are you ready for the question?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The question is on the motion to adopt the program with the changes noted. All those in favor -- oh, please stand. This is really good exercise, you know. Do you know how many times I did this yesterday in the parade? All those in favor, please press the number one on your keypad. Those opposed, press the number two. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Voting is now closed. Please show the results. Okay. I just want you to know one of those was me. By adoption of these reports -- oh, I'm sorry. The affirmative has it and the Convention program is adopted. By adoption of these reports the 94th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary is officially organized for conducting business. One second.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I am so happy to start this morning off with a visit from my friend, Sons of The American Legion Commander Mr. Joseph Gladden. Joe is a proud 22-year member of the Detachment of Maryland and an honorary lifetime member of Overlea-Perry Hall Squadron 130. Joe's eligibility is through his father, an Army veteran of World War II. He has held almost every position in the Sons and his wife Bobbi and three sons are all active in the Legion Family. Joe's theme this year is Working Together We Can Make a Difference, and I definitely agree. Please welcome from the Sons of The American Legion National Commander Joe Gladden.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: Good morning.

(Cheering.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: I didn't know I was coming to a game of Jeopardy.

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: All right. So here's the answer. Dean Martin, Everybody Loves Somebody. All right. So who has got the answer? What Joe is going to sing on Wednesday night at the National President's Banquet.

It's great to be here this morning. I first want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here. Secondly, I want to thank you for the opportunity of serving with to me one of the greatest National Presidents that I have had the opportunity to serve with. Of course, it's the only one. But --

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: -- but to meet, as well. I've loved this year with Nancy and her husband Jim, and serving alongside National Commander Dan and his wife Margaret and my wife Bobbi. We have just really had an incredible year together in our opportunities to come together.

You know when I started the year this year, or last year, in Houston, and I will never forget standing up on the stage and Nancy asked me to sing a song and I was scared to death. And I was so happy that she did because it gave me an opportunity to meet all of the American Legion Auxiliary that were there. And for you to have an opportunity to see me and to get to know me a little bit. And so it really kicked off my year. You know, as I traveled around, you know, I would run into different departments and I would get an opportunity to speak to the Auxiliary.

And some of them would say, "Oh Joe, I saw you down in Houston." And of course then they'd turn away and say, "Well, you were okay." But --

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: No, I'm kidding. But it was a great start to my year. You know, when I thought about being National Commander I had to think about a few different things and one of those things was what I wanted my theme to be. And this year has proven to be 100 percent. My theme was United in Service. And that is the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of The American Legion, the American Legion, and the American Legion Riders all working together to accomplish incredible things, and we did. And I know this year the Sons donated over \$2 million in veterans programs, over \$1 million on Children & Youth programs.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: Thank you. \$346,000 to the Child Welfare Foundation. And we are still waiting to hear about the Legacy Scholarship Fund, which was my National Commander's project.

You know, as I traveled around -- I know some of you have heard this story but I just think this story is too good and I need to share it with you. You know, I talked about the legacy from the standpoint of a soldier leaving home and planning on coming back to be with his family. And I did that all the way up until May. But when I was in Ohio in May I had an opportunity to meet a young man named Myles Eckert. Myles was an 8-year-old little boy who had gone to a Cracker Barrel with his mom Tiffany and his sister Marlee, and he found a \$20 bill laying outside in the parking lot on his way in. And as he was going in he was thinking, oh, I'll buy myself a little video game, or something like that. And he gets inside and he sits down and he looks over and he sees a soldier sitting there eating breakfast. So Myles went and pulled out a piece of paper, because this is the way he was raised. And on that paper he wrote, "My dad was a soldier but he's in Heaven now. And in my family we believe in paying it forward. Consider this your lucky day." And he wrapped that \$20 bill up in that piece of paper and he walked over and handed it to them and they left.

Well it turned out it was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air National Guard. And he was so moved by what Myles had done that he tracked him down and it hit the local news in Toledo. And then it went and hit the national news on CBS. And The American Legion then heard about it. And they decided they wanted to recognize Myles for being a young man of character and wanted to give him a life membership in the Sons of The American Legion and give him a plaque. And I had the opportunity to do that because I was in Ohio at the time.

And so they handed me the plaque, and Myles was standing next to me, and I looked at the top of the plaque, and the very first line on the plaque said Gold Star Son. Because the rest of the story was is that when Myles was just a baby his dad, Sergeant Gary Eckert had come home from his first tour of duty over in Afghanistan. And he came home, saw his son, and he saw his daughter, saw his wife, and he went back to be with his fellow comrades and just four weeks later was killed in action. And at that moment I knew that Myles and his sister Marlee were the face of the

Legacy Scholarship Fund. And so as I traveled around I talked about Myles, and I talked about Marlee. You know, and I had made the decision, and many of you in this room I know took part in that decision, and I decided I wanted to sell my Commander's challenge coin. And as I went from department to department I would tell the story and I would pull out my challenge coin and ask people to participate along with me. And I want to let you know that through all those efforts we raised \$27,000 for the Legacy Scholarship Fund.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: You know, and the money is fantastic. But to me the truly exciting part of it was that people were buying into what the Legacy was all about. And that is taking care of the children of our fallen soldiers. You know, what higher task can we have in this organization? You know, taking care of our veterans is certainly incredible. You know, they answered the call for us to give us our freedom. But the children, who make the sacrifices for what their parents' decisions are, they need our help just as much or even more. And that is what the Legacy does.

So I want to thank, and I want to tell you that as I traveled around the American Legion Auxiliary was probably the biggest purchase of my coin than any other group in this organization. And I want to say thank you for that.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: When I was in New York my last stop -- where is New York at?

(Cheering.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: It was absolutely crazy. Somebody said to me afterwards it looked like a Chippendale show.

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: There was just 20 dollar bills waving all over the place. And I know I'm not that good looking.

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: So it must have been the cause. And I only had 60 coins on me at the time. But these ladies, without even seeing the coin, and this happened in other places too, without even seeing the coin wrote their name down on a piece of paper, and turned over their 20 dollars, and said, "Joe, I trust you to get that coin back to me." Jerry Ketchum has your coins, if any of you ladies over there don't have them, and he's taking those back. We have coins going to Texas and all over the place, you know, where I just couldn't carry enough with me in order to take care of it. But I wanted to thank you all for supporting that cause and supporting me in that challenge this year.

You know in closing I just want to say that it has been an incredible year. You know I've told so many people that they ask me, "Joe, are you ready? Are you done? Are you tired?" And I would say, you know particularly about a month ago, and I would say, "Well, you know what? When I'm done, I'll be ready." Well I'm ready.

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: You know, I truly believe you cannot repeat the love the second time around. You know, when I have come into a department, the Auxiliary, the Sons, the Riders, the Legion, you know, they just embrace you so much. And I know, Nancy, you have gotten that as well. And to go back a second time I think would be cheating the next person. So I am so ready to go home and get back to work doing the things back at the blue cup level, as we like to talk about. And I want to thank you for all of your support of not only me but Nancy and our National Commander Dan. And with that I just want to say God bless you, God bless The American Legion Family, and most importantly God bless America. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Isn't he the best? He is the best. I am such a lucky girl. So you know, you must have guessed by now that this vest was a gift from Joe and Bobbi. Isn't it the neatest thing? It's really cool. I had to untie it a little bit though, Joe, because it's been a long year.

COMMANDER GLADDEN: You should see my vest.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So Joe, my husband Jim and I have some special gifts for you and Bobbi that we would like to share with you. So it's really hard to decide what to get. When you spend a year together, it's hard to find just the perfect gift. So for Jim and I it was really about the memories.

COMMANDER GLADDEN: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So this is a photograph, it's a framed photograph. You can hold on to that. There are three different photographs. The top one is from our trip together to Pearl Harbor when we were there for Pearl Harbor Days. The second one also is at the Arizona Memorial when we laid a wreath together. And the bottom one is from the Smileys. So we were in Washington, D.C. and we presented the three boys with membership in the Sons of The American Legion. So that, it's with Dan and Joe and the three boys. It's a really neat picture of myself. And on the bottom it says, "Together We Made A Difference, 2013-2014." So Joe, thank you very, very much for everything.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And then we have another gift, there is another little gift, and this is sort of sentimental. You know, you travel around, you do a lot of silly things together, you have a lot of fun. But we went to Alaska together and we looked for a moose everywhere. And the only moose we saw was the one that mooned us.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So for Joe and Bobbi, these are some beautiful salt and pepper shakers, and they are little mooses.

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: I saw these.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You did. I think he picked them out when we were together. So thank you very much, Joe, for everything you have done and the Sons of The American Legion to support the American Legion Auxiliary and the

Legion Family. It has been an incredible year together. And I know we will cherish it forever and we will always, always, always stay friends. So thank you.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER GLADDEN: Thank you so much, Nancy. And you know, I am also an American Legion Rider. And I participated in the Legacy Run this year. And so, you know, I thought, you know, what better way to represent the organization than in a beautiful vest. And so my gift to the National Commander was to have his colors on the back of his vest and to present Nancy with the same. Because I know that she supported me as much as anything. So I hope you enjoy it and will have it for years to come, Nancy. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: He said I don't always have to button it. It's more comfortable when it's not buttoned.

So the American Legion Auxiliary's relationship with USAA not only rewards you, it also supports your department, the national organization, and the great mission outreach programs of which we all work so hard. And I would tell you just personally I think USAA is the best. My husband has had USAA insurance for over 45 years and we now have it together, of course. And they have always been there for us. So I would encourage you to find out more about it if you already haven't. So here to tell you more about USAA's program is Megan McNulty.

(Music.)

MS. MCNULTY: Good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

MS. MCNULTY: Thank you very much, Nancy. And thank you to all the Auxiliary members for the opportunity to speak at the Convention on behalf of USAA. My name is Megan McNulty. My team and I have the distinct privilege of working closely with the Auxiliary on delivering value and benefits to your members via the USAA Auxiliary credit card. My grandfather was a World War II vet, my father was a Vietnam veteran, and my mother was proud to attend Evergreen Girls State in Ellensburg, Washington in 1965.

(Cheering.)

MS. MCNULTY: My husband, my sister and I all attended West Point and we are all Army veterans.

(Cheering.)

(Applause)

MS. MCNULTY: My West Point class represented the 20th anniversary of women at West Point. At USAA we are very proud of the fact that we know what it means to serve. USAA is a full service financial services firm dedicated to our military and their families. At USAA we are laser focused on our mission. This is something that we live and breathe everyday. Service, loyalty, honesty, and integrity are our core values and at the heart of every interaction with our servicemembers. The opportunity to work with an organization like the Auxiliary that has shared values and a similar steadfast commitment to mission is truly a privilege and an honor.

My team and I visited with the senators from Girls Nation last month in D.C. What an impressive group of young women. They showed us their commitment to leadership and service by organizing a barbecue for our servicemembers that are recovering at Walter Reed. As a former leader of soldiers, seeing these women who are clearly some of the best and the brightest with all the potential in the world take time out of their demanding schedule in D.C. to spend time with our soldiers and their families truly had a profound impact on me. What an incredible experience. It further solidified the value of the Auxiliary relationship to USAA as your vision is so tightly aligned with what USAA tries to accomplish, service to our active duty military, our veterans, and their families. Thank you for all that you do each and every day.

Without further ado may I ask the President or Secretary from each of the following states to report to the USAA booth for a congratulatory gift. They had the highest spend on the card for the past year.

(Laughter.)

MS. MCNULTY: The most important part of the speech. Rhode Island, Tennessee, and D.C.

(Cheering.)

MS. MCNULTY: Thanks again, and have a great Convention.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Megan, very much, and thank you for your service to our country.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yeah, come on. That's pretty impressive. Three in the same family at West Point, that's really impressive. Now let's put our hands together as we welcome our 2013-2014 Honorary National Junior President India Archer from New Mexico. Yay!

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. ARCHER: Good morning, everyone. It is a great honor and privilege to come before you today as your Honorary National Junior President 2013-2014 and bring you all personal greetings on behalf of myself, the National American Legion Auxiliary President Nancy Brown-Park, the Department of New Mexico, American Legion Post Isabel la Católica Department of Spain and Madrid, and of course all our juniors from around the country.

I know I speak for not only myself but all the national officers as well when I say this has been a truly amazing year. Throughout this year I was presented with many incredible opportunities. A portion of my term of service as the National Junior President was spent abroad in Spain, giving me the rare opportunity to come in contact with an American Legion Post in Madrid, Spain. Although I was not able to meet any of the members in person, I did speak with the Commander Donald D. Dirk, Jr. who has given me permission to keep in contact and share information about current events within my post and his.

Closely following our National President Nancy Brown-Park's theme of Pass It On, my studies abroad also gave me the opportunity to share the aims and purposes of the American Legion and the Auxiliary to my peers, inspiring them to start their own service projects within their community. These are just some of the many life-changing experiences during my presidency.

Here in the states I also had the opportunity to be involved in the many functions within my Department of New Mexico. I am proud to report I recruited seven juniors to my unit. I spent time volunteering at the VA Medical Center, attended district meetings, and helped with children's holiday parties where I helped our juniors make Christmas cards for our National Guard. I helped make Christmas gift bags for the homeless in Albuquerque, a project my unit has had for the last nine years. I was asked to sing the National Anthem at several functions, including Blue Star/Gold Star Mothers Memorial Luncheon, a Stand Down Veterans Day Ceremony, and the 2014 New Mexico Memorial Day Service, where I met the Governor of New Mexico, Susana Martinez, the Mayor of Albuquerque, Richard Berry, and Medal of Honor recipient Hiroshi Miyamura. On a side note, Mr. Miyamura is one of the Medal of Honor recipients pictured on the new Medal of Honor postage stamps. I also helped distribute poppies as well as sing "God Bless the USA" for the Memorial Day Service at my church. And it was my pleasure to entertain National Commander Dellinger with songs upon his official visit to New Mexico.

I attended the 2014 New Mexico Girls State where I was elected a City Councilwoman, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Outstanding Citizen.

At past national conventions I have had the honor and humble experience of singing for two national presidents. The first was Past National President Katherine Morris at her opening ceremony in Nashville, Tennessee, and the second was Past National President Rita Navarreté for her installation in Louisville, Kentucky. I would like to thank these ladies for giving me those honorable opportunities which inspired me to pursue my dreams of serving the American Legion Juniors at the national level.

I would like to take this time to personally thank every one of you for all the incredible things you do for our veterans, their families, our country, and this great organization. It is because of you the American Legion Family is possible and as we well know it is the work of the many that creates the success of the whole. I would like to thank National President Nancy Brown-Park for all her hard work. She has been a true blessing to this organization and held her position in excellent standing. It has been a privilege to follow in her footsteps throughout my year and I am truly grateful to have served alongside her.

A special thank-you to all the Juniors of the American Legion Auxiliary. They are the future of this organization. And as their National Junior President I have been able to see incredible growth in their patriotism, knowledge of our organization, and love for its cause. I feel a special camaraderie with all of the girls here, some of whom I have grown up with within this organization and I couldn't have asked for a more wonderful group of girls.

I would like to thank the Department of New Mexico, which if I may ask to stand and be recognized. Come on, New Mexico, where are you?

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ARCHER: Thank you. Duran Y. Gallegos, my home unit and Post 69 for their continued encouragement and support. My family and friends, Past National President Rita Navarreté for being an incredible role model and always sharing the most fantastic advice. And last but certainly not least my grandmother, Mary Lee Lopez, for from my earliest memory instilling in me the importance of Service Not Self; for her love, patience, encouragement, and understanding; and countless car rides to and from Auxiliary functions. She has been right next to me every step of the way and I could never thank you enough.

Now before I go I have a little history lesson for you guys. As I bring my year as National Junior President to a close I am both happy and melancholy to share with all of you the ending story of the National Junior President's hat. National Junior President Christie Bach [phonetic] started the legendary hat in 1995. In 2005, National Junior President Naomi Farris [phonetic] from the Department of Florida had the current hat made. Ronni Steerling [phonetic] from the Department of Arizona was the first National President to wear it. It should be noted that the National Junior Activities Chairman for that year was none other than our own National President Nancy Brown-Park.

(Applause.)

MS. ARCHER: Since then the hat has been passed down from each National Junior President to the next in a small ceremony during this, the presentation of the new President at the opening day of the National American Legion Auxiliary Convention. Ten years of love, wear, honor, pride, presidency, and forehead makeup later, this wonderful hat has come to the end of its term. For me, the hat has been a symbol of leadership, patriotism, and a reminder of all that the American Legion Auxiliary and its Juniors stand for. And it will never be forgotten. As we retire this truly wonderful hat we keep in mind that the National Junior President's hat will be archived in the Cavalcade of Memories for all future Juniors to admire. The new National President will be presented with a medal which will be passed down to future presidents. The retiring President will be presented with an engraved gavel to keep as a symbol and a reminder of the term that they served.

At this time I proudly present to you the newly elected Honorary National Junior President of the American Legion Auxiliary 2014-2015, the fabulous Graci Huddleston from the Department of Texas.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ARCHER: I have had the pleasure of attending the National Junior Convention for two years with her now. I can say with wholehearted honesty that Graci's loving and energetic personality, kindness, leadership, and patriotism make her perfect for the office of Honorary National Junior President. And I know that I leave my Juniors in wonderful and capable hands. And Graci, I wish you the most successful, productive, and fun Convention. And it is now my honor and pleasure to

place the Medal of the Honorary National Junior President upon you.
Congratulations.

(Applause.)

MS. ARCHER: You look beautiful.

MS. HUDDLESTON: So do you, girl.

(Applause.)

MS. ARCHER: Thank you all again. And I wish you a perfect Convention, and I hope to see you all in the Land of Enchantment. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HUDDLESTON: Well, India, thank you so much for that great introduction. And I'd just like to keep it short and simple and say that I'm looking forward to a great year and I hope all of you ladies are ready to go with Ms. Janet. And with faith, family and --

VOICE: Freedom.

MS. HUDDLESTON: -- and freedom. Excuse me. I'm very -- yes, ma'am. But thank you so much for this opportunity. And the American Legion Family has made me the person that I am today. And The American Legion Family is the best family that God ever blessed me with. Thank you all so much.

(Applause.)

MS. HUDDLESTON: And I'd like to introduce the Department of Texas.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. HUDDLESTON: The loud and proud Department of Texas. Thank you all so much.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So India, I have the great honor of presenting you with this letter that confirms your \$3,000 scholarship for having served as the Honorary National Junior President. I am so proud of everything you have done, everything you accomplished. You are a young woman of grace and thank you for everything. Thank you, New Mexico, for loaning her to us for a year. Thank you so much.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Come on, where is Janet? Don't you want to be in the picture? Okay, come on. Okay, let's do it here. Up, up, up.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Okay, great. Aren't they great?

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Aren't they just awesome? They are so cool. I started out that way and it's really neat. And to watch that meeting was so much fun, but they made me do the wobble.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That wasn't a lot of fun. The wobble? Have you ever seen the wobble?

AUDIENCE: No.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay, where did the girls go? Did they leave? Where did they go? Are they there? Oh darn, they're gone. You mean I don't have anybody to help me? Well the wobble goes something like --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I don't know. And then you do something with your feet. Then you go like this --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I actually learned the wobble at Louisiana Girls State.

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Here with us today is Sydney Roberts, our 2014 Girls Nation President from the Department of Oregon.

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Roberts is involved in speech and debate, YMCA youth and government, as well as Key Club. When not busy in her academics she finds time to volunteer with the Albany Downtown Association and Fish of Albany. Roberts has made several achievements including placing third in Parliamentary Debate at OSAA Speech and Debate Championships and holds office in the National Honor Society as President. Roberts is interested in pursuing a career in biomedical engineering. Please join me in welcoming Sydney Roberts.

(Music.)

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ROBERTS: Good morning, everyone.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

MS. ROBERTS: So I'm all the way from Oregon and my parents could not be here today. So I was hoping in honor of them we could take a quick selfie.

(Laughter.)

MS. ROBERTS: I'm pulling a Nancy Brown-Park.

(Laughter.)

MS. ROBERTS: Perfect.

(Applause.)

MS. ROBERTS: All right, everyone. So my name is Sydney Roberts and I am the 2014 Girls Nation President. It is an absolute honor to be here in beautiful North Carolina these past few days. I am all the way from Oregon, a state notable for having the only double-sided flag, being a leader in solar panel technology, and being the lesser cool neighbor of California. Our state motto is, "She flies with her own wings." This stuck with me through the duration of both Girls State and Girls Nation. This program, as I know alumni will agree, is difficult to explain to someone who has not been there themselves. It's hard to put into words the electricity of every Senate session, the feeling of elation when a bill you have been working on for months has passed, and the sudden but genuine feeling of sisterhood that overcomes every Senator that participates.

While Girls Nation is founded on the principles of service to country and community, it has evolved in the last few years to also encompass the ideas of female empowerment in the political process, celebration of young women with limitless potential, and the collaboration of progressive future leaders. There is no doubt in my mind that the 2014 Girls Nation Senators will be the trailblazers of my generation. They will carry on the legacy of the women of the Auxiliary to come before them, and those that sit in front of me today. And I cannot thank you enough for that opportunity to show them how much they truly can shine.

The overall theme of this year's session was, "Who Inspires You?" We were even gifted with buttons that show veterans that mean a lot to me. Mine is of my mother. She served in the U.S. Army from the late eighties to the early nineties.

(Applause.)

MS. ROBERTS: Every one of those 97 other Senators also had veterans that inspired them to serve their country in one way or another. People who made them want to keep pursuing their dreams. Though I came to Girls Nation inspired by prominent women in politics and science, I left seven days later inspired by the stories and achievements of 97 other girls and with renewed energy to make a change thanks to my fellow Senators and the amazing staff.

In just a week a bunch of teenage girls formed a mock government and passed more bills in seven days than Congress has in decades.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ROBERTS: We came together and made history. We decided right away that the 2014 session would be focused on the most pressing issues of our generation. We tackled the environmental crisis, taxation reform, rampant sexual assault on college campuses, and foreign policy strategy just to name a few. But the thing we all agreed on that really set a precedent for this session was that we are not living in a perfect Union. All of these girls have seen injustice in their communities and on a nationwide level. We have seen veterans not get the medical care they need and deserve. We have seen strong women get paid less for their jobs simply because of the color of their skin and their gender. And most recently, we have seen young men of color senselessly killed in their own communities.

But it's that fear, that sickness in your gut that makes you nauseous that was our driving force. We decided to be the agents of change. We decided to be a force of good. We see a future where children of soldiers don't have to bury their parents. We see a world where women have reached full equality. Where every child has access to higher education and most importantly a future of peace. This country, though founded on the principles of freedom and liberty, also has a dark history of cruelty. We have come so far but we cannot forget the mistakes we have lest we make them again in the future.

My generation is paving the future with the weight of the past on their shoulders and it is not easy. And sometimes it seems better to just quit. But we can't. Just like your generations did not quit, we cannot either. There is work to be done. And these girls have stepped up to the plate.

So I urge all of you to go home and encourage the young women in your life, your daughters, granddaughters, nieces, all of them, to be a trailblazer. Make sure you tell them that they can do anything they put their minds to. Tell them not to let the coldness of the world harden their heart, but rather to open it. Tell them not to approach life with rounded shoulders and a shaky voice but with the compassion and courage and strength that I know every one of them has. And tell them that even though life is scary and uncertain, we are all in this together. It is the diversity of our generation that gives us strength. Let us not find a similarity as an action that drives us apart, but rather have it be a concept of celebration that brings us together. The U.S. is unlike every other country because we challenge the rest of the world to give us their poor, their huddled masses, and give them a chance to succeed in the land of opportunity.

And the 2014 GN session has proved to be just that -- diverse. Girls of all different backgrounds and heritages came together and have hope for the future and are bound by that. As you leave the Conference keep in mind how much good you are doing and how much good this program has done and will continue to do. Because without it, a lot of young girls who might not have properly learned how to fly with their own wings. Thank you, and God bless.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I think our world is in good hands. Sydney, we are truly proud of all you have accomplished. You were presented a scholarship at Girls Nation and in addition to this please wear this Tiffany bracelet as a reminder of your time at Girls Nation and your relationship with the American Legion Auxiliary. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

MS. ROBERTS: Also, Nancy, this is how you wobble.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'm glad my husband is in the back and not in the front. What single American Legion Auxiliary event can be inspirational, educational, life changing, and fun? For me, it is the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Girls Nation Program, one of our premier programs since 1937. And just a little side note, I've been involved in California Girls State for 40 years. My dream was always to go to Girls Nation. And this year, my dream came true. And I was able to spend a week at Girls Nation. And what an incredible experience it was for me. But what an incredible thing we do for young women every single year. We need to be so proud of what we do each and every year. So thank you.

So here to tell us more is our National Girls State Committee Chairman Trish Ward.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Changing lives for the better is what we do best. And through the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program young lives are forever impacted in a positive way. We celebrate 49 awesome department programs that somehow found a way to jam pack learning moments on Americanism, the

memorial poppy, lessons on the democratic process and parliamentary procedure, all in just about a week's time. We take the best and the brightest 17-year-old young women from every corner of the country and encourage them to reach outside of their comfort zone, run for office in their mock governments, and believe with hard work, perseverance, and passion their dreams can be realized. This is American Legion Auxiliary Girls State and more.

We inspire through our mission and vision to help veterans and their families. And at American Legion Auxiliary Girls State this effort is alive and well as citizens passed it on in the spirit of hope and friendship. Activity bags for the children of veterans were donated to the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VA Hospitals in Minnesota.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Comfort items and goodies accompanied by handwritten notes from the citizens made their way into the VA network in Kansas.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: And in Arizona more than 974 pairs of socks were donated for hospitalized and homeless veterans.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Citizens folded pocket flags for the troops, helped out at local shelters, and in Tennessee visited and cheered hospitalized veterans bringing smiles, support, comfort, and compassion to our nation's heroes and those less fortunate.

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Thanks to technology Facebook and Twitter was alive and well with photos and stories and real time action to keep everyone engaged. Quick Twitter lessons helped the team in Idaho get ready to get social. While Washington admits they might be old, but they are definitely with the times and they do know it's called a hashtag.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: But it's the idea of teaching young minds about the importance of good citizenship and appreciation for the political process that is the core purpose of American Legion Auxiliary Girls State and where our beacon of light shines brightest. The excitement of campaigning for office, drafting legislation, and debating its merit allows each American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Citizen an opportunity to participate in the process, develop new skills, and solidify values that will last a lifetime. No wonder everyone wants in on the act. Even Justin Bieber found the time to stop by Badger Girls State to encourage everyone to vote. And where else but at American Legion Auxiliary Girls State do young women have the opportunity to meet and connect with their state's political leadership.

Hey, National President Nancy, you are not the only one taking selfies. We had selfies with Michigan Governor Rick Snyder tweets with West Virginia State

Treasurer John Perdue; South Dakota Governor Brenden Johnson got involved; and even the nuns from the University of St. Thomas couldn't resist joining in on the fun and the action.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Keeping it fresh and fun in Kentucky with Governor Steve Beshear; loose and lively in Wisconsin with Governor Scott Walker; and then this unidentified selfie in Louisiana.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: No matter when or where American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Citizens left their sessions with photos, memories, and an experience to last a lifetime.

We were ready and waiting when 98 Senators arrived at the 4H Youth Conference Center on July 19, 2014 for the 68th Session of American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation. This year our theme for the week was, "Who Inspires You?" And I can assure you, everyone left Washington newly inspired to make a positive difference.

Tradition found us at Arlington for the laying of the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown and a special patriotic ceremony in the old amphitheater. We visited the monuments, connected with congressional leaders, and enjoyed special time with our wounded warriors and their families at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Of course the highlight of the week was the inauguration of our President and Vice President and a visit to the White House to meet President Barack Obama. We concluded the week with President of American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation Sydney Roberts from Oregon with the ceremonial signing of the bills, and finally the planting of a memorial poppy garden at the 4H Center. It is our hope that the seeds the team planted will forever bloom to send the message of we remember to all who visit.

Awesome, amazing, enlightening, and inspiring, this is American Legion Auxiliary Girls State. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Do you have any resolutions or recommendations? I guess not.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: No, Madam President, I don't.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Trish. We believe that the more people know and understand about the needs of the children in their communities the more interest they will have in learning now they can help meet those needs. While all children are important the Auxiliary particularly focuses on helping the children of veterans and servicemembers. Here is your National Children & Youth Committee Chairman Mary Davis.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN DAVIS: Madam National President Nancy, our grandmothers passed on their pearls of wisdom to our mothers, and our mothers to us. This year American Legion Auxiliary members passed on similar pearls of wisdom in the form of principles of our organization's mission. They did this through the projects our units undertook to enhance the lives of America's children.

Our Youth Hero and Good Deed Awards provide such an opportunity to recognize young people who truly are making a difference. Two such outstanding young men were nominated for a Good Deed Award submitted by Unit 186 Virginia. Andrew and Derek saw on the internet neighborhood page the need for Legion Post home yard work that aging members were no longer able to complete. Although most high school students need community service hours, neither of them did. They contacted the Post home to volunteer their time to help out the Post simply because they wanted to make a difference.

Another youth hero, Andrew Leonard, was nominated by Unit 48 Hickory, North Carolina. I will paraphrase in part a letter written by the lovely grandmother he saved. The title, "My grandson, My Hero." It was like any other day. I picked up my grandson from school and we began the long trek up our steep, rocky driveway. Suddenly I realized my left front tire was off the road, in the ditch. I got out of the car to see which way I should maneuver the car to get back on the road. When I went back to get in the car my '87 Buick jumped out of gear, the front door caught me and turned me over end to end like a ragdoll and I was dragged down the driveway. The car veered to the left and finally came to stop down a ravine. Coming back from the shock of the accident I crawled with my hands over the car. I had no use of my legs at that time. I called repeatedly for Andrew. Finally as his head popped out of the window, he answered. He came over to help me but we both realized that he needed to run to the house for help. He ran up the steep drive and into the house, telling his Papa that "Nana tried to kill me in that old car."

(Laughter.)

MS. DAVIS: When asked where Nana was I told him, "Lying in the weeds crying." Andrew's Nana had broken her ankle, hip, and two breaks in her pelvis. She doesn't remember much about the remainder of that day but she does remember her hero, a six-year-old brave little boy who by the grace of God saved his Nana's life that day.

In Melbourne, Florida, work for the Veterans Transitional Living Facility. This facility houses homeless veterans and their families. After visiting with the children and their parents they were able to determine the needs of each child. Specific needs included school supplies, clothes, and shoe sizes. Then they turned to their community to help support their endeavor. The project concept exploded into community wide involvement with the help of their commission, his office, and the Post Home became a drop off for clothes and shoes. At the same time Unit 163 purchased every item on the school supply list. Coordination with a local hair salon allowed the children complementary cuts and new dos. And just prior to the start of school those school supplies were distributed at the back to school party for the children. The unit now calls them "our children." This project allowed the unit to not only provide for the children of veterans but to pass on the ideals and mission of

the American Legion Auxiliary to women in their community eligible for membership. This project brought them several new members.

These are but a few of the examples of the great work being done by ALA units across America. I would like to personally thank all our dedicated ladies for the great work being done. Our Children & Youth Programs are a vital part of the ALA. It's not just what we do, it is who we are.

Madam President, this concludes my remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Mary. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN DAVIS: No, Madam President, there are none.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Madam Chairman. It is my pleasure to introduce Past National President Linda Newsome, National Chairman of the Liaison to Child Welfare Foundation to present her report.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN NEWSOME: I like that. Madam President, Pass It On. That certainly describes the work of the American Legion's Child Welfare Foundation. The American Legion Auxiliary is proud of its participation in and support of the American Legion's foremost philanthropic priority and educating the public about the needs of the children across the nation, the Child Welfare Foundation. Established in 1954 the Child Welfare Foundation has awarded more than \$13.2 million, and yes that's with an M, in grants to assist America's children.

During the 2014 calendar year, 160 grant applications were received for consideration by the Foundation's Board. The Board's screening committee recommended awarding 21 grants totaling \$644,005. The Auxiliary sponsored seven grants, and another two jointly with the Sons of the Legion.

Among the recipients is the Songs of Love Foundation of New York which was awarded \$25,000 for their project, Songs of Love Outreach Project. This grant will produce and disseminate brochures and update the organization's website to promote awareness of the services offered.

The Auxiliary also sponsored a grant of \$26,500 to the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors of Arlington, Virginia for its project Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors Children's Bereavement Guide. This grant will produce and disseminate bereavement guide books.

Located in Baltimore, Maryland the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation was awarded \$25,000 for their project Healthy Choices, Health Children booklets. This grant will produce booklets to assist adult mentors and law enforcement personnel in teaching teamwork, leadership, communication, and personal responsibility to the kids they serve.

A grant which will underwrite the purchase and dissemination of anti-drug literature and promotional items was awarded to the Young Marines of Washington, D.C. The grant project Young Marines Drug Demand Reduction in the amount of \$90,000 was sponsored by the Auxiliary.

And in conjunction with the Sons of the Legion, a grant of \$25,260 was awarded to the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds of

Seattle, Washington for their project Bringing the Protective Factors in Your Work A Resource for Action. This grant will produce toolkits for trainers to educate professionals and caregivers to help prevent child abuse and neglect.

Contributions to the Foundation this year totaled just under \$585,000. Sons of The American Legion led the way again with contributions of \$346,009.16.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN NEWSOME: Contributions of \$103,047.02 were received from the American Legion, which were followed closely by Auxiliary contributions of \$87,097.91.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN NEWSOME: Together with other contributions and bequests brought our total to \$584,418.49. So with these funds and your continued support of the Child Welfare Foundation we were able to pass it on. We passed on our support and our dollars to help the children of our nation.

Madam President, while this concludes my platform remarks with your permission I would like to present two distinguished guests who have joined us this morning.

First, Dennis Boland, Past Department Commander, Department of Florida, and President of the Child Welfare Foundation usually joins us. Other commitments, unfortunately, with the Legion made it impossible to be with us today. However, we are delighted to welcome the Vice President of the Child Welfare Foundation from the Department of Minnesota, the newly elected Department Commander, Peggy Moon.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN NEWSOME: And joining us for the second year is Jason Kees, Army Veteran and Legionnaire from the Department of Illinois.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN NEWSOME: In 2012, Jason was appointed to serve as the staff liaison to the National Commission on Children & Youth and Executive Secretary of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. And he is the one carrying all of the goodies. Commander Peggy, the microphone is all yours.

MS. MOON: Thank you very much, Linda. And thank you, Madam President, for allowing us to be here and share this with you today. First of all, I enjoyed listening to the reports of Girls State and Girls Nation, and I can tell you that it is possible. I'm living proof that a Girls State citizen can grow up and become a Commander.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. MOON: I'm always proud to be here with my fellow members of the American Legion Auxiliary. I've been a member of the Auxiliary probably longer than I have been a Legionnaire. And while I'm up here I do have to say hi to my home group from Minnesota.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. MOON: I want to thank you for all the great work you have done for the Child Welfare Foundation. You truly are an integral part of this Foundation. We depend on you a lot. You give us your choices in the grants that we have to go over and that is not an easy task. And when you have finished your year and you have shown us that you were able to contribute \$87,097.91 I think that is a really good amount of money. So thank you very, very much.

With that we're going to get on to the awards. Our first one is the Excellence Award and it is awarded to the top department with the highest per capita contribution average for the contribution year. And this is presented to the Department of Wyoming.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MOON: Fantastic. The next award is the Meritorious Achievement Award and it recognizes the department with the highest increase in giving per capita for the contribution year. And this award goes to the Department of Connecticut.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MOON: Our next award is the U.S. Udie Grant Legacy Award and it is awarded to the top department nationally based on combined total contributions for the Legion, the Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion. And this one goes to our President's home state, the Department of Florida. I'm talking about President Boland. I have my President, too, you know.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MOON: And our last award is the Garland Murphy Award and this is awarded to the most active department in the nation based on actual contributions. And this also goes to the Department of Florida.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MOON: And before I leave, Madam President, as a token of our thank you for everything that you have done for us, and what the Auxiliary does, we want to give you one of our Child Welfare Foundation pins.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow.

MS. MOON: You notice --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's got a diamond in it.

MS. MOON: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

MS. MOON: So thank you so much. Okay, thank you very much. Have a wonderful Convention.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Linda asked if I was going to share it and I said no. Are there any, Linda, do you have any resolutions of recommendations?

CHAIRMAN NEWSOME: No, Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Okay. We're going to jump up a little bit here. Okay. Joining us today -- is Dan Weaver here? So it says go to page 44. That's page 44. Sorry.

Okay. Wrong book. Okay. We're just a little flexible this morning. Page - - okay. Hold on, I'm getting there. Okay. Start. It says start. National Commander Dan Dellinger of Virginia was elected National Commander of the American Legion during the organization's 93rd National Convention last year in Houston. During the Vietnam War he became an Army infantry officer and served at Fort Benning, Georgia and joined the U.S. Army Reserve in 1972, later separating from the service in 1984 at the rank of Captain. A member of Legion Post #180 in Vienna since 1982, Dellinger was made a life member in 1990. Commander Dellinger and First Lady Margaret reside in Vienna. Margaret served as American Legion Auxiliary Unit 180 President for four years and is a Past Department President of Virginia. Daughter Ann is a 23-year member of Unit 180, and son Scott is a 28-year member of the Sons of The American Legion Squadron 180. Please welcome to this stage our guests and my friends Margaret and Dan Dellinger.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: Good morning, ladies.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: Hi, y'all.

AUDIENCE: Hi, y'all.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: It's great being here this morning. And you know, I know she has had a great year. We have had great times as we traveled promoting the ideals of the American Legion Family, and I mean Family. And I want to thank you all very much for giving me a lady, the Energizer Bunny type, you know?

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: But it has been good. It really has. I think we have done a good job this year promoting the American Legion Family, Family ideals. And I hope in the future we will continue on that same path because it is what is right, what we are doing. When we work for our veterans, we work for our communities, we work for our nation, that is why we were founded and that is what we will continue to do. So I want to thank you very much for that. And so I don't have to buy a dress, although she said it, I'd like to introduce my wife, Margaret.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: She still wants a dress.

(Laughter.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: And my aide, Bob Brenner.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: And Madam President, we would like to give you a little something. Now –

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: -- take it easy, take it easy.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, don't break it?

COMMANDER DELLINGER: Don't break it, like she did some other things.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow. Oh, wow.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: There's more in there.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, they are beautiful. Oh, I'm so happy.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: You can tell the story.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yes. You can if you want, or I'll tell it.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: You can tell it. You tell it better than I can.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Margaret is going to do that so I'm going to tell you the story. So we had the opportunity when we were traveling to visit this incredible shop that had handmade poppy, hand-painted poppy platters, dishes, things like that. So we all bought some and mine came broken when they were delivered. So this is so exciting, to have these beautiful platters. Oh, look at this beautiful cheese board. I want you to see this. This is really neat because I was so disappointed -- wow. Beautiful. And the woman who owns this shop in this little town that we were in actually paints these herself. Isn't that beautiful?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So we did have an opportunity to visit Flanders Field -- oh, wow. Oh, wow. Aren't they beautiful? Look at this. Wow!

COMMANDER DELLINGER: See, I know how to shop for a lady.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And you know what? He did. I saw him shopping and I thought, wow, that is going to be really nice for somebody. Little did I know it was for me. Wow, thank you. Thank you so much.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: It has been an honor serving with you this year. God bless you.

(Applause.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: Go ahead. You go.

MRS. DELLINGER: Okay. This is my just a personal gift to you. You know, we have enjoyed going around shopping. So I got this little charm for you, you don't have to open it because it's so small. But it's of the world so when you look at it, you will think of all of our adventures as we traveled around the world.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You'll make me cry.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: And for the first dude.

MR. PARK: Thank you, Dan. Wow. Okay.

Laughter.)

COMMANDER DELLINGER: I don't wrap.

MR. PARK: Wait, hold that. Oh, wow.

(Applause.)

MR. PARK: This was from our trip in Germany. And it's, it was, it has been a wonderful trip. And him and Margaret have become great friends and Dan has been a great Commander, and we will be friends forever. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: What about the second dude? You forgot Bob.

MR. PARK: Well no, we've still got more to go.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, that's true.

MR. PARK: We've got more to go.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Come on. So this, okay, so for Jim and I it was really hard to find the very perfect thing. But because we did so many incredible things together we felt that it was important to be able to put those all in a frame so we could always remember and they could always remember the things we did together. So this has our trip to Pearl Harbor for Pearl Harbor Days. This is from Korea, Taiwan, I'm sorry. And this also has their daughter Ann, because she was with us in it. And on the bottom is our trip to Europe with Dan's son, Margaret and Dan's son and their daughter-in-law. And she was pregnant. And they have a brand new grandson that was born last Thursday, right?

MRS. DELLINGER: Last Thursday.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So on the bottom it says, "Together We Made A Difference 2013-2014." So if you will stand right there --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Where's Bob's? Oh, I'll do Margaret's first. So Margaret, Margaret, we did have a lot of fun. We did do a lot of fun things together. We traveled within the United States. We traveled kind of almost, you know, around the world together. And we really, really enjoyed each other's company. You know, it's just a great friendship. So this is a special picture just for you. And this is from our trip, our bike ride, to Versailles. And the great picture on the bottom, we just happened to have the same outfits on the same day.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So that is so that we will always remember, you will remember our times together.

MRS. DELLINGER: Oh, thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Bob? Dude? Okay, so this is the second dude. He's got his second dude badge on.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So Bob was always, was with us. And when we traveled to the Far East and we traveled to Europe, we all just, we have an amazing friendship. But when I was traveling alone, and Bob and Dan were there, Bob was always there to help me out. And I can't thank you enough. And I know Jim thanks you for being there to help me as well, and to help us both as we all

traveled together. So for you, Bob, here is your picture. It is the, on the top is when we were in Normandy. And you can see behind the paratroopers coming down. Here we were having lunch together in France and a toast of wine. And on the bottom is our picture from the Kentucky Derby. And they gave us some pretty funny looking glasses to put on. But Margaret and I are in our beautiful hats, and Jim is in his great hat, and Bob has got a funny blue hat. But it matched his glasses. So it too says, "Together We Made A Difference 2013-2014." Thank you so much, Bob, for everything. I appreciate it.

MR. BRENNER: My pleasure. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And Margaret, I have one more gift for the two of you. Because this just reminded me of some of our experiences together. So if you wanted to take that out, that would be great. So you remember the moose story? So this is a moose on a bicycle.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So it kind of talks about our moose that we were mooned by and the bike ride that Margaret and I had together. So thank you.

COMMANDER DELLINGER: Thank you very much. It's been great.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. I'll see you around.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you very much. Are they not the best? You know, they are awesome. We had an incredible time together. And you know, it is so interesting because it is so hard to find just the right gift to share with people that you have spent really over a year with. And it was, Jim and I sat one night trying, one night when I was home, trying to figure out what to get them. And we really felt that pictures really captured what we had all done together. So I know that they will enjoy those. And I love my poppy plates. Oh, okay. Now I go back to page 40.

Okay. By providing for needs of our military families on the homefront we hope to ease the minds of our deployed servicemembers so they won't worry about their loved ones back home and can focus on the monumental task of protecting our country. Please welcome National Security Chairman Marie Goede to report.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: Madam President, American Legion Auxiliary members across the country passed it on sharing their ideas on supporting our military and their families and other objectives of the American National Security Program.

Forty-four of the 52 departments reported with the Southern Division having 100 percent reporting.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: Delaware Unit 28 has a Warrior Weekend Program. They bring their warriors up from the hospital and give them a weekend of fun. These photos were taken during the dinner that was held for them.

In Illinois Strasburg Unit #289 members decided --

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: -- to trick-or-treat for the veterans. A flyer was distributed with a list of items needed at the Illiana VA in Danville. The participation was beyond belief. Those who did take part in the evening's festivities had their porch light on and were very responsive and receptive to the trick-or-treaters for the veterans. Some community members gave financial donations. The financial donations were used to purchase such items as dress socks, thermal socks, gloves, hats, scarves. In the 22-plus boxes which were delivered to the Illiana VA in Danville some of the items included white socks, thermal socks, boxers, T-shirts, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and the list goes on and on. The unit received \$5,388 worth of credit. The unit also received VA credit for the following: \$150 for wood crafts, and \$200 for craft supplies.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota Auxiliary Unit --

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: -- along with surrounding units and Legion posts hosted the deployment ceremony of the 1742nd Transportation Unit out of Sioux Falls, which was headed for Afghanistan. The Auxiliary furnished 60 dozen cookies and 50 cases of water. Members handed out pocket flags to the soldiers during being deployed and small flags to the children that were in attendance. Three thousand people attended the deployment.

It was also reported that 420 hours and \$1,350 was spent helping U.S. military or National Guard at their send off or welcome home events in their state, 435 hours and \$735 was reported for service for our military families helping with service projects.

In Utah, Unit #139 hosted two Christmas parties, one for families of deployed servicemen and one for Hill Air Force Base Squadron. They provided 110 Christmas stockings plus goodies to stuff them for 50 families, spending \$250 and volunteering 30 hours to complete the event.

Unit #33 of Utah reported about the work they are doing with a project called Operation Give. They provide comfort items throughout the year to deployed troops all across the world and delivered 6,500 Christmas stockings to the troops in South Korea and Afghanistan.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: As well as the other packages throughout the year.

The members of Washington, D.C. Unit 1 coordinated groups of their coworkers to join Operation Homefront D.C. Metro Chapter to stuff backpacks for the children of lower enlisted servicemembers as part of their annual Back to School Backpack Brigade. Over two days they helped sort and pack some 200 backpacks with all school supplies such as pencils, rules, composition, spiral notebooks, looseleaf paper, pens, highlighters, glue sticks, and crayons. Additionally, Unit #1 members worked with a similar mission based focused organization called Team Red, White and Blue. Team RWB's mission is to enrich the lives of American veterans by connecting them to their community through physical and social

activities. In D.C. the chapter is about one-third each of veterans, current servicemembers, and one-third veteran and military families. Members coordinate some of the group runs and volunteer with coordinating the Marine Corps Marathon pasta dinner.

Texas reports a special project of a moms to be baby shower. It was done for 30 active female soldiers or wives of active duty male soldiers. Gifts of baby clothing and supplies were donated to approximately 70 moms to be and several thousand dollars were spent on the project.

Unit 426 President Terry Duncan said, "In all my years of belonging to the American Legion Auxiliary this event truly touched my heart in many ways that I could never fully express. Many of the women had never heard of the American Legion Auxiliary so we shared our history, our mission, and our goals, and encouraged them to contact the local posts and units to join and become a part of a great family."

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: No, Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Marie.

CHAIRMAN GOEDE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I keep teasing her because she did the ALS challenge with an Eskimo coat on. I poured the ice over my head.

As advocates for our veterans we encourage our members to contact their elected officials by phone, email, and letter to implore them to keep the needs and sacrifices of our military and their families front and center as they go about their legislative work. Please welcome National Legislative Committee Chairman Melanie Taylor to report.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Madam National President, the 2013-2014 Auxiliary Legislative Program had one simple objective: to promote and support the American Legion's legislative priorities and agenda. Forty-five out of the 52 departments, reports came in and it is amazing the variety of ways the legislative program was promoted this year. Units reported holding special legislative programs throughout the year. They held town hall meetings and invited their legislators to come to their post home to discuss important issues affecting the veterans and servicemembers of their communities. They included their Juniors and Girls State delegates in advocating for the veterans.

West Virginia reported that their Girls State Director and two Girls State Senators worked with Congresswoman Capito and Senator Manchin on a bill that was passed at Girls Nation 2013. This bill, Educate Nurses Heal Veterans Act, was designed to increase the number of psychiatric mental health practitioners to improve the quality of care provided to the veterans, military, and their families. Subscriptions to the Dispatch were promoted and unit legislative chairmen and

individual Auxiliary members as well subscribed to the American Legion's weekly legislative update. Names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of legislators were shared with unit members so personal contact could be made easier for them.

Auxiliary members utilized the wealth of information provided in the American Legion Auxiliary Legislative Advocacy Guide, learning how to become grassroots advocates for veterans and servicemembers while supporting the American Legion legislative agenda.

California's Legislative Chairman Terry Mikesell reported she mailed all 273 units at least one copy of the Legislative Advocacy Guide. Twenty-nine district chairmen were provided with their own copy of the Guide and additional copies were handed out at their mid-year meeting.

Legislative council update forms were available to departments who were asked to identify Auxiliary members with a personal or a professional relationship with their legislators and/or their staff members to submit their names for inclusion in the National Legislative Council. These forms were received from the Departments of South Dakota and Minnesota.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: The Legislative Committee for the first time established a Facebook group: Pass It On National ALA Legislative Group page on Facebook. This group is for anyone interested in the American Legion's legislative position and the issues affecting our veterans, military and their families. It also included urgent action requests if a need was requested by the American Legion.

Wisconsin Legionnaires commented that they followed the Facebook group page and found it helpful in keeping them posted on the current legislative issues that were in the news.

Several national chairmen and officers, including National President Nancy, were invited to attend National Commander Dan Dellinger's testimony on Capitol Hill. The department members within a short driving distance were also invited to attend the testimony last September. Many Auxiliary members could be seen sitting in the audience.

Members from all over our country attended the Washington, D.C. Conference. They were able to meet with their legislators and present the American Legion legislative priority sheets and discuss the importance of the congressional reports.

I in closing quote, "We may think that one voice may not make a difference on its own. That one voice added to the voice of others with the same goals and sentiments quickly becomes a collective power of influence for our elected officials." Joining together, Auxiliary members can and do make a difference when they advocate for the veterans, the military, and their families.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Melanie. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: No, Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Melanie. Please stay for one moment while I ask that your Vice Chairman Gwenda Schroeder-Zulch join us on stage as well. Alias Judy. In recognition of the hard work of the Legislative Committee and all the members' efforts, the American Legion has a few words. Please welcome the Legion's Legislative Commission Chairman Brett Reistad from the Department of Virginia.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MR. REISTAD: Good morning. Thank you very much. Good morning. Madam President, distinguished guests, delegates, members of the American Legion Auxiliary, it is my pleasure to be here this morning joined by Jeff Steele, our Grassroots Coordinator of the National Legislative Division, to bring greetings to you from the National Legislative Commission and National Legislative Council, and to thank you for your support of our endeavors on Capitol Hill to pass legislation and represent our veterans and communicate our national security concerns.

As you are aware the American Legion's membership is between 2.2 and 2.3 million members. With the partnership of the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion, you effectively double our advocacy. We are well aware of the importance of your organization and the role that you play in support of our legislative objectives. I have seen that firsthand at the Washington Conference and I am proud to have myself associated with such a great organization. I want to thank you also for your warm welcome this morning. It makes me want to just pull up a chair and sit here with you for the rest of the week.

(Laughter.)

MR. REISTAD: But it is, my purpose in being here this morning, besides bringing our greetings, is to also recognize your Chairman, Melanie Taylor, and your Vice Chairman, Gwenda Schroeder-Zulch, for their hard work this past year on behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary and in support of the work we do at the National Legislative Commission with our partners at the National Legislative Division. So at this time I am pleased to be able to present to both an award of recognition for all of their hard work. Thank you for having us.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Chairman Reistad, for coming. As you and Melanie mentioned, together we have advocated against military retiree COLA cuts, for in state tuition, and for the VA reform bill. I cannot wait to see what we can accomplish next year together.

(Applause.)

MR. REISTAD: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you both so very much. The Junior -- oh, didn't we do this? Oh no, we didn't do this. Sorry. The Junior Activities Program works to engage the next generation to become members in the American Legion Auxiliary. Please welcome our National Junior Activities Chairman Monique Batiste.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: (Singing.) Junior girls, junior girls, log on to my computer and I see them. Great narratives is imperative, I'm Junior Chairman, try and retain them. Some chairmen were busy with Girls State. Some chairmen were busy and poppies and pearls. But lucky me it was great to be the National Chairman of all of these busy Junior girls. And busy girls they have been, Madam President.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: Who is the bully? Annual studies show 30 percent of children are victims of bullying and 160,000 kids stay home from school in fear of being bullied. The military child is at a much higher risk of being bullied because of frequent moves and the stress and anxiety of deployments. Junior members across the country embraced the idea of bringing awareness to the ongoing bullying problem and we participated in what is known as the Mean Stinks Campaign. I am sure there was a huge investment in blue nail polish this year because of the large amount of participation we received nationwide in this project.

Junior members in Kentucky set up a booth at a business expo and distributed information on bullying. Every person that stopped at the booth painted their pinkies blue showing support of our cause.

Junior members in North Carolina wrote a song about bullying. Someone wrote in a song, "I was here. I just want them to know that I did give my all, did my best, brought someone some happiness, left this world a little better because I was here." Katie Beth Caudill of Unit 16 in Huntington, West Virginia --

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: -- was here. She was bothered by an absence of the American Flag on a pole at her school. So she contacted her local American Legion Post and had one donated for the pole. With the Flag in hand she was told there was not enough time to do a flag rising each morning and the mechanism in the pole was broken. So Katie Beth and her friends met at the flagpole every morning at 7:15 a.m. and said the Pledge of Allegiance. Eventually the school officials realized how important this was to Katie Beth and the school and made sure the Pledge was said every morning. They were here. They did. They have done. Talk about a mission accomplished.

The homeless problem, yes, there is one, a huge one in the veterans community. We have passed along awareness of so many things to our Juniors, homelessness being one. Carson Delong and Junior members of her department --

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: -- organized the event, Homeless Not Helpless Veterans Awareness Camp Out Campaign. These Juniors built mock homeless forts and dressed as homeless persons. They stayed outside over night to have a better understanding of what it was like to live homeless. They presented the project at the Cohen County Regional Fair. The six units and 24 Juniors raised \$34,711.25.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: And worked 171.5 hours to assist homeless veterans and other veterans projects.

So long, farewell, auf wiedersehen, good-bye. We have passed it on, good ideas and good times. Our organization has a wonderful group of young ladies that are learning to be our next leaders. They are our future. Along with leadership we must pass on enthusiasm, creativity, and fun to keep them interested and involved.

Thank you, Madam President. This concludes my remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Well, was that great?

AUDIENCE: Yes!

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Monique is a first year national chairman. Wow, awesome! Great job, Monique. Do you have any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: No, Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Great. Thank you, Monique. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN BATISTE: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: She has done an incredible job with our young Junior members this year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: With troops constantly deployed during our nation's longest period of War, our mission to assist veterans and their families has never been more important. Here to tell us how the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program helps fulfill our mission is National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee Chairman Sharon Conatser.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Madam National President Nancy, all of our members are working very hard to promote our pillar program and our mission of taking care of our veterans in facilities and in our communities. Again this year the American Legion Auxiliary provided grants to departments to help them with their local creative arts festival. A total of \$7,700 was sent to six departments and the reports received after the local festivals the theme was very clear. We are helping our veterans do what they love through art, music, dancing, or whatever their expertise may be.

Please meet Raegan Junge, a Junior from Keystone Unit 107 in Dysart, Iowa.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: She has organized and carried out several projects this year and I would like to share them with you. She earned funds by selling her homemade lip balm. Raegan earned \$1,250 for the homeless veterans at

the Cedar Rapids Center. She decorated Christmas gift bags and filled them to the brim with many items. Twenty-seven gift bags were sponsored by friends, family, and the American Legion Family members, and handed out by Raegan. In each bag she put mouthwash, lotion, toothpaste, brush, soap, first aid kits, hand sanitizer, Kleenex, a big bag of candy mints, two socks, two winter gloves, a winter hat, pudding cups, a mystery gift, Chapstick, razors, a box of chocolate covered cherries, a thinking of you book, body spray, winter scarf, snow globe, cookies, crackers, cappuccino, hot chocolate, Christmas mug, diaper wipes, deodorant, body wash, a bag of chips or pretzels, and the list goes on and on. She also took donations for the food pantry and donated \$150 of food for the pantry. Wow! Regan is quite the caring, thoughtful, and super volunteer.

Next Raegan worked on the massive mudslide that happened Saturday, March 23rd in Darrington, Washington that claimed many lives. Raegan jumped in to help those victims. She collected clothing for the children of all ages and the community also needed gas cards or Visa cards for gas. She asked the members of the community, and I quote, “please open your hearts to help this small community recover the best way they can.” The Vice President of her unit calls Raegan the Veterans Outreach Center’s personal angel. Congrats, Raegan. Keep up the good work and we look forward to you continuing to serve our veterans.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: In the Department of Missouri at the Jefferson Barracks, there is a food pantry managed by a wonderful Auxiliary member named Ann. Her volunteer hours are out of this world. Does she count them? Units, remember when doing reports that you have many members serving our veterans that do not always know to turn in their hours. Let’s get our numbers up. I want to thank President Nancy for allowing me to represent her in Missouri when she came down ill. I’m really sorry you were sick, Nancy. But attending and finding this hidden gem was an awesome experience. The Department of Missouri put out their word to their units and several carloads of American Legion Family volunteers and donations for the food pantry showed up that day. The U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force showed up along with a group of young volunteers organized by a mom to help unload the stock the shelves. With these young people helping it made a huge difference. I visited with several of them and their love of volunteering in our country is amazing. I was honored to help stock the shelves and get them ready for July opening. The shelves were packed and ready to go. In June Ann said they serviced 235 families and in May they took care of 227 families. Besides the donation of items for the pantry the Department of Missouri gathered funds. I was part of a \$4,145 presentation for the food bank. Ann told me that that would purchase 40,000 pounds of food. In 2013 3,200 families were taken care of. Way to go, Ann, and Jefferson Barracks Food Pantry.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: By the way, we signed up three new members in the short time we were there. Have you asked someone to join? Our pillar program is alive and well. We need to remember why we joined and get out there

and seek veterans, active duty military, their families, and children, and make a difference in their lives. There are all kinds of needs throughout our nation. I hope you will be the one to kick off a project in your area.

Madam President Nancy, this concludes my remarks.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you, Sharon. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: No, Madam National President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Sharon. The American Legion Auxiliary proudly cosponsors the Annual National Creative Arts Festival. Along with the monetary donations are the countless hours of volunteering at the local and national festival which allows us to assist veterans receiving their treatment throughout the VA system. Here today to say a few words about the National Creative Arts Festival is Liz Mackey, Director of the Program.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MACKEY: Hi, everyone.

AUDIENCE: Hi.

MS. MACKEY: Oh, thank you so much, Madam President. It's truly an honor to be here, everybody. I'm also proud to say that I am a member of the American Legion Auxiliary Post 428 in Waite Park, Minnesota. Where are they?

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. MACKEY: There they are. Yay. Oh, and I know that so many of you are familiar with our national programs. We would like to thank you for stopping by our booth in the exhibit hall the last few days. The booth represents the six Department of Veterans Affairs national rehabilitation special events. These six events are the Creative Arts Festival, the Wheelchair Games, the Golden Age Games, the National Veterans TEE Tournament, the Summer Sports Clinic, and the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. You have worked so hard to support many of these events as volunteers and also through donations raised by your individual efforts. On behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs I wish to express our most sincere appreciation.

The American Legion Auxiliary demonstrates service to veterans through their involvement with programs such as the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition and Festival. You understand how art, writing, music, dance, and drama can be used to help veterans cope with physical and emotional disabilities. And since the year 2000 you have been actively involved with us in making a strong and positive difference in the lives of veterans who participate in creative arts as therapy. Through your efforts over the past 14 years the Creative Arts Program for Veterans has increased to where this year there were 3,200 veterans from 129 VA facilities across the country that entered the competition.

The American Legion Auxiliary members have been involved with the local VA competitions in the big way. Here are some examples of your support in the words of a few of the VA staff. From Memphis, Tennessee, the local ALA members have volunteered to be a part of the judging at the local Memphis Performing Arts

Competitions. They have helped with veteran travel expenses or shirts that the spinal cord injury wheelchair group needed when they performed at the Creative Arts Festival in San Antonio. They have also had donation cans placed in the community to raise funds for the competitions.

From Canandaigua, New York, the ALA has supported our local show for several years through personally baking cookies for refreshments at the local show, helping by serving the veterans refreshments, and donating funds.

From Buffalo, New York, our American Legion group's full name is Erie County American Legion Auxiliary. They have been supporting both our summer and winter art shows for many years. They can be counted on to provide a variety of tasty treats to our visitors and participants.

From Sheridan, Wyoming, the local ALA has always supported the creative arts program in Sheridan. They provide ribbons for artwork and provide refreshments for the judges while they are judging the artwork.

From Honolulu VA Pacific Islands Healthcare System, our ladies from the American Legion Auxiliary have helped every year with our local creative arts competition for as long as I can remember. They attend our ceremony each year and pass out medals or certificates to congratulate the veterans who have entered. They provided monies over the years to purchase ribbons and medals for the veterans. Most recently they provided a gift card from a local craft store so supplies for the contest and for veterans could be bought. We could not do this without their support.

From Daytona Beach, Florida, the American Legion Auxiliary has been very helpful in sponsoring refreshments for an art exhibit for the veterans. We display veterans artwork around our building, serve grape juice, cheese and crackers, and invite family to see the artwork. The American Legion Auxiliary has also donated prizes and awards to the art winners.

And the VA Maryland Healthcare System has developed an opportunity for veteran artists to exhibit their art in galleries. This community opportunity has offered a positive outreach for the veterans.

These are just a few examples of the support by the American Legion Auxiliary members. We so appreciate each and every one of the departments for your monetary and volunteer contributions. Thank you to the leadership team that we have had the privilege of working with over the last 14 years. Each of the former National Presidents have become great friends to us and this year it has been our sincere privilege to be associated with Madam President Nancy Brown-Park. She has been a great support to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival for several years. Thank you, Nancy.

Our hope is that the veterans who participate in the Creative Arts Competition and Festival come away with a sense of accomplishment and with a feeling of strong motivation to explore other areas of their lives that they can achieve with the same feeling of success. Your support has a widespread and direct positive influence on veterans who truly need your involvement and who cannot always seek out your help on their own for many varied reasons.

And now, speaking of this year, 130 of the medal winning veterans of the art, creative writing, dance, drama, and music competitions will gather together in

Milwaukee, Wisconsin during the last part of October and early November to participate in the festival experience. The veterans will participate in rehearsals and therapeutic visual and performing arts workshops that the Festival host site coordinators Shep Crumrine and Marisa Straub and their team from the Milwaukee VA Medical Center have planned. It is a chance to show their community that the use of arts as therapy in the treatment of America's veterans is strong and enduring and we thank the Department of Wisconsin for their involvement in this year's Festival.

The Festival event will culminate with a live stage show performance and a 53-piece exhibit of the first place winning artwork from the national level of competition. The art exhibit and stage show will be held at the Milwaukee Theater in downtown Milwaukee on Sunday afternoon, November 2nd. Michael Peterson will serve as the master of ceremonies for the stage show for the fifth time. We are so pleased that again this year an edited hour-long version featuring highlights from last year's festival in Reno, the stage and art exhibit, will be presented on PBS stations throughout the country around the time of Veterans Day. And I believe that the American Legion Auxiliary has a solid plan to also present that hour-long PBS presentation through YouTube. So I'm looking forward to hearing more about that. This is the ninth year that the show will be on television and so we appreciate the successful efforts of the ALA members for their part in making this happen.

Before I leave the podium this morning I just want to say once more how grateful we are to all of you for your past, present, and continuing support of the National Veterans Creative Arts Program. We appreciate your role as cosponsor and your ongoing commitment to veterans and the arts. Thank you again, and have a wonderful Convention in Charlotte.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Liz. Thank you for all you do for America's heroes. Thank you very much. The Poppy Program raises community awareness and respect for our veterans by educating Auxiliary members and the public about the symbol of the poppy. Here to tell us more about connecting the visual image of the poppy with the sacrifices made by our veterans is Brenda Collins, National Poppy Committee Chairman.

(Music.)

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN COLLINS: This has truly been an exciting year for the American Legion Poppy Program. We have witnessed many changes, changes for the good of the program. Poppies are now made in a variety of materials, from the red felt poppy of California to the crocheted poppy from South Carolina. And also let's never forget the red crepe paper poppy we all know and love. We are thankful to the American Legion for the changes due to Resolution #20.

Our units have worked diligently this year to keep the Poppy Program in the forefront of our organization and to bring it back in areas where it had faltered. This Chairman has been working with the American Legion Auxiliary National Marketing Team and the marketing team for the Texas Roadhouse Restaurants to

secure our Auxiliaries a place to distribute their poppies all across the country. The Texas Roadhouse is a restaurant that holds our veterans in high esteem. They welcome this partnership with the American Legion Auxiliary and they feel that this is one of many ways that they can continue to give back to veterans who have given so much to them and for them. This is their way to pass it on.

Again this year, as in the past three years, South Carolina's North Strand Unit #186 turns their post into the TV set for Deal or No Deal. On the last Saturday of April they have the 26 boxes, two contestants, and of course their very own Howie as the M.C. Tickets are sold and excitement mounts as the contestants are chosen. Each box has a money value from one cent to \$500. The contestants must figure out if they want what is in their box or if they want to continue with the offering of the banker to continue opening boxes. All the proceeds for the day are placed in their Poppy Fund. This year's gave netted the Auxiliary unit \$1,100. They will use that money to pass it on to veterans in their area.

The Robert McMillan Unit 332 of McClure, Ohio, have started a poppy mailing. Each member of the American Legion Family receives a poppy and a letter from the unit stating the significance of the poppy program and how their donations can help. They have taken a lesson from the national marketing team. They include in the letter a list of tangible items that the poppy monies could provide for the veterans and the military and their families. For example, a dollar provides toothpaste or toothbrushes. Five dollars would provide three pairs of socks. Ten dollars would provide transportation to a VA clinic for medical services. Twenty-five to \$50 provides a meal for a veteran or a military family, especially during the holidays. It paints a picture in the mind of the donor as to how their donation will help. They have found this to be a great way to pass it on.

Poppies were pinned in Senators, Representatives, legislators, and Governors all across this great country. We continue to work with the Poppy Program to raise funds to help in supporting our veterans, our active duty military, and their families. What a wonderful way to pass it on. Thank you, Madam National President. This concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any recommendations or resolutions?

CHAIRMAN COLLINS: No ma'am, there are not.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Would you like to introduce your guests?

CHAIRMAN COLLINS: I would love to. Today we have Little Miss Poppy, Nonie Lamb from Kansas. She is in the age group 6 to 12.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: When I met her in Kansas, she wasn't quite so shy, were you? Huh? Isn't she beautiful? Can you all see her?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, good. So Nonie, we have a special plaque for you that you can hang in your room. Isn't that neat? Thank you for your

hard work. So this is presented to Nonie Lamb, Department of Kansas, for the best scrapbook and narrative on the memorial poppy in the ages 6 to 12.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Did you hear what she said? Did you hear what she said? Are you going to do a selfie again?

(Laughter.)

MISS LAMB: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You're so welcome.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN COLLINS: Next we have Miss Poppy Taylor Houghton from Michigan in the age group 13 to 18.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So Taylor, we have a special plaque for you as well. Ms. Poppy ages 13 to 18. Taylor Houghton, Department of Michigan, for the best scrapbook and narrative on the memorial poppy. Congratulations, Taylor.

MISS HOUGHTON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Congratulations.

MISS HOUGHTON: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much, both of you. Okay.

CHAIRMAN COLLINS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair asks that the National Secretary read the announcements.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: There are a few. The NEC 101 orientation session will begin at 1:00 p.m. this afternoon in Room 207 A, B, C, NEC 101 orientation at 1:00 p.m.

A reminder that the Membership and Strategic Planning breakout sessions will begin this afternoon at 2:30 p.m. I happen to know that the Strategic Planning breakout session is in the same room where the NEC 101 group will be meeting.

Installation rehearsal will begin immediately upon adjournment. It will take place up here by the stage, if you would gather by these stairs over here by the stage.

To leave the Convention Hall once we adjourn this morning you can exit the room at the end on the way out, as the way you came in. Or you can go out this side and back around and you can follow the DG signs. So there are two ways to exit the Convention Hall.

So while we are talking about Convention Hall, we have noticed that we had a little bugs, a few bugs to work out about scanning all of you getting in this morning. Okay, we know. So in the spirit of goodwill we have been discussing a better way to do that and we hope in the spirit of goodwill you will appreciate that we are trying to work through the bugs. So next, so at the next time we gather for the sessions just come on in the room like you normally will. And we are going to

have people wandering through and doing the scannings if you didn't get scanned as you walked into the room. So bear with us, we are trying to work this process out.

National Historian Sharon Doran would like to meet with the candidates for 2014-2015 National Historian at the close of the session in front of the stage.

Now tomorrow the President of the United States is scheduled to visit us for a joint session. Tomorrow's American Legion Auxiliary general session will conclude in plenty of time for those wishing to go to the joint session to see the President of the United States. Magnetometers will be located at the Martin Luther King entrance starting at 6:00 a.m. So at the MLK entrance there will be magnetometers. How many of you have never gone through one? Watch those who have.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: That's the fastest way to learn. They will go through your bag. So just be conscious of all the things that you would have with you.

Now bus schedules will be changing tomorrow. So this is kind of a heads up. Route 1 and Route 2 on the shuttle will unload on the College Street entrance for Tuesday until the President of the United States leaves. Route 3 and Route 4 will unload at their normal unloading station. Once the President of the United States departs the Convention Center all shuttles will resume their normal location. However, pickup for all routes is still going to be on MLK. No one is telling me which way to point. So you're going to have to look, there is a map in your Convention Guide. And you will follow the crowd.

So here is the drill. No, it's just like getting on an airplane, you can't bring liquids on board with you, you can't bring liquids into the Convention Hall tomorrow for the joint session. Remember to please leave your large bags at the hotel. I can tell you that this will delay things an awful lot because they have to look through your bags. So leave the big stuff back at the hotel and bring only the small things, or just really put your room key in your neck purse so that you don't have to carry a lot of stuff with you.

The luncheon, the Woman of the Year Luncheon will begin at 1:30 with doors opening at approximately 1:00. This should allow ample time for everyone to exit the special joint session and walk back over to the Hilton for the luncheon. Now if there are any other special announcements about that we will let you know tomorrow morning.

Now how many of you realized that you can follow this Convention on social media? Let's see those techie hands up. So don't forget on Twitter we're @ALANatIHQ, on Instagram we're alaforveterans, and Facebook we're alaforveterans.

Now did you also know that we began live streaming our Convention sessions this morning? That means you all have been on T.V. So this week we'll be airing all our general sessions and the installation through a live streaming service online so that those who are unable to be here can indeed watch the Convention from their computers or their smart phone. So let's do something fun. We have a virtual audience watching us right now. So you can, so when I raise my hand you can either

say hi, or if you are from the South you can say hey. But at the same time let's everybody say hi. Okay?

AUDIENCE: Hi!

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Also be sure to use the hash tag #auxcon in all of your Convention related social media posts. So let's all share in the excitement. And be sure to tell your friends who haven't made it here that they can watch the live streaming video by just going to our national website alaforveterans.org.

Now I do have a sad announcement to make. Jerry Hedrick, Past National Commander from here in the State of North Carolina, and Chairman of the 2014 National Convention Committee passed away this morning from a heart attack. Please keep Jerry and his wife Marie -- I'm sorry, if I can get through this -- in your thoughts and prayers.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I have been privileged this year to get to know Jerry Hedrick and his lovely wife Marie, my husband and I both. Jerry's untimely death this morning is a devastating loss to The American Legion and the entire Legion Family. So, please, please let's all honor this veteran and his wife, and beloved leader, with a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you to all of our national chairmen who presented and to all our special guests from The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion who stopped by to visit today. And how about one more round of applause for all of today's distinguished guests.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And I know that Jerry would want us all to go on, to have a great Convention with a happy heart.

(Whereupon, at 12:02 p.m. on Monday, August 25, 2014, the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

**NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2014**

ANNOUNCER: Welcome to Day Two of Pass It On: The 94th American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. Here to begin our session is your National President Nancy Brown-Park.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Hey!

AUDIENCE: Hey!

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I love that southern term. You know, in the valley in California, that's what they do, "Hey!" It's a little different. So, welcome. Are you ready for another great day in Charlotte?

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Did anybody see the sunrise this morning?

AUDIENCE: Yes!

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow, was that beautiful? You know, when I saw that sunrise this morning I thought of Jerry, and I knew that he was looking over us and that we were going to have an absolutely incredible Convention. So here we go.

So as many of you know, the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation was started in 2007 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to raise funds to ensure that the charitable purpose and the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary are here for the future generations. This past year the Foundation established a fund for making grants to departments, districts, or units to meet a new project need. Throughout the year this Veterans Project Fund was my special project, and thanks to your generous support we got off to a great start and already have awarded four veterans projects, four grants, fund grants. One of those grants made it possible to ring a little music into the lives of veterans living in a VA facility in Illinois. Let's watch.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

ANNOUNCER: This is Liberty House on the Illiana VA campus. It is the reinvention of a traditional veterans home, where ten men with various needs call home. In stark contrast to typical institutional living it looks and feels like a residential home and inside Liberty House the liberty bells are ringing.

(Music.)

ANNOUNCER: The residents are participating in a music program that got a boost from the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. In synch to recorded music a music therapist flips a series of colorful flash cards that tell each participant when to ring their color coded bells.

MS. PAYNE: (Indiscernible.)

VOICE: I like the bells and (indiscernible). (Music.)

ANNOUNCER: And beyond having fun music therapy has clinical benefits, too.

VOICE: Music provides a break.

ANNOUNCER: Those with visual impairment enjoy playing the bells with the gentle touch of a volunteer. But there weren't enough bells and equipment to meet the needs of Illiana VA.

MS. WILLIAMSON: (Indiscernible.)

(Music.)

ANNOUNCER: That very day Patty saw an article in *Auxiliary* magazine.

MS. WILLIAMSON: (Indiscernible.)

ANNOUNCER: The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation was incorporated in 2007 and after great support and investment growth program grants are now available.

MS. WILLIAMSON: (Indiscernible) and submitted it online, or hand it in by mail, and within six weeks we found out we had the grant.

ANNOUNCER: And because of the grant the men of Liberty House now have their own bells.

MS. WILLIAMSON: And the guys here love the bells so much that they are planning on different venues around the campus so that everyone can enjoy the music. They just light up like you wouldn't believe.

MS. GRAHAM: (Indiscernible.)

MS. PAYNE (Indiscernible.)

ANNOUNCER: For more information, including Foundation grant applications, please log on to alaforveterans.org, and look for ALA Foundation under the About tab., or log directly onto the Foundation website, ALAFoundation.org.

VOICE: Hey --

VOICE: Very good, who recognized that one?

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So ladies and gentlemen, please welcome two people involved in the bell program. From the Department of Illinois please welcome Patty Williamson and Sandy McCool.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: What a great project! And how easy it was to make a difference in the lives of those veterans. And you know, you raised the money. The money is in the Foundation, now we just need to spend it. So please, find those opportunities in your area, in your state, so that we can pass that money on. So thank you, ladies, so much for such an incredible job, and making such a difference. Thank you so much. Let's get right over here and get a picture.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So the 94th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will come to order. Before we begin I would like everyone to please take a moment to ensure your electronic devices have been placed on silent mode. Linda, would you check mine? Because I don't think it is. Thank

you. Would our National Chaplain Shelley Riggs please come forward to lead us in our invocation?

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Let us pray. Good morning, God. We ask your blessing on us today as we continue our program reports. Be with President Nancy as she leads us today with her enthusiasm. Thank you for another beautiful day.

God, please wrap your arms around the family of Jerry Hedrick. Help them get through this most difficult time in their life. Jerry was a most, a very important member of the Legion Family and he will be greatly missed. Rest in peace, Jerry.

It's really nice to wake up this morning realizing God has given us another day to live. Thank you, God. In your most holy name we pray, Amen.

ALL: Amen.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please be seated.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: An effective historian knows how to document moments in time so that they create a historical path for others to follow for years to come. Please welcome this year's National Historian Sharon Doran.

(Music.)

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: Madam National President, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today and the members of this great organization. I do have the heels, I do not have the pantyhose. It seems but a short time ago that I stood before these members that stated that I hoped to build a one on one relationship with each department historian. That was the vision. I must have been wearing the rose-colored glasses as I waited for me to come to me for information when I, it should have been I going to them to see if they had all they needed to write their histories.

That having been said, it gives me great pleasure to state that through emails, telephone calls, and with many department historians, divisional vice presidents, and with the invaluable assistance of the National Liaison Tamara Shumate that we have received over 30 midyear and year end reports. Thirty-seven out of 52 departments submitted a senior history for judging and only one junior history from the Department of Louisiana was submitted.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: I wish I had the time to share with you all the stories that formed the foundation of their histories. However, I do not wish to have the hook drag me off the stage. The Department of Missouri dedicated their history to their Department President Barbara Sheets. The Department of New York dedicated their history to all American Legion Auxiliary members who keep the veterans smiling, keep our children and youth laughing, and for keeping our servicemembers in our hearts.

(Cheering.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: Thank you, New York. The Department of North Dakota dedicated their history to all the men and women who have answered the call

to serve our nation, both now and in the future. And if you will forgive me for one moment -- page three out of 47.

(Laughter.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: The Department of Kentucky dedicated their history to all veterans and their families. The Department of Arizona wrote a forward stating that history is a word derived from a Greek word meaning a search of knowledge. The historian as an artist looks upon his subject as a picture whose detail must sometimes be subdued in order to make a harmonious whole. Tacitus wrote in Annals, "the principal office of history I take to be this: to prevent actions from being forgotten." These pages were written therefore to preserve for posterity the accomplishment of the American Legion Auxiliary and to point out this fact, that the Department of Arizona members do contribute in large part to the culture of our nation.

The recording of a department history is a long, arduous, and time consuming endeavor. The task of judging the divisional winners is difficult and a thank you to each division vice president, thank you for your assistance, and their judging teams, which they all did have. It is well earned.

I don't know what happened to page 47.

(Laughter.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: That's what I get for being first. Choosing the winner of the Toomey Trophy was as equally difficult, and it was presented during the pre-convention meeting to the Department of North Dakota, Lynn Tomlinson, Historian.

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: Madam National President, the vision may have been broad, but the mission has been accomplished. And this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: One more, I'm waiting.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are you done?

HISTORIAN DORAN: Yes. Well, sort of. You're going to ask me a question.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Right. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

HISTORIAN DORAN: I'm going to be the first one to say yes, there are no resolutions, but there are two recommendations.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay.

HISTORIAN DORAN: During the pre-convention meeting, well actually before that, I realized why the department historians were having such a hard time writing the history to be judged in its entirety and to do it right. So they have asked that we do some how-to sheets and I have worked with the two candidates who are coming in. And I recommend that we give how-to sheets on the opening pages, up until the you give the narrative, so everybody has conformity. That is my first recommendation. And to pass it on, each National Historian needs to pass it on to

the next one, the pitfalls, the highlights, and a way to get the job done better than the last one did. That is the first recommendation.

The second recommendation, Madam National President, and the incoming, is the Toomey Award and the history is probably the single largest document outside of the Constitution & Bylaws and come out of this organization. For those who have written it and written it well, it is a great piece of work. I recommend that the future Presidents include the Toomey Trophy awarded from the stage as part of their awards of excellence. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Sharon.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Sharon. We will pass that on.

The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation secures the service work of the American Legion Auxiliary, the service work of the American Legion Auxiliary, for a future generation. It opens a different door of opportunity to individuals, corporations, and other foundations wishing to financially support the American Legion Auxiliary. Here with the Foundation report is Foundation President Linda Boone.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Good morning, everyone.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

PRESIDENT BOONE: The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation is in its seventh year and building momentum. We encourage you to read our report in the report to the membership to get a bigger picture of the Foundation's accomplishments. Today the Foundation board is pleased to be able to report on the grants distributed this year. It was an exciting time to review proposals sent in and determine the dollar amounts that could be awarded based on the donations received. Working out the process for grant-making was a new venture and we appreciate the national staff's guidance and support throughout.

Grants provided this year were made possible by our supporters' various donations and are varied and mission focused grants. This year the administration of the Veterans Creative Arts Festival grant funds was moved to the Foundation. Grants were evaluated and recommendations made by the National VA&R Committee and they awarded two. The Department of Iowa, VA Central Iowa, \$750.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Department of Maryland, Perry Point VAMC,
\$500.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Department of Vermont, White River VAMC,
\$1,500.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Department of New York, Syracuse, VAMC, \$750.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Department of Illinois, Illiana Healthcare System, \$2,500.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Sometimes departments, districts, or units missed an opportunity to receive a grant because of their IRS status as a 501(c)(19). The Foundation can aid in these situations because it is a 501(c)(3). This year a district took advantage to access grant funds by using the Foundations 501(3)(c) IRS status. This \$500 pass through grant went to District 20 in the Department of California.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: The Veteran Projects Grant Fund, inspired by National President Nancy, received donations like at the Washington Conference Parade of Checks that enabled the following grants to be awarded. Department of Illinois VA Hospital music bells therapy project, \$2,633.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Research has shown that music with a strong beat can stimulate brain waves to resonate in synch with the beat with faster beats bringing a sharper concentration and more alert thinking and likewise a slower tempo promoting a calm, meditative state. This grant will provide for the purchase of a musical bell system which includes flash cards, CDs, boom boxes, and a set of old-fashioned bells.

The Department of Delaware Oak Orchard Riverdale Unit 28, Home of the Brave for Homeless Veterans, repair of siding and insulation, \$6,000. Home of the Brave has provided veteran housing for over 20 years. This 150-year-old farmhouse provides transitional living for 15 male veterans. Two years ago after Hurricane Sandy winds revealed the need for extensive repairs on replacing windows, siding, and insulation to enhance energy savings and to add to the comfort of the veterans. Two phases of four have been completed and this grant will be used to complete the project.

Department of Connecticut, District 1, washers and dryers for veteran residents, \$1,600. Victory Gardens is a veteran housing project that opened in 2013. It is housing for 120 veterans and their families and currently has 72 children residing there. This grant will be used for purchase washers and dryers for some of the units.

The Department of California, iTunes gift cards for \$1,250. California requested a grant to provide 54 \$25 gift cards for the American Legion Auxiliary National President Nancy Brown-Park to distribute during her visits with servicemembers. Special American Legion Auxiliary labels were affixed to each

iTunes gift card that states, "A small gift of appreciation from the American Legion Auxiliary. On behalf of the American Legion Family, thank you for your service."

Most of the funds that have been donated to the Foundation since its incorporation in 2007 have been put in an endowment fund which means that it is our bast and the interest from that base, from that endowment, will be used to support the mission. For the Foundation our mission is to raise funds to support the American Legion Auxiliary programs. And for the first time interest from our endowed funds provided a grant to the American Legion Auxiliary for \$2,250.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Small, but a milestone beginning for a future anticipated growth. Thank you to all our donors for supporting the growth of the Foundation. This will ensure that funds are available to provide service to our nation's veterans. Madam President, that concludes our platform remarks.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Linda. Are there any resolutions or recommendations? No.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: No.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I just want to say thank you for everybody who donated to the Veterans Project Fund. And I just said to Linda, what did we raise? And I think we raised this year \$64,000.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And if I am correct, I think, Janet, you are going to continue that? Janet will continue with that fund next year. So it is very exciting to be able to go out right away and make a difference. And having those iTunes cards as I traveled overseas, when we were at Landstuhl, we had the opportunity to meet some of the wounded veterans who had come back. And I was able to give them iTunes cards. And that generation loves those. So I still had some when I went to Walter Reed for that incredible picnic with the wounded warriors over there. We were able to hand out 40 cards to those young men and women and it was really, really a neat opportunity. So thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And now for something really exciting. It is my pleasure to announce the winner of the special fundraising challenge we extended to all departments. The winner of this challenge will receive a gold medal winning painting awarded at the 2013 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival donated by disabled veteran Frank Ramirez Jr. And the winner is the Department with the highest per capita donation of two thousand -- two thousand. Of \$2.72 per member. So drum roll....so the winner is the Department of Hawaii.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please come to the stage to be recognized. Come on. Come on, girls. This is definitely the year for Hawaii. Congratulations.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Congratulations.

VOICE: So pretty, yeah? This is wonderful. Wonderful.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I think that was a big surprise. You know, that's pretty incredible coming from a department that wanted to turn their charter in last year to now be 100 percent membership, donations coming in. That is really exciting and you have all done an incredible job to turn that around. Thank you. Thank you, ladies.

So now I get to introduce my good friend, Past National President Peggy Thomas, for the Past Presidents Parley report. And she's got lots of cool guests.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Madam President, good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Serving with me this year on the Past Presidents Parley Committee is Sandi Dutton from the Department of Maryland, Kristine West from the Department of New Hampshire. And it is with pride and humility that I report what these outstanding Past Presidents Parley women have generated all across the nation this administrative year. Not only was incredible work performed that enhanced our organization, but our dedicated members also supplied thousands of dollars to scholarships to our young people, the future leaders of our country.

The Department of Ohio --

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: -- gave 14 nurses scholarships, 14 totaling more than \$10,000. They also gave \$600 to each of their four VA hospitals.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: As well as \$325 to each of the five outpatient facilities for female veterans.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Past Presidents Parley reports also showed that many units across the Department of Ohio honored our female veterans with gifts, luncheons, and recognition banquets. Department of California reported that 110 units donated a total of \$5,380 to the nurses scholarship.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Two deserving applications were awarded \$4,000 for the winner, and \$2,000 for the second recipient. Nineteen units honored and recognized their own Auxiliary members of the year with flowers and gifts as well as honoring them with special luncheons and presenting them with poppy corsages and a certificate of appreciation at unit meetings. Time will not allow me to share with you all the great work that each of these reporting departments have done. But I will say however that these special women have worked very hard across the nation, not

only to communicate but to raise money in each department in order to give out much needed scholarships. A special emphasis was placed on visiting female veterans in the VA hospitals and also in their homes if the need was there.

Each of you attending this 94th Annual Convention need to read the report printed in the Annual Book of Reports and to share our message with the members of your departments.

One highlight of the year is to honor a special unit member from each department that has not risen above the office of unit president. She usually is the first one to arrive at functions and the last one to leave. This member goes above and beyond expectations, working for the betterment of this organization. She is the one that enjoys working on the unit level and most of the time has no aspirations to move up the ladder. We know that great things are accomplished by one member at a time completing one job at a time, so every year we have the privilege of honoring that amazing member who is doing exactly that. We call them our Unit Member of the Year and recognize and honor them for their dedication and commitment to the Auxiliary's mission during our Woman of the Year Luncheon. At this special event our Unit Members of the Year are treated to a guest speaker named the Woman of the Year by our National President.

Four women are being recognized today with the American Legion Auxiliary Salute to Active Duty Servicewomen and it is a pleasure to make the following introductions. The U.S. Army recipient is Lieutenant Colonel Lisa Harbach.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: She has served her country proudly for 33 years. She started out as a private and is now a lieutenant colonel. She is a combat veteran, having served in the desert of Kuwait, Iraq, and the mountains of Afghanistan. Her accomplishments are many and here are just a few of the medals she has earned: Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and NATO Medal.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: In 2010 when she returned from her latest deployment Lieutenant Colonel Harbach was selected as the Deputy Commander Executive Officer for the 475th GM Group located in Williamsport, Pennsylvania where she is still serving. Please give a warm welcome to our first recipient Lieutenant Colonel Lisa Harbach.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

COLONEL HARBACH: Thank you very much. First, I would like to say that I am deeply honored and humbled to have been selected, and nominated and selected for this prestigious award. Just to update my biographical sketch that you just heard I have since been promoted full-bird colonel.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

COLONEL HARBACH: And I am now coming up to 36 years of serving honorably in this uniform.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

COLONEL HARBACH: I have been told that I only have about two to three minutes, so that's good when a commissioned officer is speaking.

(Laughter.)

COLONEL HARBACH: Because we tend to be a little long-winded but I guarantee you that I am a very short-winded speaker. I would not be here today, and I really would like to honor those brave women that served before me. Yes, I am coming up on 36 years of service. But this would not have been possible if it would not have been for those brave women that broke barriers back in, I'm sorry, I'm a little nervous, it would not have been possible in 1941 if we had not had the Army, or Women's Army Auxiliary Corp, formulated in 1941, later 1943 it was transitioned to the Women's Army Corp. It wasn't until 1951 when women were permitted to serve in Vietnam, and 1972 women were permitted to enter into ROTC to become commissioned officers, and also in that year women were permitted to obtain above the rank to general. Up until that point women were not permitted to carry on any type of general rank.

I entered into the military as a 18-year-old high school senior in 1979, four months after the WAC, which is the Women's Army Corp, was demolished, which was November of 1978. So four months later I raised my right hand and volunteered to enter into the United States Army as a private E-1. Okay. So I know what it's like to be a private. I know what it's like to be a follower. And I maintained my enlisted status for approximately nine years before I decided to enter over into the dark side of becoming a commissioned officer.

(Laughter.)

COLONEL HARBACH: And here we are today. What I thought was going to be a three-year career still continues. So I thank those women before me. I hope I have served and made them proud. And the next three women that you are going to meet, my comrades, part of the younger generation, I hope continues to carry on this proud tradition of being able to serve in the United States Military. Thank you.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Lieutenant -- well, bird Colonel now Harbach. It gives me great pleasure to present this award to you and it reads, "We salute you and thank you for your honorable military service on the War on Terrorism on the behalf of a grateful nation, presented August 26, 2014." And National President is going to

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(Applause.)

COLONEL HARBACH: Thank you so much. Appreciate it.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Colonel Harbach, please remain on stage as we welcome our next recipient.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Full-bird Colonel.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I would like you to also have my National President's Coin. Thank you so much for your service and all you have done. And we are so proud of you and everything you have accomplished.

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: And honored.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Our next recipient is with the U.S. Marine Corps.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Jessica Paz Swaim from Arizona is currently stationed in South Carolina.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Sergeant Swaim is a dual member of this organization and comes from a long line of family members that have served this country. Her great-uncle served in World War I; her grandfather in Korea; uncle in Vietnam; her father, a Legionnaire, in the Gulf War; brother in Afghanistan; and now Sergeant Swaim is serving her country. She was chosen as the model for the new head wear for the U.S. Marine Corps cover and was featured on Fox News and CNN in October, 2013. She made the cover of the Marine Corps Times publication in November, 2013 featuring the dress blue uniform for the U.S. Marine Corps. As in most military families, Sergeant Swaim is no stranger to the sacrifices one has to make for this nation. Sergeant Swaim went through the months of vigorous training to be a drill sergeant at Parris Island. She had to do this in order to be able to teach and train others. She now takes the new recruits, quality young women, and transforms them through the foundations of vigorous basic training as shared legacy and a commitment to their core values, preparing them to win our nation's battles in service to their country. Sergeant Swaim, it gives me great pleasure to greet you this morning. Please come forward -- there she is.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Do you want to say something?

SERGEANT SWAIM: Yes.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

SERGEANT SWAIM: Good morning. I just want to say that I am very grateful and feel privileged to be here with you right now. I'm going to choke up.

I'm working in a different company right now so that's why I sound a little sweet and I don't have the drill instructor voice right now.

(Laughter.)

SERGEANT SWAIM: Well I just want to thank you all and how privileged I feel to get this award. And above all, Jane Shoemaker for nominating me for this award.

VOICE: Thank you!

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

SERGEANT SWAIM: And the American Legion Auxiliary Post 62, and my parents. Because without them I wouldn't be here, and where I'm at, and wanting to follow in my father's footsteps. I have spent six years in the Marine Corps and still undecided if I want to stay in or get out. But we'll see. Whatever God has a plan for me. Thank you, everyone.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

SERGEANT SWAIM: Also, I would like to say thank you to my beautiful son, I don't know where he's at. Okay. Yes, thank you.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: She has a beautiful little son back in the distinguished guests area. Sergeant Swaim, it gives me great pleasure to us to present this award to you and it reads, "We salute you and thank you for your honorable military service on the War on Terrorism, on behalf of a grateful nation, presented August 26, 2014." By our National President Nancy.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: All right. Now if you would join Lieutenant -- I keep saying Lieutenant Colonel, but I'll just reduce it to Colonel. Colonel Harbach, as we welcome our next honoree. The bird colonel is not in my script.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: The U.S. Air Force recipient is Tech Sergeant Cassandra Freer. Tech Sergeant Freer has served 26 years in the U.S. Air Force and is now stationed in Vero Beach, Florida.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: We know that freedom is not free and that a female servicewoman's role in the military has not always been an easy one. Her climb to the rank of Tech Sergeant has been reached through perseverance and hard work. Tech Sergeant Freer's narrative on why women are vital to today's armed forces is an inspiring one. Women have been fighting alongside their male counterparts for decades. In today's world they are more valuable than ever before. Tech Sergeant Freer has earned her role as a woman in the military through unwavering dedicating to the cause of justice and freedom. To quote Sergeant Freer, "I am a 26-year veteran of the United States Air Force and throughout my career I have witnessed firsthand or at times been a participant to change in attitudes towards

females expanding into once male-dominated career fields. By no means has it been an easy task to accomplish. It has taken a lot of sacrifice with an unwavering mind set that failure is not an option regardless of the obstacles set before me.” Please give a warm welcome to Tech Sergeant Cassandra Freer.

(Music.)

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

SERGEANT FREER: Good morning. Thank you. I appreciate it and I am deeply humbled and honored to be here to receive this award. Peggy kind of stole my speech with all the quotes.

(Laughter.)

SERGEANT FREER: So I guess I will just wing it. Right now I am currently, I started in June, 1988 is when I went on active duty. I have been through Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and currently I am in Operation Restore Hope and Operation, those are just one of the many operations and support that I have gone through over my career. And I just want to thank the American Legion and their supporters and the Auxiliary for supporting us veterans. And I would be remiss if I did not give a call out to my mother. She is the one that has really instilled the loyalty and patriotism within me. Billie Pirres [phonetic], thank you. And thank all of you.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Tech Sergeant Freer, Sergeant Freer, it gives us great pleasure to present this award to you today and it reads, “We salute you and thank you for your honorable military service on the War on Terrorism, on behalf of a grateful nation, presented August 26, 2014,” by our National President here.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Tech Sergeant Freer, if you would join Colonel Harbach and Sergeant Swaim as we welcome our next honoree. It’s in the script.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Just remember, she is a bird colonel. But we still make her nervous.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Okay. The U.S. Navy recipient is Lieutenant Rebecca A. Bennett. Lieutenant Bennett, a graduate of Cornell University, received her wings in 2011, graduating at the head of her class, the Commodore’s List with Distinction. In 2012 she was posted to Helicopter C Combat Squadron #6 North Island in charge of 30 most junior personnel. In 2012 qualified Second Pilot in five months, four months faster than the average.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: She was promoted to Aircraft Commander six months ahead of squadron average.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Quickly moving up the line of command still, in 2013 she was promoted to Lieutenant and Qualified Check Pilot. Now in 2014 Lieutenant Bennett is an Aircraft Division Officer in charge of 20 percent of the Division she serves, and that is a total command of 55 people, not a small accomplishment.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Please give a warm welcome to Lieutenant Rebecca A. Bennett.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

LIEUTENANT BENNETT: Thank you all very much. I guess we saved the best for last.

(Laughter.)

(Cheering.)

LIEUTENANT BENNETT: First of all, I would like thank the American Legion Auxiliary, my friends and family, and especially my husband Alex who is currently on deployment and was unable to be here today. I was asked today to share my personal military experience with all of you. That is certainly a tough topic to cover in two to approximately three minutes. But anyone who spends a decent amount of time with sailors knows we are quite adept at swapping stories.

(Laughter.)

LIEUTENANT BENNETT: Yes, we poke fun at each other sometimes. You can ask me how I got my call sign. But the idea, particularly with naval aviation, is that our shared experiences will prevent everyone from learning the hard way. Every week all the pilots in my squadron come together and we talk about the mistakes we made in the hopes other people will not repeat them. From this corporate knowledge, and a little bit from the school of hard knocks, I have learned quite a bit during my time in the military. One thing in particular that stands out to me is the implicit trust existing within a crew.

In the aircraft I fly you have two pilots that sit side by side, and two air crewmen sit in the cabin area behind the pilot stations. Each person is vitally important to the flight and the safe completion of the mission. You know the saying you can pick your friends but you can't pick your family? Well, the same goes for your Navy family. The group of junior officers with whom I work on a daily basis is probably the most random group of people you could possibly conceive. They come from all walks of life, but I would do anything to help them out. And I know they would be there for me if I needed them as well. People join the military for all sorts of reasons but the relationships you create and the camaraderie you grow to cherish are what keep you going day after day. The people are what have shaped and created my experience. I have one quick sea story for you. Last year I did a nine-month deployment on board the USS Nimitz in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and

the Syrian crisis. Some of you may have heard about a helicopter crash in the Red Sea last year September. That was my squadron and as I'm sure you can imagine I knew both the pilots very well. Much like the memories surrounding President Kennedy's assassination or 9/11, I will never forget where I was that day, when I found out a helicopter, our helicopter, had crashed.

As the primary search and rescue asset for the strike group we searched all night for our friends. We flew for hours over miles of open ocean hoping and praying to see a searchlight, a flash of their helmet, anything. When the search was finally called off we took a day to grieve for our lost family members and we kept flying. We had to.

There is a saying sometimes used in retirement ceremonies or in more tragic circumstances such as these. We've got the watch. It means the people left behind have got it. We will pick up the slack and make sure the mission is still accomplished. This is why it is so important to have women in the military. Without us you are automatically losing 50 percent of your potential pool of servicemembers. It takes a special kind of person to climb in a helicopter two days after you lost two of your best friends, but that fortitude has nothing to do with gender. It has everything to do with heart. The "we" isn't just men, it is every single person currently serving in the greatest military in the world. We've got the watch. Thank you very much for your time.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: It gives us great pleasure to present this award to you today and it reads, "We salute you and thank you for your honorable military service on the War on Terrorism, on behalf of a grateful nation, presented August 26, 2014." It gives me great pleasure to present this to you.

LIEUTENANT BENNETT: Thank you.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: And now would all the recipients please join me at the lectern, including the bird colonel.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Let's give a well-deserving, rising ovation to honor these military women who are serving our country.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: They protect us, they protect us so we can sleep safely at night. Thank you all. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Peggy. Do we have any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Madam President, I do have one recommendation.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You do?

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: I do.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: What?

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: You're not going to like it.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yes, because I have to do this next year.

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Past Presidents Parley is an activity and therefore it does not require a written report. I recommend one be required as so much work is done and lost because it is not reported.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay.

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We like that. We'll pass it on.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We need the pictures over here.

CHAIRMAN THOMAS: Okay.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. This is so cool. You can be in the picture.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. Thank you. See you at lunch.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow. You know what? That is why we do what we do every single day. Isn't he cute? He was in the back. He was like --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I said, you know, trying to get him to, he had to get up way too early, they said. And I said so did I, so.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The National Finance Committee in addition to developing the proposed annual national budget oversees the financial policy of the organization. The committee reviews the financial statements and makes recommendation to the National Executive Committee for action to ensure the organization is meeting nonprofit benchmarks and government mandates. Here to tell us more is National Finance Committee Chairman Nicole Clapp.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: National Finance Committee members review the draft budget, making any adjustments that may be desired to reflect new and changing goals. The National Finance Committee recommends a budget for the national Executive Committee's consideration and adoption. Additionally the National Finance Committee oversees that financial policies of the organization, reviews the annual audit of the ALA and the ALA Foundation, and makes fiscal policy recommendations to the National Executive Committee for action to ensure

that the National ALA organization is meeting our not for profit benchmarks and governmental mandates.

One member of the National Finance Committee is also designated to serve as the liaison for the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board. And another committee member is designated as a liaison to the National American Legion National Audit Committee.

The fiscal performance of the national organization for the 2014 fiscal year has been positive. With significant revenues streaming from the dues increase adopted at the 2011 National Convention that became effective with the 2013 membership year, plus the positive performance in our investments, we were able to enhance the Department National Leadership Conference by continuing to underwrite the cost for three department representatives to attend, maintain department visits by the National Division Vice Presidents, and fund the National Public Awareness Campaign.

The successful fundraising efforts by our direct mail vendor continued this fiscal year with three appeals designated for the American Legion Auxiliary and one for the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. Fiscal year donations as of July 2014 totaled a net \$303,000.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Seventy-eight thousand greater than the net guarantee by the direct mail vendor. The analysis of the 2013 direct mail donations indicated 212,000 gifts were received. Of those gifts half came from ALA members and half came from non-ALA members. Therefore just as many gifts came from donations outside the ALA, a tremendous source of external support for our great organization.

In fiscal year 2014 the number of people applying for the Auxiliary USAA credit cards continued to increase. As of June 2014, 4,278 Auxiliary USAA credit cards have been issued and \$10.4 million have been spent and charged on the USAA credit card. Based on the growth of the number of cards issued and cardholder usage the USAA credit card royalty program shared with the departments in this fiscal year 2014 is expected to be \$12,500. Please consider obtaining an Auxiliary USAA credit card and charge, but responsibly of course.

Your National Finance Committee believes in the value and knowledge gained in and by our members through mission trainings. This past fall 250 members attended the training sessions. As a committee we support the future of such learning opportunities with the unveiling of the departmental specific trainings this fiscal year. So on behalf of the National Finance Committee, thank you for your dedication, commitment, and generous financial support of the American Legion Auxiliary's tireless efforts to fulfill our mission. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Nicole. Are there any recommendations or resolutions?

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: There was one resolution that was presented to our committee and that will be presented later on the platform from another committee.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: You're welcome. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you, Nicole.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So this morning, just so you know, my husband, the First Dude, is down in the front, and when they were talking about those credit cards I know he thought I spent most of it. Is that right, honey?

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Preserving, displaying, and sharing our history, traditions and milestones was the purpose behind the establishment of the Cavalcade of Memories in 1972 at the National Headquarters in Indianapolis. Here to tell us more about how our organization's memorabilia is collected and preserved in our National Cavalcade of Memories is Chairman Kenya Ostermeier.

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: Good morning. Madam President, it was very difficult to choose out of the many creative ideas that Cavalcade chairmen across the country used to pass it on. They not only used their Cavalcade of Memories for commemorating our veterans and Auxiliary leaders and members, but as a tool for publicizing our great organization.

Cruising for Unity was the theme this year for Debbie Sviderskas, Cavalcade Chairman for the Department of Florida.

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: This paragraph is part of her year-end report. "As we pass along the torch to next year's raft of hope, the waves come and go and beat against the boat. To help our veterans, community, and children, I want to let you know how we have stayed afloat." Her approach to engage members to her plan of action was creative and encouraging, also teaching them as they moved through the year. She challenged them to find the answers to clues she presented each month regarding their cavalcades. A correct answer got them a charm. As they completed the clues each participating chairman would have charm bracelet by the end of the year. Great idea!

Through her leadership many units carried out a variety of projects to build up their collection of memories and record current events for future generations. Miami Unit 346 created a beautiful and informative booklet about their activities for the year. Paul W. Airey Unit 382 Chairman Diane Russell reported and saved pictures and stories about the great things their unit accomplished as they added onto their post home to make it larger and added a sprinkler system. They honored World War II veteran Tom Dellatore and wrote a biography of his experiences. Posters featuring his life were on display the whole month of November.

They invited active duty families from Tyndall Air Force Base and the Naval Installation from Panama City to share Thanksgiving dinner with them. A USO-type welcome home show as put on for 45 Vietnam vets. There was so much more there is not time to tell of it all.

Gigi Janesik, Turner-Brandon Unit 7, made a booklet which includes a news clipping from a 1957 installation, before and after pictures of their post home, and a page researching the veterans their post was name for. They were Howard

Turner, killed at sea September 26, 1918; and Ian Brandon, killed in machine gun fire in Belleau Woods, June 4, 1920.

Thanks, Debbie, for creative thinking, engaging members, and carrying our your plan to pass it on.

From the Department of Ohio Gwenda Schroeder-Zulch reports that Masillon Unit 221 has a museum of their own on the second floor of their Post home. It even has the medical items from a MASH Unit.

Here are great pictures of a 1969 baseball team, singers at a membership rally, and a cape used in the 1930's for parades and special events. What a fashion statement! Liz Foster, Historian of New Mexico --

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: -- sent information on their Cavalcade activities. Unit 10 in Las Cruces is fortunate to have created a Cavalcade of Memories that encompasses two rooms in their Post home. Here are some examples of their beautiful displays. The department has created a manual for unit historians and Cavalcade chairmen to use. It explains their duties, procedures, and requirements.

Milan 60 has been mentoring a Junior member who is interested in being a Unit Historian. The department has chosen Past National President Rita Navarreté as their famous Auxiliary member. In an interview with her she states, "I strongly believe I have a responsibility to give back and ensure that everyone knows who we are, what we do, and how we serve in continuing the legacy of the organization."

Liz says that the members of the Department of New Mexico are fortunate to learn from the experiences of Past National President Navarreté. She has a wealth of knowledge and openly shares this knowledge with our members.

Sharon Pearson, Unit 44, Elephant Butte, New Mexico, tells the story of the gourd doll Pride which is residing in their Cavalcade. As their department's theme was Angels Serving Heroes one of their members, Steph Ross, said she would be willing to make an angel with poppy wings. So a group of members went to a local gourd farmer and chose just the right gourds for her body, head, and wings. The different members of their unit added their own special touches to Pride. One member printed the In Flanders Fields poem on her skirt. Others added flag and angel charms for her earrings, and another donated the military emblems attached to her skirt. Auxiliary charms became the buttons on her bodice. Sharon says that Steph worked the real magic that brought her into being. Pride has become the mascot of their unit. They are all very proud of her and love to tell the story of the Auxiliary and its purpose when visitors see her.

Linda Devo, the Department of California Cavalcade Chairman, reports the distinct privilege of having two department presidents whose daughters followed in their footsteps. The first was Jean Brown, 1962-1963, and her daughter, Nancy Brown-Park, 2002-2003.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: The second was Betty Stehouver, 1991-1992, followed by her daughter Bonnie Christner, 2005-2006.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: Of course, Nancy is currently serving as the National President for this year. They have also had the following National Presidents: Eliza London Shepard, 1925-1926; Estella Hanell, 1968-1969; and Josie Melgard, 1985-1986.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: George Tadlock Unit 472 is building an extensive Cavalcade on its website. They were the first electronic unit in the nation. They have an innovative approach to supporting veterans, active duty military, and their families. They have included pictures, stories, documents, interviews, awards, and a local veterans honor roll on their website. A quote from their Cavalcade page says, "The Cavalcade of Memories captures the milestones, moments, and the lifetime of our organization, from trophies, plaques, and pictures to restored artifacts and priceless keepsakes. These treasures from our history have come to us from all over the world. Each item adds more detail to our Auxiliary history books and another chance to relive our most cherished memories." Congratulations, Unit 472 Chairman Lou Thompson, on making technology work at preserving items of the past, present, and future.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: These are just a few of the wonderful reports I received this year, proving that our members do care about preserving our outstanding activities and passing them on to future generations. I would like to recognize my committee, Vice Chairman Lou Thompson, and members Brenda Smith and Carolyn Koveleski. Madam President, this concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That was beautiful, thank you. Thank you. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN OSTERMEIER: No Madam President, there are not.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kenya. Wow, that was really cool. I guess I am a Cavalcade, I've been around so long. Just kind of quickly and a little side note. Right down in front, and if you'll just stand really quickly, is Josie Melgard's family. So I would like for you to all just say, "Hey," this morning.

AUDIENCE: Hey!

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much for being here to share these moments and memories with me. I've been very close to the Melgard family since I was a little tiny girl and they are here to support me, so it's pretty neat.

The Constitution & Bylaws are governing documents that should be known by all members at all levels of the organization. Kathy Dungan, National Constitution & Bylaws National Chairman, will present her report.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Daniel Webster once said, “There is a chart and a compass for us to study, to consult, and to obey. The chart is the Constitution.” Although he was referring to the Constitution of the United States, the same applies to the Auxiliary’s Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules. They are our foundation, our chart. They outline the defining principles that define the Auxiliary, set out the reason we exist, and provide the rules by which we are governed. These documents must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they continue to reflect how the organization is doing business and that our day to day activities still fall within our mission and intended scope of operation.

At last year’s National Convention we adopted a major reorganization of our Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules. Several reasons prompted the major update. In recent years more regulation and oversight of nonprofits have been called for by Congress. The reorganization provides greater transparency and disclosure. Relocation of frequently amended sections to our Standing Rules eliminates the necessity of amending our Constitution & Bylaws every year.

Over the past year departments and units across the country have willingly accepted the task of reviewing and updating their governing documents. Reports from 48 departments were submitted. Seven departments reported adopting Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules similar to National’s. Thirty-four departments report they are at some level of reviewing or revising their governing documents.

The Department of Iowa’s committee met over 300 hours for a complete rewrite of their Constitution & Bylaws. They held a question and answer session prior to the vote at their Department Convention. Chairman Betty Baker stated, “This was a complete reorganization which the committee felt would make it easier for unit members to use and understand.”

The Department of Wisconsin made substantial changes to their Constitution & Bylaws beginning in 2012, with addition changes proposed in 2013. Their goal was to clarify and simplify them to a more concise document by eliminating redundancy. Chairman Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan stated, “The process was ambitious but necessary, and members at the convention embraced the changes.”

In addition to this work departments and units have held many workshops on various topics, including parliamentary procedure. They have answered numerous questions regarding elections, protocol, policies, and procedure. It has been a challenging but productive year for Constitution & Bylaws. Department chairmen are to be commended for their diligent work in reviewing and implementing the revisions. The job does not stop here, though. We must ensure that our members read and understand these governing documents.

Author Jacob Roecker, a Bronze Star medal recipient, and sixth generation U.S. Army member said, “The greatest threat to our Constitution is our own ignorance of it.” So ladies, are you ready for the next challenge?

Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any proposed amendments or resolutions?

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Yes. There is one amendment to the Constitution & Bylaws, and five amendments to the Standing Rules.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You know, last year Peggy got to leave now.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Is that when I go? Can we have some music?

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I would like to remind everyone that if you want to make a motion or an amendment, it needs to be on a motion form per Standing Rule No. 10. Motion forms are located at stage left. Stage left.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: But it says to me -- I'm going to read you my script. It says to me, "Motion forms are located at stage left. Gesture to your right."

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So somebody was trying to trick me. The debate will be limited to two minutes for each speaker. No person shall speak on the same question more than twice without the consent of the Convention. I also remind you that we do have a timer here to fairly enforce the rules. The rules also state that during debate delegates, alternates, guests are to remain seated within their own delegation or assigned seating area unless they are approaching the microphone, completing a motion form, or exiting and entering the general session. Are there any questions? Mikes are located -- I can't see. One here, one there -- is that it? Oh, in the back. Do they have little paper numbers on them? Could somebody kind of tell me because I can't see them.

MS. MENKE: Madam President, Joyce Menke, Department of Wyoming. We're number one.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Number one? Number one. Is that two?

MS. SULLIVAN: Kimberly Sullivan, Department of Florida, number two.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Number three? Number four?

VOICE: -- four.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yay, great. Thank you. Okay. Kathy, let's, so before we get started let's all remember kind of what we talked about during the NEC meeting and in the spirit of goodwill, that we all respect each other. That I have declared this a no bully zone, and we will all, this will all be great. So Kathy, please proceed with presenting the amendments.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: It is the responsibility of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee to bring all proposed amendments to the floor for deliberation apart from the endorsement status by the pre-convention committee. Therefore, regardless of the pre-convention committee's recommendation on the adoption of the amendments, I will on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee move for the adoption of all amendments.

Madam National President, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee presents Amendment No. 1, a proposal from the Department of Arizona to amend Articles 4,

5, and 6 of the National Constitution and Articles 2 and 3 of the Bylaws to change the governance structure to establish elected Second and Third National Vice Presidents whose duties include chairing the National VA&R Committee, and a Third National Vice President whose duties include chairing the National Children & Youth Committee.

Amendment No. 1, a proposal to amend Article 4, National Officers, Section 1, by striking the current section and inserting the following, “The National Organization shall have the following National Officers: National President, National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, National Third Vice President, five National Division Vice Presidents, National Secretary, National Treasurer, National Chaplain, and National Historian.”

And amend Article 4, National Officers, Section 2 by striking the first sentence and inserting the following, “The National Convention shall elect the following term limited national officers: National President, National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, National Third Vice President, National Division Vice Presidents, National Chaplain, and National Historian.” With the proviso that if these amendments are adopted the office of Second Vice President and Third Vice President will not go into effect until the election process at the 2015 National Convention.

And amend Article 4, National Officers, Section 3, by striking the current section and inserting the following, “In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President the National First Vice President shall become President and shall assume the duties and authority of the office. Vacancies occurring between National Conventions in these offices other than National President shall be filled by election by the National Executive Committee and any member of the American Legion Auxiliary in good standing shall be eligible for election to such vacancy provided, however, that no Past National President or Past National First Vice President, Past National Second Vice President, or Past National Third Vice President shall be elected to fill any vacancy in these respective offices.”

This proposal includes the following several consequential amendments as follows. Amend the National Constitution by inserting the word “First” before the words Vice President in all occurrences of the words “National Vice President.” So it will then read “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Constitution Article 5, National Executive Committee, Section 2, by inserting the words, “National Second Vice President, National Third Vice President,” after the words, “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Constitution, Article 5, National Executive Committee, Section 3 by striking the current section and inserting the following, “The National President, National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, and National Third President shall serve as National Executive Committee Chairman, First Vice Chairman, Second Vice Chairman, and Third Vice Chairman, respectively.”

And amend National Constitution, Article 6, National Convention, Section 3 by striking the current section and inserting the following, “The National President, National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, and National Third

Vice President shall be delegates at large to the National Convention with vote to be exercised with their departments, and shall serve as National Convention Chairman, First Vice Chairman, Second Vice Chairman, and Third Vice Chairman, respectively.”

And amend the National Bylaws by inserting the word, “First,” before the words, “Vice President,” in all occurrences of the words, “National Vice President.” So it would then read, “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Bylaws, Article 2, Election of Officers, Sections 1 and 5, by inserting the words, “National Second Vice President, National Third Vice President,” after the words, “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Bylaws, Article 3, Duties of Officers, by striking the current Section 4 and inserting new Sections 4, 5, and 6, with the remaining sections to be renumbered. The new sections to read, Section 4, National Second Vice President, “The National Second Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee. She shall assume such other duties as assigned to her by the National President. In the absence of the National President and the National First Vice President at a meeting of the organization it shall be the duty of the National Second Vice President to be the presiding officer. In the event of a vacancy in the office of National Second Vice President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the office of the National Second Vice President. If the unexpired term of office for National Second Vice President is less than six months the person so named is eligible to election by regular process to the office of National Second Vice President.” Section 5, National Third Vice President, “The National Third Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the Children & Youth Committee. She shall assume such other duties as assigned her by the National President. In the absence of the National President, the National First Vice President, and the National Second Vice President at a meeting of the organization, it shall be the duty of the National Third Vice President to be the presiding officer. In the event of a vacancy in the office of National Third Vice President, the National Executive Committee shall fill the office of the National Third Vice President. If the unexpired term of office for National Third Vice President is less than six months the person so named is eligible to election by regular process of the office of National Third Vice President.” Section 6, “In the absence of the National President, the National First Vice President, the National Second Vice President, and the National Third Vice President, a chairman pro tem shall be elected by the National Executive Committee.”

And amend the National Standing Rules by inserting the word, “First,” before the words, “Vice President,” in all occurrences of the words, “National Vice President,” so it will then read, “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Standing Rule, Article 2, National Convention, Rule 2, and Article 5, National Executive Committee, Rule 7, by inserting the words, “National Second Vice President, National Third Vice President,” after the words, “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Standing Rule, Article 2, National Convention, Rule 3, by striking the following current clause, “The National Vice President shall be the

Vice Chairman,” and inserting the following clause, “The National First Vice President, National Second Vice President, and National Third Vice President shall be First Vice Chairman, Second Vice Chairman, and Third Vice Chairman, respectively.”

And amend National Standing Rules, Article 6, Committees, Core National Standing Committees, Finance, by inserting the words, “National Second Vice President and National Third Vice President,” after the words, “National First Vice President.”

And amend National Standing Rules, Article 4, Duties of National Officers, by inserting the following new duties after the duties of the National First Vice President and before the duties of the National Division Vice Presidents, which will read, “National Second Vice President, one, the National President may authorize the National Second Vice President to attend meetings on her behalf and attend such special meetings on her official department visits,” -- let me start again. I lost my place. Just -- two lines. I’m doing it as fast as I can, I promise. “One, the National President may authorize the National Second Vice President to attend meetings on her behalf and to attend such special meetings or official department visits as she may authorize. Two, the National Second Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee. Three, the National Second Vice President shall not attend department conferences, or conventions, or other functions in any official or unofficial capacity unless specifically authorized to do so by the National President, attendance at her own department conference or convention being the exception. National Third Vice President, one, the National President may authorize the National Third Vice President to attend meetings on her behalf and attend such special meetings or official department visits as she may authorize. Two, the National Third Vice President shall serve as the Chairman of the National Children & Youth Committee. Three, the National Third Vice President shall not attend department conferences or conventions or other functions in an official or unofficial capacity unless specifically authorized to do so by the National President, attendance at her own department conference or convention being the exception.”

And amend National Standing Rules, Article 6, Committees, Core National Standing Committees, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, by inserting the words, “be the National Second Vice President,” and after the words, “be comprised of a chairman who shall.” So if adopted the first sentence shall read, “The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee shall be comprised of a chairman who shall be the National Second Vice President and shall serve a one-year term, three members serving staggered three-year terms, one of whom shall be appointed each year to a three-year term, and a representative from each National Division who shall serve a one-year term.”

And amend National Standing Rules, Article 6, Committees, Core National Standing Committees, Children & Youth, by inserting the words, “who shall be the National Third Vice President,” after the words, “be comprised of a chairman.” So if adopted the first sentence shall read, “The Children & Youth Committee shall be comprised of a chairman who shall be the National Third Vice President, and two

members, plus a representative from each National Division, all of whom shall serve a one-year term.”

The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that this amendment not be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment No. 1.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Holy Toledo. Okay. Before we get started with debate, I think we need to give Kathy a big round of applause.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Holy Toledo. Whew! Okay, the question is on the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as just read. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that the amendment not be adopted. Is there any discussion?

VOICE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I have microphone three.

MS. NELSON: Four.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I have somebody at microphone three, I think.

MS. NELSON: Madam President, Kris Nelson, Department of Minnesota. On behalf of the Centennial Implementation Team, I move that Amendment No. 1 be referred to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee with a request that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee work with the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee under goal number three, developing leadership, and to report back with recommendations to the 2015 Convention.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Do we have a copy? We need a copy of that. It has been moved and seconded -- that was good. Oh it came from a committee? So we don't need a second. So it's been moved. On behalf of the Centennial Implementation Team I move that Amendment No. 1 be referred to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee with the request that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee work with the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee under goal three, developing leadership, and to report back with their recommendations to the 2015 Convention. Is there any discussion?

MS. NEWMAN: Madam Chairman? Microphone four?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Microphone number four?

MS. NEWMAN: Yes. I think --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I need you to give your name and --

MS. NEWMAN: Oh, I'm sorry.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

MS. NEWMAN: Rosey Newman, Department of Indiana. I feel the delegates here this week should vote on this. We do not need committees to tell us what we need to do.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Is there any other discussion?

MS. BLAKE: Madam President?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Microphone number two?

MS. BLAKE: Microphone two. Judy Blake, Department of Arizona. This is my baby, I started this about five years ago. And I am willing after discussions we have had with national leadership at this Convention to in the spirit of developing a culture of goodwill and trust my baby to the care of the National Constitution & Bylaws Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee.

(Applause.)

MS. BLAKE: Our concern all along has never been about any individual who may or may not have served or ever serve as National President. Our concern has always been to protect the democratic right of delegates and members of the American Legion Auxiliary to vote for your national leaders when your vote counts. This year our nation celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Please let us not forget, democracy is like a muscle. It needs to be exercised in order to stay healthy and strong and able to do its job. If it becomes unused, it becomes weak and may eventually atrophy and die. Please care about the fact that you need to be a part of this process. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Is there any other discussion?

MS. KOKERNAK: Madam Chairman, microphone four.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The chair recognizes microphone number four.

MS. KOKERNAK: Thank you. Cindy Kokernak, Department of Virginia. I am a member of the Centennial Planning Team for the next five years. Our team is working very hard to make sure any changes put in place are for the betterment of the organization and I fully support the motion made by Kris Nelson. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Is there any other discussion? Okay, so we're going to vote on the motion. And I'll read it to you again. On behalf of the Centennial Implementation Team I move that Amendment No. 1 be referred to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee with the request that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee work with the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee under goal three, developing leadership, and to report back with recommendations to the 2015 Convention. So the question is on the adoption of the amendment, of the motion, to refer the amendment to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee to work with Long Range Strategic Planning. Are you ready for the question?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All -- oh, everybody stand. Okay, all those in favor of the motion to refer the amendment to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee to work with Long Range Strategic Planning, please press the number one on your keypad. All those opposed, please press the number two on your keypad. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The voting is now closed. Please show the results, and it takes a majority to pass. The amendment has passed.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. I'm trying to find the right page. What page are we on? Okay, but what page are we on? Somehow I got this. Okay. Okay. So I knew this was going to happen. Now I get to leave. So Janet, will you please take the chair? I'm going to go address The American Legion. So I'll be back shortly.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Kathy, please continue.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Okay --

MS. BIGGS: Excuse me, Madam President? May I address the chair?
Microphone two, Anita Biggs, Department of California.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Yes, Anita?

MS. BIGGS: Madam President, Madam President, who just left, stated that the amendment passed instead of stating that the motion had passed. Is that corrected on the stage?

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: The motion to refer to committee was adopted.

MS. BIGGS: Yes, it was just stated that the amendment passed.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: And we will correct that in the proceedings.

MS. BIGGS: Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you, Anita. Now, Kathy?

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Madam President, Standing Rule, Amendment No. 1 was submitted by the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee. The subject is Standing Rules, add a five-member executive committee to the National Executive Committee. A proposal to amend Standing Rules, Section 5, National Executive Committee, to read as follows, "11, as provided in the ALA National Bylaws and enacted by the National Convention, there shall be a national intermediate body, the Executive Committee to the National Executive Committee, that shall be subordinate to the National Executive Committee, and shall report to, be accountable to, and its actions ratified by the National Executive Committee. The National President, National Vice President, National Secretary, National Treasurer, and National Finance Committee Chairman shall comprise the Executive Committee to the National Executive Committee. The purpose of the Executive Committee to the National Executive Committee shall be, one, to review, research, and make recommendations to the NEC on matters requiring NEC action. Two, to address and act on time sensitive matters subject to ratification by the NEC." The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends that this Standing Rule Amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of the Standing Rules Amendment No. 1 as read.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: The question is on adoption of Standing Rule No. 1 as read. Is there any discussion? Is there any discussion? Are you ready for the question?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All those in favor of Standing Rules Amendment No. 1, please press the number one key on your voting keypad. All those opposed, please press the number two. Everybody standing, please vote now.

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All right. Voting is now closed. Please show the results. This takes a two-thirds vote to pass. Motion is adopted.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Kathy, please continue.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Madam National President, Standing Rules Amendment No. 2 was submitted by the National Constitution & Bylaws Committee. The subject is on increasing by two the number comprising the National Constitution & Bylaws Committee. This proposal to amend Standing Rules, Section 6, by striking two and inserting four so that it will read as follows. "Constitution & Bylaws, the Constitution & Bylaws Committee shall be comprised of a chairman and four members, all of whom shall serve a one-year term. The purpose of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee is to inform members about having proper governing documents at all levels." The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 2 as read.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: The question is on the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 2 as just read. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Microphone four?

VOICE: Madam Chairman, as we have seen last year and this year, our Constitution is very important and the revisions very intense and necessary to be correct. If it takes two more members to do it correctly, I move that we do adopt this resolution. Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you. Is there any other discussion? Are you ready for the question?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All those in favor of Standing Rules Amendment No. 2, please press the number one key on your voting keypad. All those opposed, please number two. Vote now.

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: This also takes two-thirds vote to pass. Please show the results. The amendment passes. Kathy?

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Madam National President, Standing Rules Amendment No. 3 was submitted by the National Education Committee. The subject is on reducing by one the number comprising the National Executive Committee. This is a proposal to amend Standing Rules, Section 6 by striking three and inserting two to read as follows. "Education," -- oh, I said Executive? I'm sorry. I'm talking about the Education Committee.

The subject is on reducing by one the number comprising the National Education Committee. This is a proposal to amend the Standing Rules, Section 6, by

striking three and inserting two to read as follows. "Education, the Education Committee shall be comprised of a chairman serving a one-year term, two members serving staggered two-year terms, one of whom shall be appointed each year to serve a two-year term, plus a representative from each National Division, all of whom shall serve a one-year term, with the following proviso: the 2014-2015 American Legion Auxiliary National President will not be making a multiyear appointment to the National Education Committee. By not making a multiyear appointment for 2014-2015, the composition of the committee will be reduced by one and the current appointees will fulfill the remainder of their existing terms." The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment not be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee I move the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 3 as just read.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: The question is on the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 3 as just read. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment not be adopted. Is there any discussion?

MS. POREMPSKI: Yes, Madam President, microphone one.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Microphone one?

MS. POREMPSKI: Karyn Porempski, delegate from the Department of New York, and I am also a member of the Education Committee. I speak in opposition to this resolution, and there is definitely a need for the fourth member as a learning experience for her. I will tell you when you receive that big book --

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: I've got it.

MS. POREMPSKI: -- of Samsung applications in August, it's a daunting task and you go into panic mode. So I would, you need that other fourth member and those other three members to guide her to let her know how to do that judging. So she would need that time, which would actually be wonderful for her to be able to have that time to be educated by the other members on how to do that judging. And also you could use that member to do extra bulletins and other administrative uses. So if you, I would like you to remember that the American Legion is not designating that we cannot have the fourth member. They are just saying that there will only be three members at the conference table at the spring and fall meetings in Indianapolis. Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you.

MS. CRAIG: Madam --

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Microphone number four.

MS. CRAIG: Yes. Flora Jean Craig, Department of North Carolina. I also am serving as a member of the National Education Committee and I too am opposed to this amendment. I think always that the American Legion Auxiliary should make decisions based on what is good for us and not because it has anything to do with what the American Legion is doing. And this, we have had a four-member committee for 40 years. It has served us well. I too say, as Karyn did, it was daunting to receive that notebook of Samsung scholarships. And fortunately I had some folks who helped me. But I think it would be good for those, the two-year member and the three-year member to work with this new person during that first

year so that when she receives the scholarships the following year she won't panic as we did. I think it is important, again, to understand that we do what we do because it is good for us and not because of what any decision the American Legion makes. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Microphone number one?

MS. DUSCHECK: Diane Duscheck, Department of Wisconsin, Chairman of the Education Committee. In the yellow Policies & Procedures book from 1999 it states that in 1981 we had a standing committee on education that we increased with one additional member, and then we set up the rotation of members so that they would have three-year appointments. So that was in 1981. We have always had three members that have been able to be at the table now with The American Legion. And the nice thing about having, it was three members and the chairman. Now we're going to have only two members and the chairman that are able to go to that table. And one of the things about that is when you receive that notebook it comes with directions, number one. So you read them, and then you read through all the applications. The Legion is not going to be sending a notebook to somebody who is not going to be coming to the table to judge those applications most likely, because it has sensitive information that has to be turned back in. That leaves one person out.

Later on in the year when we look at Children of Warriors Scholarships in order to review those, again, a lot of paperwork. Again, it comes with directions, you read all the applications. But if the Legion is only going to send these to the members who are coming to the table, again we will have one person who is left out. That one person who gets left out isn't going to have the opportunity to learn about judging scholarships. And for those of you who have judged scholarships, you follow the directions. There is a check sheet. You look at what the application has. And then you put things in order and make a judgment from that.

The amendment that there is does not interfere with the people who have appointments now as members on the committee. The motion doesn't interfere with the division chairmen, who will continue communicating with their departments. So that is not impacted at all.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Time. I'm sorry.

MS. DUSCHECK: Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you. Is there any other discussion? Are you ready for the question?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All right. Just for clarification, the Pre-Convention Constitution & Bylaws Committee recommended that the amendment not be adopted. The question on the floor is for the adoption of the change in the Standing Rule. So you are not voting on the recommendation but on the motion to adopt Standing Rule Amendment No. 3. Everybody clear? All right. Please stand. All those in favor of Standing Rules Amendment No. 3, press the number one key. All those opposed, press number two.

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Again, this will take a two-thirds vote to pass. Please show the results. The motion is defeated.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Kathy?

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Madam National President, Standing Rules Amendment No. 4 was submitted by the National Leadership Committee. The subject is on increasing five National Division representatives, the number comprising the National Leadership Committee. The proposal to amend Standing Rules, Section 6, by inserting the words, "plus a representative from each National Division," after the words, "three members," to read as follows. "Leadership, the Leadership Committee shall be comprised of a chairman plus three members, plus a representative from each National Division, all of whom shall serve a one-year term." The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 4 as just read.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: The question is on the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 4 as just read. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Are you ready for the question? All right, please stand. Okay, thank you. Microphone number two?

MS. EPPERSON: Toni Epperson, the Department of Oregon. I stated at our caucus or somewhere else that I think we need to use our Divisional Vice Presidents. And if it means they have to go to a stronger leadership class and use them as they visit the states to, instead of having five more people.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you. Is there any other discussion? Microphone number two?

MS. GROUT: Four.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Four, sorry.

MS. GROUT: Good morning. I'm Coral Grout, National Leadership Chairman. Please excuse my voice, I can't talk. But our committee is one of the smallest committees. With the goals that have been addressed in the strategic plan, four people cannot undertake the responsibilities. The divisional people would be there to assist us by making contacts with each of the department chairmen. With our four-member committee this year, we divided up an entire division alphabetically to make contact. It didn't work. And if we are going to develop leaders across this organization, we need more leaders on this committee to make that a reality. Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you. Microphone number four?

MS. WALLACE: Eva Wallace, delegate, Department of Washington. I have been serving as the Department Leadership Chairman and I felt all of the pressure went to our national chairmen as we had no other resources to go to for questions and whatever was going on. It all fell on one person.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you. Is there any other discussion? Are you ready for the question now? Yes? All right. Please stand. All those in

favor of Standing Rules Amendment No. 4, please press the number one on your keypad. All those opposed, press number two.

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All right. Please show the results.

Amendment is adopted.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All right. We're going to jump around here a little because we have some special guests. It is my pleasure to introduce you to the delegate from the Veterans Affairs Republic of China. Each year they host the Legion Family during our visit to Taiwan. Here with us today is Deputy Minister Chin, accompanied by Retired Major General Leon Shaw representing the Veterans Affairs Commission of the Republic of China. Let's give them a warm welcome.

(Music.)

MR. CHIN: Thank you. Thank you, everybody, thank you. Be seated, please. National President Brown-Park, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am greatly honored to attend and address your National Convention on behalf of my colleagues and my fellow veterans in Taiwan. I wish you a successful 2014 National Convention and a wonderful stay during the week.

You, the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary have been very successful in volunteering yourselves and serving veterans and their families. And the veterans are proud of your efforts to make America strong and safer. Your achievements in developing voluntary services and the fundraising are the role models for our ladies in Taiwan. We salute you and hope that our veterans' dependents can learn from your services in the future.

Our country cherishes your friendship very much. Our President Ma Ying-jeou invited your leaders to exchange views on veterans services. He also expressed his appreciation for the strong support you have given us, the Republic of China on Taiwan, over the past years. Taiwan is a beautiful island. Your National President Brown-Park and many of the Past National Presidents have visited there and must have some wonderful memories to share with you. Our two organizations have associated with each other for nearly 60 years. We appreciate this relationship very much. We hope when you visit Southeast Asia in the future you will find time to visit us, too.

Once again, thank you very much indeed for allowing me to address your National Annual Convention. And I wish you all good health and happiness. Thank you. Xie xie. Xie xie da jia. Xie xie.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: And thank you, Deputy Minister Chin. And on behalf of Nancy Brown-Park, I know how much she enjoyed her visit with you and she has made fond memories and she shared those memories with many of us. So on behalf of President Nancy, that's a little gift for you.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MR. CHIN: Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. Thank you. Oh great, thank you. You're not done?

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Uh-uh. We saved the best for last.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Madam Vice President. Okay. Oh, Kathy, would you like to continue? I think Kathy left.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Madam National President, Standing Rule Amendment No. 5 was submitted by the National Audit Committee. The subject is on granting voting privileges to two liaison members of the National Audit Committee and prohibiting each from chairing the committee. The proposal to amend Standing Rules, Section 6, by substitution a new section for the current section to read as follows. "Audit, the Audit Committee shall be comprised of a chairman and two members, each serving staggered three-year terms, one of whom shall be appointed each year by the National President, and two liaison members, one of whom shall be recommended each year by the National Finance Committee and one of whom shall be a member of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board of Directors recommended each year by the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation to the National President for appointment. The National President shall appoint the chairman from among those who are not liaison members." The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 5 as just read.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kathy. The question is on the adoption of Standing Rule Amendment No. 5 as just read. The Constitution & Bylaws Pre-Convention Committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Are you ready for the question?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: All those in favor of Standing Rules -- you know the drill now, right? All those in favor of Standing Rule Amendment No. 5, please press the number one on your voting keypad. All those opposed, please press the number two key.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Voting is now closed. Please show the results. The affirmative has it and the amendment is adopted. Thank you -- oh. Thank you, Kathy. Thank you, Kathy, for an incredible job. Well done. Get over here.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much, Kathy.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Kathy did an awesome job. This is, I had to do this one time and it is not easy. So thank you for all your hard work, and your committee. We really appreciate it. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN DUNGAN: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Would the National Secretary read the announcements?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Remember we are live streaming this Convention, which means that you were on television again today. So for everybody who is watching, let's all say hi!

AUDIENCE: Hi!

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Y'all, y'all say hi. And remember to remind your friends they can watch this on their computers. Also, the badge scanning, just a little FYI. Technology is wonderful and it's always especially exciting when the software company decides to do an upgrade of the software about the same time you are all entering the Convention Hall yesterday morning. So that was the little glitch. It wasn't, it was just that the software was evidently going through an update and that just caused a delay. So hopefully it will be a lot smoother.

Tickets. A few States Dinner tickets are still available for purchase at the Auxiliary Staff Offices in Ballroom A and B. They are \$50 each. Also, if you do not have a ticket to the Woman of the Year Luncheon there may be a few available. They are \$40, again at the ALA Convention Office in Ballroom A and B. If any department, any individual has tickets you want to hawk you need to go to the Convention Auxiliary Office and stand outside as if you were on a sidewalk in front of an arena.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: How's that for efficiency? Also, there is another program correction to note on page 129. This is our mistake. At the top right column, Sharon Doran should be listed as National Historian. She also chairs all the work that is done for the History Committee, for the National Histories, but she is the National Historian and we apologize for that mistake.

Also a note about the Convention Guide. Now the mistake that was not our fault, the mistake that was not our fault was a vendor error on the misspell, or the reversal of the National President's name on page five. There were, we are having a supply printed, departments will receive those, Nancy will have those. That is an annual report and I just want to give you all just a real brief explanation. Every year departments want that deadline pushed farther and farther back and every year we still have a hard and fast deadline for when it has to go to the printer. It goes to the printer that first Monday or Tuesday after the Fourth of July. So every year since I have been with this organization my Fourth of July weekend is working 20- and 22-hour days with about a half a dozen other people trying to get the Convention Guide completed because a lot of that information doesn't come in from all y'all till June. So little things like that are going to happen because of the compressed timeframe to get it done. So I just want you to understand that yes, it is the end of August and you are here at National Convention. But that Convention Guide has gone to the printer

the first of July, the early part of July. So we really don't have a lot of time to get that turned around. It is an annual report. It is an external document and because it is a historical document for the organization we do want the National President's name in the correct spelling on page five. So we will have some additional copies printed and sent to you for your Cavalcades. So Jim, you get to be James Brown for a few people. But for the history you are going to be, it is going to be Nancy Brown-Park. Okay?

So in the spirit of goodwill, do we all have peace, and goodwill, and cheer, an all of that for us? Thank you.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: All right. Also, there are going to be several committee meetings for the 2014-2015 national committees. I'm just going to go down. The 2014-2015 National Community Service Committee at 4:00 p.m. today in Hilton Hotel, room 1801. Hilton Hotel, room 1801, 4:00 p.m. today.

The 2014-2015 Education Committee upon adjournment of the Woman of the Year Luncheon, by table ten. Education, upon adjournment of the Woman of the Year Luncheon, by table 10.

Junior Activities Committee, upon adjournment of the Woman of the Year Luncheon, at the back of the room.

The Leadership Committee, upon adjournment of the Woman of the Year Luncheon, by table 26.

The PR Committee, after the Woman of the Year Luncheon, in the Westin Hotel, room 2234.

The Poppy Committee, after the Woman of the Year Luncheon, in the Hilton Hotel, in the Piedmont Ballroom. I'll have these up here if anybody needs those.

Also, I want to remind you all that we lost a dear friend, North Carolina's National Executive Committeeman, Jerry Hedrick, also the National Convention Chair. His services, I'm looking because I was told this might be put up on the screen for you and I don't see it. Oh, okay. Condolences may be sent to his wife Marie. Visitation -- so you have that information. I'm not going to read that. Visitation, the visitation will be in Lexington, North Carolina from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday. I share that because a lot of your friends here from North Carolina and a lot of the Legion leadership will be going to this so there will be some absences from the States Dinner. And I just think everybody ought to understand and respect why certain people may not be there. The funeral will be in Lexington on Thursday, and the burial will be on Friday. So you have that information. Thank you very much. Madam President, that concludes my announcements.

Oh -- I'm sorry. It does not conclude my announcements. Those on stage for today's joint session with the American Legion need to be in Hall A by 10:25.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay, well we'll hurry. The Woman of the Year Luncheon -- okay, I'm sorry. Now I'm caught up. Okay. The Woman of the Year Luncheon will begin at approximately 1:30. I mean, it will begin when we all get there but it is still scheduled to start at 1:30. The National Commander's

Reception is this evening at 5:15 p.m. and the banquet starts at 6:30 p.m. Okay. Now that concludes my announcements.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Tell Peggy she forgot her stuff. Okay, so just quickly, because I love to tell the story. And so I'm going to tell you that, the James Brown story. So when, Jim when we got married, we were married by a Superior Court Judge who was a very close friend family, and we were married in the chapel where my parents were married many, many years before that. So as we were there we had somebody that played the music, and he was there. So Jim said he really wanted to be James Brown. I said, "You can't be James Brown. I'm Nancy Park." So when we were going through rehearsal, the Judge, he said, okay, we're going to do this, and I'll do this, and then we'll turn around, and you'll turn, and I'll introduce you. So he said, "Let's practice." We said, "Okay." So we didn't know this was going to happen. So we did, and he said, "Okay, turn. I'd like to introduce to you Mr. and Mrs. James Brown."

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And at that point the musician went, "Da-da-da-da-da-da, I feel good."

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So that's how the James Brown story came. So Nancy Brown-Park, Nancy Park-Brown, it all works for me. So thank you. So we are adjourned now until tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m. See you over at the American Legion, and for you attending the Luncheon, we'll see you there."

(Whereupon, at 10:26 a.m. on Tuesday, August 26, 2014, the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2014

THE NARRATOR: Pass it on. The 94th American Legion Auxiliary National Conventional. Here to begin our session is your National President, Nancy Brown-Park.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Did everybody have fun last night at the banquet?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I love that Margaritaville. It was really fun. I had a great time.

So does everybody have a seat before we get started? I know you all have seats, but do you have a seat?

VOICE: We have a chair.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: A chair. So let me just quickly tell a little story before we get started while everybody finds their chairs.

So yesterday, you know, we went to The American Legion and I got to meet the President of the United States.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That was pretty incredible. That was the second time I had seen -- actually had seen him several times, but mostly on the big screen. So it was live, but he was there and I was here. But yesterday Jim and I, the First Dude, had the opportunity to go back and have our pictures taken with him.

Well, when we were at Girls Nation, and I don't know if you know this, but each of the girls, and I think Trish shared this during her report, had an honor their service button. And they -- we asked the girls to send their eligibility or their veteran or somebody they admired.

So we did that. And when we went to the White House, each girl had their button. But we had buttons Trish had made for his daughters with his grandfather who was a veteran. We didn't get a chance to give them to him at Girls Nation.

So I got clearance to do it yesterday when I had my picture taken 'cause I didn't want somebody to chop off my arm because I was handing the President something.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I said, okay. So he -- they said fine. So Jim and I got up there and I said it's so nice to see you again, Mr. President. We met at the White House when I was there for Girls Nation. He said I remember that. Okay, okay.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I remember that, although I did realize I had that same black and white jacket on, so he may have remembered me, right?

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I said when we were at Girls Nation and I told him the story that we had our buttons. And we had these made for your daughters, but I didn't get a chance to give them to you. And he took the buttons and he just went this is so incredible, this is great. Wow, I can't believe this bridges the gap between the generations. And he looks down and he goes this is my grandpa. And then he had to tell everybody in the room and show everybody that this was his grandpa.

So I'm hoping that he takes those buttons back to his girls so that they will be able to honor the service of their grandfather. So it was an incredible moment for me and I -- I can't tell you how amazing it was.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So -- so it was really great.

So we're going to get started. On stage this morning is the POW-MIA empty chair, a symbol of our ongoing support for those missing or captured in wartime. The empty chair and empty table during meal functions is loaded with symbolism and metaphors that help remind us of the fate of those lost and missing.

Sometimes we get lost in the symbolism and forget our remembrance. It's really about real people. Often they never come home, yet we vow to never forget. But sometimes they do come home with the help of a little prayer and support from patriotic Americans often unknown to them.

During the Vietnam War, tens of thousands of caring U.S. citizens wore POW bracelets in silent support of those prisoners. This is a story of patriotism and compassion passed on from mother to daughter. It's a story of incredible suffering, faith, and an enduring belief in America.

And it's the story of a little girl who wore a POW bracelet with love and hope that some day the man whose name was inscribed on her bracelet would one day come home. So let's watch.

(Video ensues:)

MR. McGRATH: My name is John Michael McGrath. I'm a retired Navy captain and I flew in the Vietnam War.

THE NARRATOR: After graduating from the United States Naval Academy, Mike, as he likes to be called, earned his wings on November 22nd, 1963, the day President Kennedy was shot. With a wife and two young sons, Lieutenant McGrath headed to Vietnam.

MR. McGRATH: I joined my first squadron, the Tach Squadron VA146 in Lamore, California. There I -- in the first year of the war, '65, '66, I completed 157 combat missions flying off the decks of the USS Ranger. After eight months retraining and I re -- I rejoined the war in 1967 where I flew a total of 179 combat missions in north Vietnam.

THE NARRATOR: On June 30th, 1967, Lieutenant McGrath took off from the USS Constellation flying an A46 like this one. Right after firing on a north Vietnamese bridge, he was hit by enemy fire just south of Hanoi.

MR. McGRATH: My wing was torn apart. My airplane went into a spin and I had to eject. During the ejection, I was injured with compression fractures, a

broken arm, and a dislocated knee. So after a few swings of the shoot, I was captured by enemy troops.

THE NARRATOR: In his book *Prisoner of War, Six Years in Hanoi*, Captain McGrath drew many illustrations that demonstrated the horrors of his treatment by the north Vietnamese.

MR. McGRATH: I was taken to Hanoi where I expected medical treatment. But in Hanoi, I jumped into the experience that 476 POWs in north Vietnam experienced. I was immediately put into torture.

After two weeks of torture, they finally broke me. I started giving them distortions and lies and made up stories, anything I could to keep the enemy from getting anything of value.

For the next almost six years, I spent my time in the Hanoi Hilton or the auxiliary camps around the Hilton and I got to experience all of the -- the horrors of being a prisoner of war in a communist prison camp.

The Vietnamese denied us everything and they interrogated us daily and they were trying to destroy our faith in our God, faith in our country, faith in our President, faith in our military. Everything we believed in, they tried to subordinate and put down and destroy. But they failed. They failed miserably.

THE NARRATOR: Through faith and determination, POW McGrath endured and lived for the day he might return home.

VOICE: I have asked for this radio and television time tonight for the purpose of announcing that we today have concluded an agreement to end the war and bring peace with honor in Vietnam.

MR. McGRATH: People were overjoyed. They were overjoyed that the war was over and their prisoners were returned. And then I found out about a program, a program where people wore bracelets in memory of us and support of us with their prayers.

And, you know, I suppose one of those people wore one of my bracelets while I was a prisoner of war.

THE NARRATOR: Captain McGrath supposed correctly.

VOICE: During Nancy Brown-Park's homecoming in California last October, I met Doreen Long, the daughter of Past National President Josie Melgard. She told me about a POW bracelet her mother had given her when she was a child.

Doreen found that bracelet recently when she was going through her mother's things after her mom's death. I offered to Doreen to help her find the man whose name was engraved on the bracelet she'd worn. This is the letter she wrote me after our meeting.

Hi, Karen. It was nice to have met you at Nancy's homecoming. I hope your trip back to Colorado was pleasant. I'm excited to know that you are on board to help me in my search for my POW whose bracelet I just recently found.

I believe my mom gave me this bracelet in either 1967 or '68 from an Auxiliary even to raise funds for our POWs and MIAs. I wore it proudly for a good year or so and was always wondering what could have happened to my lost soldier along with who he was. Was he suffering? How old was he? Did he have a wife or children? How is his family doing?

So many questions. I was only 10 or 11 at the time and alas after a year or so went by, I put the bracelet aside and soon life took hold of me and the bracelet slipped further to the back of my mind. I would think of my soldier occasionally, but in that day and age, there was really no way of searching, at least not by my own means.

My mother passed away in 2011 and slowly my sisters and I had been going through her belongings and finally cleaning out our own belongings that were left behind in long forgotten boxes.

A few days before Nancy's homecoming, I was going through one of those boxes and came across my small porcelain jewelry box and lifting the lid, there lay the bracelet bearing the name of Lieutenant John McGrath captured 6/30/67.

Well, right away it was a no brainer. I turned to the internet. Immediately the first article I pulled up was one detailing his capture and his ultimate release six years later. I was so elated. My lieutenant was found. He not only was found, but he had been awarded some of the most prestigious medals a veteran can receive.

He had even written a book about his experience in captivity which I plan on purchasing soon and one day I hope to find Lieutenant McGrath, tell him how proud I am of his service and sacrifice, tell him my prayers as a young child were answered, and to finally return this bracelet to a man who is very much alive who probably had to overcome the most horrendous and terrifying of circumstances any human could ever endure, a man who is a true hero in every sense of the word.

Well, if you've managed to get through this mail, Karen, I'm hoping you're still on board to help me on this journey to find Lieutenant McGrath. Thank you again. It was so nice to have met you and to be able to share this story with you. Sincerely, Doreen Long.

Well, Doreen, you don't have to wait any longer. Would you please join me in giving a warm Auxiliary welcome to retired Navy Captain Mike McGrath.

(Applause.)

MR. McGRATH: Thank you, Nancy, and thank you to the Auxiliary for inviting me to say a few words.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please.

MR. McGRATH: This is an exciting moment. Thank you very much.

You know, 50 years ago, 50 years ago this month, Everett Alvarez was shot down. I'm going to go see him next week. He's a friend of mine. He spent almost nine years as a prisoner of war. Floyd Thompson was there nine years. Everett Alvarez was four months short. And they were -- they were our longest held prisoners of war.

I was shot down a couple years later. I joined them and spent those tough years in the prisons of Hanoi. Now, as you know, conditions were tough. There was lots of torture for everyone. For six years, I never sat in a chair. I lived on the floor.

I never had a bed, a pair of shoes, a pair of socks. I didn't have paper. I didn't have a pencil. I didn't have a Bible, didn't have communication with my family. They didn't know if I was dead or alive. I was missing in action.

And that's the way they kept us. They kept us in the dark. We didn't even know a man landed on the moon and -- but we got through all that because we had

lots of secret weapons. One, we had faith in America. We had faith in our families and our God and our country and our President and we had them -- we had them behind us.

And there's another secret weapon, too. We had people like you. How many in here, I just want to see a raise of hands, wore this bracelet during the Vietnam War?

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

MR. McGRATH: See those hands go up? So you know what I'm talking about. The Auxiliary, the mothers, the daughters, Doreen, they were our secret weapon. You guys never forgot us and guess what? We got home. We found out about this program and we never forgot you.

So, you know, what a connection. Here we are full circle. Now, some more of the secret weapons. We had great leadership. We had people like Jim Stockdale (phonetic), Stockdale, Bud Day, Jerry Denton. We had these great leaders that said our motto is to return with honor.

And that we did. We held our heads high and five, six, seven, eight years later, we walked out of the Hanoi Hilton with our heads held high and returned with honor.

So what I'm going to pass on to you --

(Applause.)

MR. McGRATH: -- I think we -- and we continue to serve. We -- we were all walks of life. But what I'm going to turn on to you is it's your turn. We're going to pass it on because now our time from the Vietnam War has past. We've closed that loop and it's now your time as the Auxiliary. You have to support our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Middle East, and all over the world where our troops serve.

So I want to pass that baton on to you and I want to thank you. And I'm going to close just with a thought which sums it up by one of the greatest speeches that I know of, two sentences.

Jerry Denton when he got off the airplane after eight years as a prisoner of war, Admiral Giler (phonetic) met him at the -- at the airplane and said, Jerry, would you like to say a few words to the Americans, the American public. And -- and Jerry said, well, yes, I would. And he said we are thankful to our President and our nation for this day. We are proud to have had this opportunity to serve our country during difficult times. God bless America.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. LONG: Pardon me if I'm a bit nervous. This was a total surprise and I just want to say how -- how happy I am to be here standing before this man. What an honor. I -- I -- and he looks so good.

(Laughter.)

MS. LONG: So handsome, just like I imagined him. I thank you all for -- for this journey and like I -- it has come full circle. And I am so proud of your service and -- and to have worn that bracelet so long ago. And to have seen it again was -- was such an incredible experience. And now to -- to give it back.

MR. McGRATH: Thank you.

MS. LONG: Thank you so much, Lieutenant Colonel McGrath. I don't -- (Applause.)

MS. LONG: Can I have you sign this for me?

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Doreen has -- carries his book with her. And so the -- she's got some pretty sneaky sisters who were able to -- she said how did they get this bracelet. So they've been -- we've been working on this.

But this is an incredible moment to be able to be here and to share this and to be able to meet Captain McGrath and knowing -- I've known Doreen since she was that little tiny girl that wore that bracelet, incredible life stories together that we have, and to be able to see this happen is just absolutely incredible. And it's -- you know me, I'm never at a loss for words, but right now I think I am.

So thank you both. Thank you, Melgard family, for making this happen. And thank you, everybody. And thank you so much for your service and what you did for our country.

MR. McGRATH: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow. It's why we do what we do, isn't it?

And now I'm very excited about a special gift we will present today to a deserving wounded warrior. I'd like to ask National Secretary Dubbie Buckler to come up and tell us about it.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I'm sorry. I can't see right now. So this is what you call winging it till I can get my eyes focused.

How many of you remember -- excuse me. I do apologize. Okay. How many of you remember about three years ago a company called the Mattress Firm wanted to do something around Veterans Day and donate a mattress, a therapeutic mattress to a deserving veteran? And they wanted to do it in several markets. And that grew to 44 therapeutic mattress sets in 44 Mattress Firm markets across the United States. Many of you remember that?

Well -- and several of you asked me the next year are we going to do that again. Well, identifying the people, getting the stories, getting that arranged, that was a pretty big project. So the Mattress Firm, it was just more than everybody was -- could take on at the time.

So a couple years had gone by and then we -- they contacted me about a question about something totally unrelated. And I said you know what would really be -- could -- would you consider donating a mattress again. But rather than doing it as a really big project across the country all at the same time, what if we turned it into a service project each year at our National Convention host city so that the host Convention Committee could identify a veteran, a deserving veteran, work with the Mattress Firm and their local representative, and make another wonderful story really happen.

And that happened here in Charlotte. So the Mattress Firm was delighted to do that and I'm delighted to share with you that going forward at each of our National Conventions that will be one of the service projects for the Mattress Firm to make -- isn't that wonderful --

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- to make a therapeutic mattress donation. And I don't know how many of you have gone out and priced some of these, but the therapeutic mattress sets can be in the four, five, six, seven, eight thousand dollar range. These are not your \$399 Labor Day weekend specials. These are -- these are -- these are very special mattress sets.

And so Martha Corriher who is the Convention Chairman this year for North Carolina -- this is your -- this is your cue to give it up in North Carolina. That was a little lame. Okay. So Martha Corriher who was -- is your Convention Chair here in North Carolina --

VOICES: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- she did just that. She worked with your VA and our committee in North Carolina. And you did identify a very deserving veteran. And so I can tell you that his name is Jessie. I can tell you that -- oh, no. Is that your part?

Oh, I will not tell you any more about that. Did I tell you that I'm still not able to -- okay. So that's the background. Tell me when to jump in since I can't -- tell me -- tell me when you're ready to jump in with your part.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'm ready when you're ready.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. Well, come up here and join me since I can't see.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. Here we go.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You can't talk about yourself. Okay.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So Dubbie has played a huge part in the -- role in the American Legion Auxiliary's partnership with Mattress Firm. So thank you, Dubbie, for everything that you did. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So our wounded warrior, Jessie Fletcher, was a Marine sniper who lost both of his legs and parts of several fingers when he stepped on an IED in Afghanistan in October 2011. We appreciate his service and sacrifice and we wish he could join us on stage today, but he recently suffered a personal loss when his friend, a fellow marine, passed away a couple of days ago.

So joining me on stage this morning to accept this gracious gift from Mattress Firm on Jessie's behalf are Senior Master Sergeant Neal Burgess who currently is serving with the 145th Air Wing -- left -- Lift Air Wing of the North Carolina Air National Guard, and he's my driver, and he's just a really cool dude, and Mattress Firm representative Cricket Goforth, and Martha Corriher who played a large role in helping us with this project.

So let's give them all a great big hand.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CORRIHER: I spoke to Jessie a few days ago and he sends his apologies for not being able to be here, but he just mentally couldn't handle

everything, that he feels that he is not deserving of this honor. And I told him, I said, listen, Jessie, mama bear's got your back and you are very deserving.

But he thanks Mattress Firm and he thanks you for the support that you give all active-duty military around the country and the world and for the veterans that you serve. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. GOFORTH: Wow. They said this was a large room and they weren't kidding. So I just wanted to -- you know, I was here when -- I was able to actually go out to the veteran's home when we did this in Charlotte three years ago and that was just an amazing experience.

And to be able to be here again and to be able to partnership with such a phenomenal organization like the Auxiliary is truly meaningful to me, but also to Mattress Firm as a whole. So we pride ourselves on doing a lot of community service and to me, this is probably one of the most important things that we can do is to be able to give back to the men and women that serve and that protect us every single day.

So we are extremely excited about the opportunity going forward to be able to partnership with you guys in every city that you go to and to be able to give such a deserving person the opportunity for a better night sleep and to hopefully help their lives as they help ours.

So thank you all so much for that opportunity.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The 94th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will come to order.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Welcome, everyone, to today's session. Please remember to silence all your electronic devices. Thank you.

As -- at this time, I would like to ask National Chairman Shelley Riggs to come forward and give her invocation.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Let us pray. Dear God, we thank you for another beautiful day and what an incredible moment we just had. And we know that you were a part of that moment.

Thank you for attending our meetings and from the opening prayer, all of our -- all can feel your presence floating softly in the air. You guide us through our meeting with lessons from above. At times, they can seem impossible, but are sprinkled with your love.

When our meeting is over and the closing prayer is read, know that you go with us and face what lies ahead. We go our separate ways, but listen for your command 'cause you hold our very soul clutched tightly in the hand.

Blessed by our God, Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Shelley.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The next business this morning is the nomination of National Officers for the 2014-2014 -- 2015 administrative year.

Representatives making the nominations as well as candidates are to be seated on the stage. Dobbie Buckler, National Secretary will read the rules governing nominations.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Nomination of candidates for Division National Vice President shall be at the caucuses on Saturday, August 23rd, 2014.

Nomination of candidates for the Office of National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be on Wednesday, August 27th, 2014.

Nomination of the National Officers shall be made from the floor. Nominating speeches shall be limited to two minutes for each candidate except the National President candidates. She will be allowed four minutes. There shall be no seconding speeches.

After nominating speeches for National Officers on Wednesday, August 27th, 2014, each of the nominees for National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be introduced to the assembly by the Auxiliary member making her nomination, said introduction to be only by name and department affiliation.

And in response to the introduction, the nominee for office shall be allowed a maximum of two minutes for remarks.

Madam National President, that completes the reading of the nomination rules.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Nominations are now in order for the office of National President. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Department of Connecticut has an announced candidate for the office of National President. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purpose of the nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Connecticut for the purpose of making a nomination.

CHAIRMAN GOEWY: Madam President, Helen Goewey, Delegate Chairman, Department of Connecticut, requests that you recognize Carlyn (phonetic) and Morgan Jefford for the purpose of nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. I do that. It's not in my script. Okay. We got it now. First one. You know, it will be easy now.

MS. JEFFORD: Good morning, National President Nancy, officers, delegates, and guests of this Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary. My name is Morgan Jefford and I am proud to present to you Connecticut's endorsed candidate for National President 2014 through 2015.

My grandmother, Janet Jefford, or as I call her, my babshi (phonetic), is a 46-year member of the Goodale Rameker Unit 56 of Glastonbury, Connecticut.

While she has held numerous offices and chairmanships in her unit, district and department, as Unit President, she earned the Unit President of the Year Award and, again, as District President the District President of the Year Award.

For as long as I have known her, my grandmother has put everything into the American Legion Auxiliary. She has been doing her part in changing lives one person in need at a time.

My brother and I have learned a lot from my grandmother's example. All of our closest relatives are part of the Legion family including my mother, Carlyn Jefford; my father, Christopher Jefford; my younger brother, Lucas; and my Uncle Willy Jefford. And we are all very proud of it.

In her time, babshi works as a vice president at Goodwin College in East Hartford, Connecticut. In my mind, my grandmother is one of the luckiest people I know because she gets to make a difference in people's lives both at work and with the Auxiliary.

I am absolutely sure that her love for this organization will help to do a phenomenal job as the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

MS. JEFFORD: As a member of the Goodale Rameker Unit and on behalf of the members of the Department of Connecticut, I am honored to place in nomination the name of Janet Jefford for the office of National President of the American Legion Auxiliary for the year 2014 to 2015.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Janet Jefford is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National President?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Hearing none, nominations for National President are closed.

Nominations are in order for the office of Vice President. The National Secretary will call departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Madam President, the Department of Illinois has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

CHAIRMAN ZIMMERMAN: Madam President, I am Judy Zimmerman, Chair of the Delegation from the Department of Illinois.

And I would like to ask that you recognize Pam Ray for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Illinois.

MS. RAY: Madam National President Nancy and members, my name is Pam Ray and I am the delegate to this Convention from the Department of Illinois.

Illinois believes in our candidate and knows she has the qualifications to hold the office of National Vice President. Sharon Conatser is a 61-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Her eligibility is through her dad, Clay Lofton, a World War II and Korean War veteran. Her husband, Marty, a Vietnam era veteran, and her son, Rick, are Gulf War era veterans.

Sharon has served her unit, district, and department holding most chairmanships and serving as President on all levels. Sharon has been active on the National level since 2001 serving as NEC and holding many national chairmanships.

National recognized Sharon's talents, her organizational skills, and love of the organization many years ago.

Sharon's husband, Marty, served as National Commander of The American Legion in 2007-2008. As First Lady of The American Legion that year, she continued to serve her unit, district, department, and the National organization.

Sharon's dad is a past Department Commander. Her mom is a past Department President as well as a past Central Division National Vice President. Her sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren, her pride and joy, are all members of The American Legion family as well. The ALA is truly a part of Sharon's every-day life.

Sharon is an active member of Faith United Methodist Church. She served as director of vacation Bible school one year. And many of us know that this not only takes organization but patience and humor. She's also active in her community.

Sharon retired from the University in 2010 after over 25 years of serve. She received the Staff Award for Excellence from her department as well as the Chancellor's distinguished award for outstanding service to the University.

Sharon's boys will tell you that no matter what she was doing with the Auxiliary, she always supported them as they grew up and she was always there for their school activities. As you can see when Sharon does something, she does it well while still being there for family and friends.

Being elected to this high office has always been her dream. I am so proud and happy to see this finally becoming a reality for her. I know she credits her American Legion family as well as her personal family -- sorry -- for helping her achieve this. But we know it is well-deserved and she has worked very hard to reach this goal.

Madam President, it is my honor on behalf of our parents, Sharon's family, and the Department of Illinois to nominate my sister, Sharon Conatser, for the office of National Vice President for the year 2014-2015.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any further nominations for the office of National Vice President?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Hearing none, nominations for National Vice President are closed.

Nominations are now in order for the office of National Chaplain. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Department of Oregon has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate of Oregon for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the Department of Oregon for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. LIEBENOW: I'm Linda Liebenow, Department of Oregon.

I would like the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purpose of nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Oregon for the purpose of making a nomination. Now you can come.

MS. EPPERSON: Good morning. I'm Toni Epperson from the Department of Oregon.

Madam President, distinguished guests, fellow delegates, greetings from the great State of Oregon, home of the Mighty Ducks and the end of the Oregon Trail, but most importantly the home of Cheryl Park.

Through the eligibility of her father, Virgil Brown, a World War II veteran, Cheryl first joined the Legion family as a Junior member. Her daughter, Becky, is a veteran of Desert Storm. Her grandsons serve on active duty and both her daughters and her granddaughters are members of the American Legion Auxiliary and the Juniors.

With the exception of Treasurer, Cheryl has held every office at the unit, district, and department level. The first office she held was -- at each level was Chaplain. Because this position is one of the -- is the one most near and dear to her heart, she has been instrumental in engaging her unit with local churches and she regularly shares the story of Four Chaplains of Dorchester to congregations in an effort to raise awareness about faith, family, and freedom.

Cheryl has continued to pass it on by inspiring the next generation of Auxiliary members. She is the Junior Activities Chairman for both the Department of Oregon and her unit.

Cheryl captains various fund raising and awareness walks and serves as the coordinator for the Adopt a Family Program. Cheryl was tireless -- Cheryl also tirelessly cultivates and mentors new members thereby exemplifying our call to mutual helpfulness.

Cheryl has had more than her share of life's trials and challenges, but it is because of her experience and consummate spirituality that she deserves to be our next Chaplain.

When Girls Nation President, Sydney Roberts, addressed our assembly on Monday, she noted that Oregon's state motto is she flies with her own wings. With her engaging personality, contagious smile, and inspiring spirituality, Cheryl Park flies with her own wings. But for Cheryl, God is the wind beneath her wings.

Madam President, it is the State of Oregon's honor and my personal privilege to nominate Cheryl Park for the office of American Legion Auxiliary National Chaplain.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any further nominations for the office of National Chaplain?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Department of Colorado has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate from the Department of Colorado for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT MCBRIDE: Deb McBride, Department of Colorado.

I would ask the Chair to recognize delegate Suzie Bozella (phonetic) for the purpose of nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Colorado for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. BOZELLA: Hello, everybody. President Nancy and Auxiliary members, on behalf of the Department of Colorado, I am proud to nominate Karen Boehler as our endorsed candidate for National Chaplain.

Karen has served as President of her unit three years, Department President 2012-2013, and last year as the AEF National Chairman. Karen also has served 34 years as a teacher, counselor, and principal.

She's been deacon of her church for seven years and recently she spent two years earning a degree as a Chaplain.

Karen joined the ALA under her father's service during World War II. His name was Oscar. He and his wife, Dorothy, were active Legion members for many years in North Dakota. Karen has two sons and two grandsons and one granddaughter.

Karen loves the Lord and enjoys helping others. She's a strong prayer warrior and is always there to listen when someone is in need. Again, on behalf of the Department of Colorado, I am proud to nominate Karen Boehler for National Chaplain. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any further nominations for the office of National Chaplain?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Hearing none, nominations for National Chaplain are closed.

Nominations are in order for the office of National Historian. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Department of New Jersey has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate from New Jersey for the purpose of a nomination.

CHAIRMAN GALLAGHER: Madam President, Doreen Gallagher, Delegate Chairman, Department of New Jersey.

Would the Chair please recognize Laurel Matthews for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the delegate from New Jersey for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. MATTHEWS: Thank you. Laurel Matthews, delegate, Department of New Jersey.

Madam President, delegates assembled, it is a great honor and privilege to be able to endorse my friend, Debra Noble, for the office of National Historian.

Debbie, as we know her, is eligible for membership through her father, George Buddy Young's service, a World War II and Navy veteran.

Debbie has had a great history with the American Legion Auxiliary for many years serving as an honorary Junior Department President. She has served as

unit, county, and Department President in 2005 and 2006. She was awarded a life membership from her Unit Number 19 of Bayonne for her work and dedication to the Auxiliary.

Her history with the department includes serving on many, many committees. She has served as National Executive Committeewoman and has had National appointments on the National Security, Poppies, and Community Service Committees along with the Girls State, Girls Nation Committee, and is also a member of the National Strategic Planning Committee.

Debbie's civic history with her community includes serving on the Rent Control Board for 20 years and the Bayonne Fire Canteen for over 20 years where she is a charter member and ex-chief and was awarded the Showcase Award for work after the 9/11 attacks.

Debbie's history with the Girls State Program is long and historic. She has worked with the Girls State Program for over 30 years after being a delegate the same year that I went to Girls State.

On a personal note, Debbie has been married for 24 years to Jim Noble, a past National Vice Commander East of the ASL. She is the assistant controller at Continental Management, graduated summa cum laude, and a member of Phi Theta Kappa.

Debbie is a loyal friend and member and will strive to keep the history of our great organization. Debbie is always looking for ways to help better the organization at every level. She is currently instrumental in trying to preserve our history and our future with spearheading the efforts to start a foundation for our department.

In case you haven't noticed, there is a theme here, history.

Madam President, it is my pleasure to nominate my friend, Debra Noble, for the office of National Historian so that she can record history, be history, and make history for our organization. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Debra Noble is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Historian?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The Department of Vermont has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate from Vermont for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT BERRIO: Madam President, Ann Berrio, Delegation Chairman for the Department of Vermont.

I -- please recognize the delegate from the Department of Vermont for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes the delegate from Vermont for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. MCKINSEY: Madam President, delegates, and guests, I'm Elaine McKinsey from -- delegate from the Department of Vermont.

The State of Vermont proudly nominates Lorraine "Rani" Gray for National Historian. Lorraine, better known as Rani, is a 39-year member of Harry Ann Cutting (phonetic) Unit Number 59 in Waterbury, Vermont.

She served three terms as Unit President and several times as Unit Historian. At the department level, Rani served as District President, Department Historian, and Department President. She has held numerous chairmanships at the unit and department level.

At National level, Rani has served as NEC, alternate NEC, Eastern Division National Vice President, Vice Chairman of Girls Nation, Junior Activities Committee member, as well as the Eastern Division Chairman for Membership, AEF, VA&R, Poppy, and Junior Activities.

Rani recently joined the American Legion Riders. Rani retired in 2009 after 25 years of owning and operating a licensed childcare center. Rani has served on many community boards throughout the years and has always been active in her community.

Rani is eligible for membership through her late father, Albert Hickory, who retired from the U.S. Army after serving in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, and her husband, Richard R. Gray, who served the U.S. Army and retired after 23 and a half years as a sergeant major, serving one tour in Vietnam.

Collectively Rick and Rani have five children and 12 grandchildren who are all members of The American Legion family. Rick is currently the Department of Vermont Commander.

In light of Rani's dedication to the American Legion Auxiliary and her incredible organization and enthusiasm, you can feel confident that she will do an outstanding job as your National Historian.

On behalf of the Department of Vermont, I am pleased to nominate Lorraine Rani Gray as National Historian. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Lorraine "Rani" Gray is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Historian?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Hearing none, nominations for National Historian are closed.

With these nominations and nominations made during the division caucuses on Saturday, August 23rd, 2014, nominations for 2014-2015 National Officers are complete.

The Convention rules provide that nominees for the office of National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, and National Historian shall be introduced to the assembly.

The Auxiliary member who made the nomination will introduce the candidate by name and department affiliation only. Each nominee will be allowed a maximum of two minutes for remarks.

Will the representative from Connecticut please introduce the candidate for National President?

MS. JEFFORD: It is with pleasure and pride that I present to you Janet Jefford, the candidate for National President 2014-2015.

(Applause.)

MS. JEFFORD: Thank you so much, Carlyn and Morgan, for that wonderful nomination speech.

I pledge to each of you if elected that I will try my best to serve this organization with pride and dignity. I stand with each of you as an Auxiliary member ready to do my part to move this organization forward towards its second century of service.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Will the representative from Illinois please present the candidate for National Vice President?

MS. RAY: It's my honor and with great pride that I introduce to you my sister, Sharon Conatser, from the Department of Illinois.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: I am overwhelmed and honored to be a candidate for National Vice President.

And thank you, Pam, for that nomination. There were no sister stories, so I'm really happy about that.

With your permission, may I ask the Department of Illinois to be recognized, Madam President?

Would the Department of Illinois American Legion Family please rise.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: Thank you, Department of Illinois and Central Division. Many mentors and friends who have helped me to reach this point in my ALA dream are here today. Thank you all for showing me this opportunity.

Throughout my life, you have all been there to help me. Thank you for your continued love and your continued support.

I am very thankful that my parents could fly in from Illinois, and they are sitting in the front row, Clay and Irene Lofton, and I just want to say thanks for being here, mom and dad.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: They are the ones that started me on this journey 60 years ago and I am very proud to be where I am today to show them, make them proud.

I pledge my support to all of you as an organization moves forward in serving our veterans and our active-duty servicemembers. I value the trust that I hope you will place in me and I pledge to work to help move our organization forward for the good of our membership.

As Vice President, I will continue to work as a grass roots member continuing to hold the values of all of the American Legion Auxiliary members high. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Will the representative from Oregon please present the candidate for National Chaplain?

MS. EPPERSON: It is with great pride and friendship that I introduce to you our candidate for Chaplain, Cheryl Park.

(Applause.)

MS. PARK: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. PARK: I am so humbled to stand before you today. I believe that anyone who would lead must also serve and God has given me many opportunities to minister to others' needs.

Friends, coworkers, and Auxiliary members know that they can come to me when they need prayer and support and in turn, my prayer partners have been called upon many times to start a prayer chain. I truly believe in the power of prayer for I have witnessed it sustain people through life's ups and downs.

One January, I attended my first Auxiliary meeting where the Chaplain, a dual member, was absent from the meeting. The Unit President asked if anyone would open the meeting in prayer. When no one stepped forward, I stood up and I offered a prayer. At the conclusion of my prayer, one of the senior members said I think we just found our next Chaplain, and I was installed as that unit's Chaplain six months later.

Because of my passion and ability, I am frequently called upon to lead memorial and funeral services for friends, family, and unit members. I know that God has blessed me with faith and compassion and continues to open doors so that I may minister to others.

I see the opportunity to serve as your National Chaplain as one of those doors that I am meant to walk through. Although I have held many offices at the unit, district, and department level, the office of Chaplain has been the one most dear to me.

I feel that as Chaplain, I can best serve God, the veterans who sacrificed in service to this great country, and the American Legion Auxiliary. I respectfully ask that you give me that opportunity by voting for me as your next National Chaplain. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Will the representative from Colorado present the candidate for National Chaplain?

MS. BOZELLA: I am proud to introduce to you from the Department of Colorado our candidate for National Chaplain, Karen Boehler.

(Applause.)

MS. BOEHLER: Thank you, Suzie, and good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. BOEHLER: Long ago, I claimed Jeremiah 29:11 as the scripture passage that was really mine. And to paraphrase it, it just says I have plans for you says the Lord, plans to help you, not to harm you, plans to prosper. He's done that in my life, I believe, also as I prepared for today. This is the plan our Lord has for the American Legion Auxiliary.

Over the past few years, we've heard the numbers, and it's scary, about how our membership is diminishing. I have no doubt that God will continue to prosper this great organization because he knows we've got lots and lots of work to do for our veterans.

As I've served my time in the Auxiliary, I've really been thankful first of all to so many veterans including my father. It's my parents who were active Legion members in the Department of North Dakota.

To Unit 4, Fort Collins, Colorado, those ladies have been great mentors to me and believe me, they've straightened me out more than a time or two, dearest friends who have encouraged me to move up in leadership, Betty and Sue from the Department of Colorado, others whom I've met.

And yet it's been the Chaplains at this National level that I've really watched over the years and who have just left me in awe. I said to one of them the other day the way you pray, it's just clear to me that you and God have that relationship that we all continue to seek. And I believe that if we continue to seek his guidance again that our organization will prosper.

There is one thing I want you to know. While we all should live by this code of ethics that the Auxiliary embraces, you have to know that Chaplains aren't perfect. Just a little warning. We face the same challenges, the same temptations, and certainly need to ask for the same strength and forgiveness as any other person.

I would like to leave you with a benediction that I find just really, really beautiful, a blessing for you all. May you do good and not evil. May you find forgiveness for yourself and forgive others. May you share freely, never taking more than you give.

Thanks for your attention this morning. I'm thankful to be a member and I'm thankful to be up here.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Will the representative from New Jersey present the candidate for National Historian?

MS. MATTHEWS: It is a great honor and privilege to introduce to you my friend, Debbie Noble, from the Department of New Jersey.

(Applause.)

MS. NOBLE: Madam National President, National Officers, delegates, alternates, and guests to this Convention, first let me say thank you to my dad, Buddy Young, and my brother, Tommy, for their service to our country. Without them and all those who have served, we would not be here today.

Thank you, Laurel, for your wonderful words of endorsement. We have served together for many years and are history parallels each other in many ways. She is a true mentor and friend.

To my Department of New Jersey, thank you for your support and encouragement as I pursue the dreams of that young girl whose parents signed her up as a Junior member in October 1968. Never did I think as I studied the histories of my unit that I could one day stand here on a National stage and accept your nomination as National Historian.

Through my 48 years of membership, I have been privileged to work side by side with some incredible women who have taught me the meaning of service. Today I proudly wear the Past Department President's pin of one of those great leaders, our Past National President Elsie Bailey.

When she was Department President of New Jersey, her theme song was Stand By Me. If I am elected your National Historian, I promise to stand side by side and work hand in hand with every unit, county, district, and department Historian as we record the accomplishments of our organization.

Together you and I will honor our past and celebrate the present as we record the events that let everyone know who we are, what we do, and why we do it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Will the representative from Vermont present the candidate for National Historian?

MS. MCKINSEY: On behalf of the Department of Vermont, I am proud to present to you our candidate for National Historian, Lorraine "Rani" Gray.

(Applause.)

MS. GRAY: Madam President, officers, delegates, and guests, thank you, Elaine, for that wonderful nomination.

Lord Acton said to be able to look back at one's past life with satisfaction is to live it twice. A written history gives you the opportunity to look back to that special time in your life and to relive it over and over again.

I have always prided myself as a person who pays attention to details whether past, present, or future. Three simple words but combine them with the American Legion Auxiliary and they become very powerful.

We can't be successful in the American Legion Auxiliary without paying attention to the past, where we come from, the present, where we are now, and the future, where we will be in times to come.

In closing, I leave you with these words written by Bill Keen. Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift of God and that's why it's called the present.

Please consider voting for me, Lorraine Rani Gray, from the Department of Vermont for your National Historian. God bless you, God bless our veterans, and God bless America. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I don't know my name either today, Rani, so that's good.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We will proceed with the election of National Officers. You have nominated Janet Jefford of Connecticut for the Office of National President. In accordance with the rules you have adopted, if there is but one candidate for the office, the nominee will be elected by voice. So we're going to skip this part and we're going to move on.

All in favor of electing Janet Jefford as National President for the 2014-2015 administrative year, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, no.

VOICES: No.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair declares Janet Jefford of Connecticut duly elected as National President for the 2014-2015 administrative year.

Janet, will you please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. We haven't cried enough today.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sharon Conatser of Illinois is the only nominee for the office of National Vice President. All in favor of Sharon Conatser for the office of National Vice President, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sharon Conatser has been duly elected as National Vice President for the 2014-2015 administrative year.

Sharon, will you please stand?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: On Saturday at the division caucuses, each division nominated a candidate for Division National Vice President and the current Division National Vice Presidents have certified to the Chair the following nominees:

Election -- oh, Laura Mosby of Missouri has been nominated for the office of Central Division Vice President. All those in favor of Laura Mosby as Central Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Laura Mosby has been duly elected as Central Division National Vice President.

Laura, please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, hi. I didn't know you were here. Sandra Neylon of New -- New Hampshire has been nominated for the office of Eastern Division National Vice President. All those in favor of Sandra Neylon for Eastern Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You have elected Sandra Neylon as Eastern Division National Vice President.

Sandra, will you please stand?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Lori Skallerud of Minnesota has been nominated for the office of Northwestern Division National Vice President. All

those in favor of Lori Skallerud National -- Northwestern Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I didn't really give you much time for that, did I? You have elected Lori Skallerud as the Northwestern Division National Vice President.

Lori, please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, that's a mouthful.

Sue Heil of Oklahoma has been nominated for the office of Southern Division National Vice President. All those in favor of Sue Heil as the Southern Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sue Heil has been elected the Southern Division National Vice President.

Will you please stand, Sue?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sue Diaz from Alaska has been nominated for the office of Western Division National Vice President. All those in favor of Sue Diaz as the Western Division National Vice President, please say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Those opposed, no.

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Sue Diaz has been elected the Western Division National Vice President.

Sue, will you please stand?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: For the election of National Chaplain, we will be voting with our electronic keypads. The nominees are Cheryl E. Park from the Division of -- from the Division -- from the Department of Oregon and Karen Boehler from the Department of Colorado.

So if you'll -- you don't even have to -- no, you need to stand. Please stand. If you would like to vote for Cheryl, please -- Cheryl Park, please press one. If you would like to vote for Karen Boehler, please press two. Please vote now.

We're waiting for the election judge. You could do the wobble or something.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, a song is played.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The election judge will now read the Election and Tally Committee report.

Oops, sorry, Tammy.

TAMMY: Thank you, Madam President.

For election of National Champion 20 -- Chaplain 2014-2015, the number of votes cast, 796. Number of votes needed to elect, 399. Cheryl E. Park, 374. Karen M. Boehler, 422.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: For the election of National Chap -- Chaplain 2014-2015, number of votes cast, 796. Number of votes needed to elect, 399. Cheryl E. Park, 374. Karen M. Boehler, 422. Karen M. Boehler is the Chaplain for the year 2014-2015.

Karen, please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: For the election of National Historian, we will be voting with our election keypads once again. So please stand.

The nominees are Debra Noble from New Jersey, Lorraine "Rani" Gray from Vermont. If you would like to vote for Debra Noble, please press one. If you would like to vote for Lorraine "Rani" Gray, please press two.

The voting is closed and the answer is?

(Whereupon, a song is played.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. So did -- I guess I -- did I share the story already about our -- our -- what was that thing we did? We put the water on our head.

VOICES: The ice bucket challenge.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, I told you about the bucket, didn't I?

VOICE: Yeah. Did they see it?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: But Janet didn't put any ice in hers.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: I did.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: You did not.

There was no ice in Janet's bucket.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Sure there was.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Well, she went like this. She didn't go like this. Let's see. Can I tell a Janet story? Let's see.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: No.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So Janet's going to tell a Nancy story if I tell a Janet story.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: What can I tell you about?

VOICE: Pulling weeds.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Pulling weeds? Oh, yeah, that wasn't very much fun.

(Laughter.)

VOICE: Madam President --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yes.

VOICE: -- the Department of California --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Uh-oh. Uh-oh.

VOICE: -- and the Department of Oregon are requesting you tell us the story about the mooning moose.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, my goodness.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. So when we went to visit Alaska -- where's Alaska?

VOICES: Woo.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We had an incredible time. And I really wanted to see a moose. I went to Vermont. Where's Vermont?

VOICES: Woo.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yay, Vermont. So that was my very first visit. And I got to Vermont and I said, oh, I can't wait to see a moose. I want to see a moose. And you drive along and there's signs everywhere that say watch out for moose. Well, the only moose are the ones in the store or the sign that says watch out for moose.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I never saw the moose except we almost did get killed that one time when we pulled over very quickly to get a picture of the sign that says watch for moose.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So, you know, now I'm on a mission to find a moose. So we got to Alaska and I said, oh, we're going to see a moose here. We know we're going to see a moose. So they took us for a ride. And the National Commander was there and Joe Gladden, the SAL Commander. So we were all there together and our wives and Margaret was there. We had a great time.

And they picked us in a -- up in a bus from a nursing home.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It looked like we were six people who had escaped from the nursing home.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And we're driving along in this bus and they're going to take us out for a drive to see some of the nature, you know, animals. Wow, we're like, oh, we're going to get a moose. We're going to see a moose.

So we drive through town. We're in town. We drive through. We look over and our driver says there's a moose. And we look over and the moose is mooning us and he's got his head drinking water. That was the only moose we ever saw --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: -- was the one that mooned us, right? We never did see another moose. So that was the end of the moose. I never saw a moose. Stuffed moose, the one on the dish I found for Margaret. That was fun. So we did. We had a wonderful time.

Was that the right story? Did I tell you the right story?

VOICES: Yes.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, they're here. Thank goodness or I would have had to find another story.

TAMMY: For the election of National Historian 2014-2015, number of votes cast, 798. Number of votes needed to elect, 400. Debra Noble, 339. Lorraine "Rani" Gray, 459.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: For election of National Historian 2014-2015, number of votes cast, 798. Number of votes needed to elect, 400. Debra Noble, 339. Lorraine "Rani" Gray, 459. Lorraine Rani Gray has been elected Historian, National Historian for the year 2014-2015.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So just to let you know -- is the Election Committee still back there? Can you come out just quickly?

So there is an Elections Committee, so you know there are eight plus the judge of the elections. And they are here and they are in the back and they are the ones that certify the election. It's like the Wizard of Oz behind the curtain. You know, the little guy that comes out.

Are they coming? They're what? We can hear them. We can hear them.

VOICE: I see them. They're slowly coming. They didn't know you were going to call them.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: No, they didn't know I was going to do this. But they are the ones that come early every morning to make sure you get your voting keypad and they are the ones that are here to certify your elections. So -- and they stay late to make sure that everybody turns them in.

So we want to say thank you to them for what they've done this week to get us through the election process. And they're really not done yet, but we're going to thank them anyway.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, everybody, for being there and doing this. And we really appreciate your work and what you're doing. So keep it up because we're -- oh, missing one. It was Scooter. Here she comes. Don't run over her. If it doesn't fall down, we're going to break it down. There we go. Yay. Okay. Now we're all here.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. Thank you, ladies, very much. Thank you very much. Thank you.

And thank you, Tammy. Tammy is from my department and I made her the judge. And she was like the judge? So -- and she does an incredible job in California. It was something I wanted to do for her.

Okay. So we're -- okay. Great. We're going to move on now. Oh, no, wait. You're all going to get up. You're all going to come out here. This way, Janet.

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you your 2014-2015 American Legion Auxiliary National Officers. Thank you, ladies.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Ladies, you are excused to go back to your departments.

Americanism programs teach respect for our country and our nation's flag. The Auxiliary creates opportunities that all Americans can do to show our respect and set positive examples of living as grateful patriotic citizens. Here to report is National Americanism Committee Chairman Martha Lee Thatcher.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: Before beginning my report, I would like to proudly announce that the 2013-'14 Americanism Committee has worked terrifically hard this year and they have received in return 100 percent reporting across all five divisions.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: Americanism is woven into every American Legion Auxiliary program. As members, we promote Americanism in our every-day lives by how we live, share, promote, and show pride in our communities. In short, Americanism is patriotism in action.

We are and support veterans, recognize and promote responsible citizenship, mentor youth, educate by example, and we pass it on.

If you watch TV or read the newspapers, I am certain that you've heard that surveys show a decline in patriotism. Well, I'm here to tell you that ALA members are proud and true patriots and belong to the world's largest women's patriotic organization in the world and they show their pride by wearing honor their service buttons with a picture of the family member whose family -- whose service to our country gave them the eligibility to become members.

Many units pass it on by teaching flag etiquette and proper flag disposal in their schools, but Unit 109 in the Department of North Carolina --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: -- introduced a new element to their students. They presented a variety of skits, one like what is an American, with students dressed as animals. What a great way to introduce a discussion about diversity. They also presented the writing of our Constitution as a skit with students dressed as the founding fathers and as representatives of the original 13 colonies.

Many units reported participation in the Pocket Flag Program and found that working with their Juniors increase the success of this project.

For all of you who have struggled to complete a correctly folded pocket flag, listen to this amazing story. Liz Popowsky, a member of Unit 171 in the Department of Maryland, and their Pocket Flag Chairman, spends most of her evenings folding proper triangles ready to ship to deployed troops. And since 2012, Liz's unit has sent nine shipments totaling 2,533 flags.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: This truly is an example of members working the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary and passing it on.

In closing, let me tell you the story of an American flag created by students at Lyons Elementary. At the direction of their teacher, these students created a full-

sized United States flag by strategically placing their hand prints to form the stars and the stripes. Thanks to this teacher who is also a Houston, Texas Unit 77 member, these students had a hands-on patriotic experience.

Please join me in applauding their efforts.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: Thank you, Madam President. This concludes my platform remarks.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Martha.

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN THATCHER: No, Madam President, there are not.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you so much. What a great -- what a great project for children.

We know the sacrifices of our veterans are the reason we live in freedom. Easing the burden of the cost of their children's education is one way we can express our gratitude to them, which is why the Auxiliary supports a number of scholarship programs.

Here to report is the National Education Committee Chairman, Diane Duscheck.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: Madam National President, many Auxiliary units and departments pass on the legacy of the American Legion Auxiliary for eight or 16 or more years in the lives of the youth in their communities. Let me pass on to you two opportunities used to touch the lives of the youth in their community.

Give ten to education presented numerous opportunities to donate school supplies to both children and to schools. At the end of the school year, supply lists go home with children listing all the items they need to purchase before the next school year begins.

As the end of August rolls around and the children are contemplating the end of summer and the exciting beginning of another school year, there are those children who don't have the necessary supplies to begin their new educational year successfully. Both children of our military and children living in poverty come up short of funds when it comes to preparing for the first day of school.

Individual Auxiliary members gathered give ten to education items and then pooled with the school supplies. As a unit, school items were dispersed to needy children that the unit was aware of or that the school identified for the Auxiliary.

And what items were collected for give ten to education? Items for art class like crayons, rulers, and glue, materials for language arts, dictionaries, bookmarks, loose-leaf paper, and pens. For math, members collected pencils, erasers, notebooks, and graph paper. And there are other items that students found handy to have including Kleenex, hand sanitizer, insulated lunch bags, and backpacks.

Classrooms needed new flags and iPad applications. The library had a wish list of books to purchase for students and anti-bullying comic books and posters were purchased to post in the hallways.

A few creative items that members collected for the give ten to education were underwear, slippers and socks, hats and mittens. When you think of it, these are great items for school children.

A second opportunity to touch local youth was the Veterans in the Classroom Program. Veterans and children form a special bond of awe and respect during the Veterans in the Classroom Project.

In preparing for the arrival of the guest veterans in their school, the school children hung hand-made posters in the hallways to honor their visiting veterans. In an effort to reach out to students and pass on the meaning of the words proud to be an American, veterans shared with the children their military experiences, their love of country, and the sacrifices that veterans have made to preserve freedom.

Youngsters dotted the program with their patriotic contributions, a poem entitled My Daddy's Got Your Back, as well as musical selections, Freedom Isn't Free and My County Tis of Thee. A huge dose of flag education was mixed in as students were taught what the flag represents, why a flag is draped over a coffin at a military funeral, and proper flag disposal.

The program ended with two trumpet players echoing Taps and students silently filed out of the gymnasium enlightened by their encounter with The American Legion family.

Veterans have earned and deserve the respect and thanks of all of us. We touch the hearts of youth and passed on to them an understanding of the heritage of being proud to be an American.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: No, Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Great. Thank you, Diane. Great job.

Community service projects focuses on enhancing the quality of life for veterans and their families, whether it is hosting a stand-down or walk, run, roll event to bring vital health and support services to homeless veterans. Auxiliary members are continuously at work in their communities demonstrating the compassion and heart we have for all those who serve our country.

Please welcome to the stage National Community Service Committee Chairman Sue Britton.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: Madam National President and members of this Convention, good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: How many of you took the time to pass it on this year? National President Nancy's theme of pass it on has spread like wildfire. Let's take a look at how the community service projects allowed some of our members to pass it on.

On March 22nd, 2014, at 10:37 a.m., tragedy struck the towns of Oso, Darrington, and Arlington in Washington State devastated by a massive mudslide

killing 35 people and destroying dozens of homes. Several posts and units came together and were closely involved with providing food, clothing, and other necessities needed.

First responders and the National Guard were called in and thousand of dollars of supplies and goods were donated to assist rescue workers. Units spearheaded food carts, fund raisers, and housing for those in need.

These communities continue to raise funds to help those affected with one unit donating a hand-made quilt to raffle off. All together, what a true show of community service assistance by The American Legion family.

Another prominent display of community service action is evident at Unit 1 in the District of Columbia from welcoming veterans to the nation's Capitol upon their arrival to visit national monuments to preparing tax packages and providing the manpower for Operation Home Front to pack backpacks for children of lower enlisted servicemembers to assisting at job fares and placing wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery. This unit works community service at every opportunity.

Unit 6 in Kokomo, Indiana raised --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: -- raised \$3,000 for homeless veterans and hosted a community Easter party.

Walk, run, and roll events were held in several departments.

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: And as evident here, Minnesota took roll to the max.

The Department of Virginia held an event and their publicity --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: -- before, during, and after was over the top. They raised \$11,500 --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: -- for oversized wheelchairs for recovering veterans. With 251 volunteer hours, they raised community awareness through press releases and two television interviews. Even our National President Nancy participated in their event.

California held their walk, run, and roll --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: -- at their Department Convention. A grand total of \$92,608.34 was raised by 18 departments.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: All funds per our National President Nancy's request were kept in the areas where raised to benefit veterans. Both National President Nancy Brown-Park and I extend our sincere thanks to those departments making this initial project such a success this year.

Unit 164 in Spearfish, South Dakota found members hard at work --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: -- raising funds for university veterans and working a local home show with informational booths. They even found time to provide needed yard work for a struggling cancer victim within their community.

Unit number 32 of Longmont, Colorado maintains a unique program assisting veterans in their community. Although intended for veterans, no one is turned away. The Auxiliary manages a hospital equipment program free of charge providing wheelchairs, crutches, canes, et cetera. And this year, the unit even purchased five new wheelchairs.

Unit number 28 of Delaware held a Martin Luther King, Jr. day of service and packaged nearly 300 totes containing personal items for women veterans and homeless individuals. They also held a stand-down and veterans selected needed items. In addition, they held a variety show to raise funds for a female veterans transitional home and held Veterans Day events.

Pocatello Unit number 4 created an impressive display of patriotism by creating a field of heroes. Over 6,686 cross markers were placed on the local high school soccer field. Each cross was marked with the name, branch of service, and date of loss from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Hundreds of community participants came to place the markers in line similar to the markers at Arlington National Cemetery.

Now let's take a look at the final numbers that were reported under the Community Service Committee this year. There were 1,044,217 volunteer hours reported.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: Dollars spent totaled \$2,004,150.18.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: And the reported veterans served was 78,164.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: Community service efforts across the nation have been powerful and productive this year. You have made that happen and you have increased awareness of the American Legion Auxiliary name in your communities. Congratulations to all those who made it happen and passed it on.

Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: No, Madam President, there are not.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Sue, and thank you for taking on this Chairmanship and helping us get our walk, run, roll started.

And how incredible is that that we raised 94,000 --

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: Ninety-two.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: -- \$92,000 plus and every bit of that stayed within your department or your unit or your community. Thank you, everybody, for doing that.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BRITTON: You're welcome.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I had to really run, too, when I did it. I had bright yellow shoes. It was really fun.

Chaplains provide spiritual and emotional guidance often in times when many of us feel lost. They are compassionate listeners who always bring dignity and love to every situation.

Please welcome our very own National Chaplain, Shelley Riggs.

(Applause.)

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Madam National President, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that who so ever believeth in him shall not perish but have ever-lasting life, John 316.

What a humbling experience has it been to be your spiritual leader this past year. It has truly enriched my life. In the words of Helen Keller, and I quote, "Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."

The Chaplains all around the United States from the department to the district to the unit has certainly come together to serve one another and our veterans.

In mid September, the Chaplains Conference was held in Indianapolis where we had a rewarding experience that was to meet many of the Chaplains in attendance and then change -- exchange our thoughts and put together a plan of action for all.

It was interesting to see that some Chaplains are elected year after year, yet some Chaplains are voted in and they run the Chairs for the department officers.

Social media continues to strengthen among the Chaplains. We use the Chaplains' Facebook page to ask for prayers or any other important messages. This year, almost every day an inspirational quote was put on this page by this Chaplain. If you haven't joined us yet, I encourage you to do so.

I did not ask for year-end reports, but 19 departments sent one to me. They reported giving prayers at the beginning and ending of meetings, participating in memorial services, draping the charters, Chapel of chap -- of four Chaplains Program, preparing food for grieving families, sending get well cards and sympathy cards, and having services for other special holidays.

A couple of interesting stories. The Department of Tennessee, Lynda Winkles, Department Chaplain, passed away during this past year. She was an endorsed candidate for National Chaplain for this coming year. Her project was collecting a penny a day for the Chapel of Four Chaplains. Her department sent \$1,510 as a re -- as a memorial to the Chapel of Four Chaplains.

Patsy Varnell, Chaplain from Oklahoma assisted 83 Korean veterans to board the honor flight to Washington, D.C.

What an honor it has been to serve as your National Chaplain from coordinating the Chaplains Conference in Indianapolis, giving prayers at the Washington, D.C. Conference, and ending my year at the National Convention here in Charlotte and putting together the Reflections page in the national magazine.

Choices, chances, changes, you must make a choice to take a chance or your life will never change. To everyone that sent in a report or a prayer or a poem for Nancy's prayer book, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

We must remember why we joined this great organization and what has gone before and given all their -- and given their all. Please continue to pray for all our children, our communities, our veterans, and America.

In the worlds -- words of Walt Disney, laughter is timeless, imagination has no age, and dreams are forever. May God's blessing and grace continue to shine upon you all.

Madam President, that concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Shelley.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Yes, ma'am.

You're already at the podium -- podium. I'll be right back.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I get a present. Thank you, Shelley.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Nancy, on behalf of all the members of the American Legion Auxiliary, I proudly present to you this prayer book. And when you have some spare time, I know you can sit down and read the prayers and poems that has been sent for this book. God's blessing continue to be upon you and it's been an honor to serve as your Chaplain.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Shelley.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you. Shelley, want a picture? Shelley, thank you for your excellent report and it's wonderful that you did this.

Shelley, you know, Shelley with an E. It's not Shelly. It's Shelley with an E.

I now ask Past National President Carlene Ashworth to please lead us in the celebration of life for Past National President Helen Holcomb.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT ASHWORTH: It is a -- it is a great honor for me to share with all of you the virtues of a wonderful lady, Past National President Helen Holcomb.

The American Legion Auxiliary's 1993-1994 administrative year began with the installation of Helen Holcomb as National President. Helen gained her eligibility through her husband, Harvey, who served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War.

A resident of Odessa, Texas, Helen joined Earl S. Bailey Unit 430 in 1967, becoming a life member and served as unit, district, and division President before becoming President of the Department of Texas in 1980-1981.

Helen next became a National Executive Committeewoman before going on to hold many National Chairmanships and in 1992-1993, she served as National Vice President. And in 1993-1994, she was elected National President.

In her professional life, Helen was an executive secretary and corporate officer at Sivals Oil and Gas Process Equipment Company, Incorporated for more than 35 years. Thus, she brought a broad background in administration and planning to her role as National President.

Helen felt that she was very blessed to have a loving family. Her family consisted of three sons, one daughter, one daughter-in-law, one granddaughter, and one grandson. And they all belong to The American Legion family.

Helen was an active member in her local unit until just a few years ago and she was never too busy to serve her unit, district, department, and on the National level. She was a mentor to many and was always extremely proud of the accomplishments of those she shared her knowledge with at all levels of our organization.

If you did not know Helen well, you might have thought of her as being quiet and perhaps a little reserved. However, once you were with her for a brief time, you realized she had a great sense of humor and a quick wit. She loved to laugh and could as easily laugh at herself as she could with those around her.

She was the epitome of a lady and wouldn't dare ever put herself in any type of a compromising situation that might cause embarrassment to herself or her beloved Auxiliary.

Helen loved the American Legion Auxiliary and all it stands for. And if she was here today, she would be one of the first to endorse the Auxiliary's plans to move forward into the next century.

Today I have only touched upon her many achievements and will forever miss her enthusiasm and the vision that she had for our organization that she loved so dearly and shared with all of us for so many years.

Rest in peace, dear friend. We will always love you and you will never be forgotten. Your legacy of service lives on in each of those of us who knew you.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Carlene.

The Leadership Program prepares future leaders and helps develop their skills so that everyone from our youngest Junior members to our young at heart adults can step into a leadership role with confidence.

Here today is National Leadership Committee Chairman Coral May Grout.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Margaret Meade once said never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. Through leadership, our members are indeed changing the Auxiliary world.

A huge thank-you goes to each of the department chairmen for submitting a report. We received 100 percent department reporting.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I would like to introduce you to Wisconsin leadership team, Diane Wagon, Chairman, and Joan Chwala, and Rose Heinz, members.

The Department presented a series of leadership workshops and an officer training workshop as well. PowerPoints were designed for each group as well as appropriate handbooks. Information included how to utilize the Auxiliary's documents and materials and information about our programs.

Wisconsin encouraged participation by creating a display board for the fall informational forum. It, quote “dominated the huge hall of round tables,” unquote.

Members could visit the display for one-on-one information or wait for the program session for the next day. More than 50 members attended that session. Program information and materials were distributed at district fall informational workshops, spring conferences, and county and unit meetings.

All unit Presidents received leadership messages from the department mailings and by email. The committee also published an article in the Wisconsin.

Seventy-three Seniors and 16 Juniors successfully completed the online leadership course which included the history, programs, organization, and growth of the Auxiliary.

To promote better unit reporting, the committee created a check list of action activities for the Leadership Program and its objectives. This helped Unit Presidents to build leadership within their own units. The committee saw a huge increase in reporting.

Team building activities took place in many fun ways including group projects and skits. Wisconsin members served as mentors on all levels.

One Leadership Chairman told about her ALA moment where members used three to five minutes to share information on a topic of interest before committee reports at meetings.

Great job, Wisconsin.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Florida’s Leadership Chairman was Diane C. Rousseau.

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Leadership programs included a weekend boot camp for department officers, chairmen, district presidents, a department workshop, and well-attended district schools of instruction to pass on program information to unit members.

Eight certified instructors traveled throughout the department presenting ABC schools. ABC stands for Auxiliary Basic Concepts. Two hundred eighty-nine members participated in 13 schools.

The Leadership Chairman wrote several leadership articles for issues of the department bulletin. Many units held mini workshops. These lasted for five minutes at unit meetings on such topics as officers’ duties, parliamentary procedure, ALA programs, conflict resolution, flag etiquette, nominations and elections, working with military children, and making motions.

The department offered a leadership tugboat plaque to the Unit Leadership Chairman who submitted the best overall report on these mini workshops in each membership grouping. Everyone, though, who submitted an entry received a citation.

Units and districts began mentoring programs for members and chairmen. Informational packets explaining the Auxiliary’s programs, mission, reference documents, and locally applicable materials were developed. Kudos to the Department of Florida.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Nearly every department reported something that other departments could use to support their leadership programs. Outstanding reports from many departments were already mentioned at the Pre-Convention meetings. I encourage each and every one of you to seek out these departments and share what your accomplishments are and theirs during this year.

Our strategic plan calls for leadership development in order for our organization to continue doing the great work that it does. Thank you for your efforts this year. Please remember to pass them on.

Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Coral, for that excellent report. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: There are none.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

When a sudden financial crisis befalls an eligible member, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund may be able to provide temporary emergency assistance when no other source of help is available.

Please welcome National Auxiliary Emergency Fund Committee Chairman Karen Boehler to give her report.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: Madam National President Elect and Madam National President, Helen Colby Smith, a 40-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Wisconsin, left a bequest of \$160,000 to establish the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.

Its express purpose is to support members of our organization with grants should they fall upon difficult times economically, experience some type of family tragedy, or fall victim to any one of the incredible natural disasters that we witnessed in such abundance the past several years.

Her decision to pass it on enhanced by those contributions offered by members ever since have meant the world to so many women who feel helpless and hopeless during a crisis often not of their own doing.

Application is made through one's unit, passed on to the department secretary, and then forwarded to the National AEF staff. Requests are held in strictest confidence so that other than the recipient, only the department secretaries have knowledge of the outcome.

One hundred eighty-one thousand seven hundred seventy-seven dollars twenty-two cents. Let me repeat that in case you didn't get it. A One hundred eighty-one thousand seven hundred seventy-seven dollars twenty-two cents. Wow.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: Auxiliary sisters from 49 departments dug deep to show their caring for one another as well as for the mission of this wonderful program. Thanks to the growth on the fund's investments as well, this year's disbursements were nearly \$225,000, and let me try that again, 2,220 -- \$225,000 -- I was good at math -- \$247.07.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: Think about it. That's nearly a quarter of a million dollars of love poured out on each other. Amazing. One hundred thirty-two AEF financial assistance and 29 AEF disaster grants were funded totaling 161 Auxiliary members receiving assistance through AEF.

It was fascinating for me to study the average contribution per member and by department. Gifts ranged from nothing at all to the National coffers, two departments did not contribute, to a National high of \$6.75 per capita.

Thank you, Washington, D.C. Great job.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: South Carolina followed in second place with an average contribution of \$1.90.

By divisions, the discrepancy was not nearly so great with a range of between 14 cents and 46 cents per member.

Now to the Western Division, congratulations for such an incredible effort.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: I can make available a spreadsheet by department and division. If you're interested, let me know.

But Oakridge -- Oak Richard Riverdale Unit 28 in Delaware made the largest contribution by a single unit with a donation of \$2,000.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: While Washington, D.C. made the largest donation per capita overall and the highest contribution in the Eastern Division.

This was closely followed by South Carolina in the Southern Division, Colorado in the Western Division, Oregon in the Western Division --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: -- and Iowa in the Central Division.

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: Members were creative in their approaches to raising these funds. I received a call from one department to AEF Chair who wondered about our goal which I told her was simply to double last year's contributions. Granted, this department hadn't contributed significantly the previous year, but a few minutes later she called me back and said, well, I've called several ladies and the dollars are all in place. So for her, a few strategic phone calls was all it took.

I did encourage her not to stop there but to keep moving and involve more members, but that lesson reinforced in me that we don't receive if we don't ask.

Department Presidents in Iowa and Illinois made the Auxiliary Emergency Fund their primary focus and in both cases, their commitment paid off.

The Department of Florida's rough waters enticed members to find for a small fee the golden key in order to open the contents of a treasure chest.

Virginia's silly tax form was really delightful. Ask someone from that state if they'll share a copy of their assessments with you. Very creative and just delightful.

Colorado during another welcome blizzard hosted a Mardi Gras raising funds from a meal, silent auction, and other solicitations.

Connecticut was reportedly visited by a clown during their Convention. Yes, that was the AEF clown in disguise soliciting help for the organization.

While stories of these needs have been difficult to read, it is so gratifying when we can pass on your support to Auxiliary sisters.

To quote some recipients of your generosity, I didn't know where else to turn. Thank the Lord for the Auxiliary ladies. I didn't even know about this fund, but it was there for me in my time of need. I couldn't have imagined losing my home that way. The bright spark this grant gave me added joy to my life when there was little else about which I could find to be happy.

Thank you, ladies of the Auxiliary, for your generous donations and for passing on the spirit of the American Legion Auxiliary to those in their time of need.

Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Karen.

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: There are none.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you very much, Karen.

CHAIRMAN BOEHLER: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

Thank you, members, for all your hard work for AEF this year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Public Relations Program works together at all levels, Unit, Department and National, to positively promote and advance the objectives and programs of the Auxiliary beyond our membership.

Lisa Williamson, our National Public Relations Chairman, joins us now to present her report.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Thank you, Madam National President.

As American Legion Auxiliary members, we know what we do, but we are the best kept secret outside of our organization. Some departments, units, and members are tooting our horn. Let's be sure to make -- let's make sure everyone is doing it and doing it often.

Although we have shown marked improvement, we still must remind ourselves that public relations in -- to include public relations in everything we do to create more public awareness, fanfare, and surrounding our ALA events, programs, and activities.

Successful PR creates interest and in turn provides volunteers, hopefully being converted to members, which we need to work our programs, which increase -- or which creates more PR, a very simple cycle.

And this year with the Public Awareness Campaign starting it all off, our members took it from there through an abundance of resources. The National website provides a wealth of information.

And I've highlighted some success stories in the Convention program when it comes to traditional PR. Please take a look at it when you have a chance. You can see that traditional approaches are still successful and a viable option even today in this age of technology.

I have a request. Those of you here today with a smartphone or a tablet, please raise your hand.

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Now look around you. With the popularity of hand-held devices, you can see that we must be educated with the internet, particularly in social media, to compete with people's time. Events are being promoted before, during, after an event on the internet, all immediate attention grabbers.

Our National Public Relations Committee promoted the merits of social media throughout the year, so I'm going to share some success stories there.

First Twitter. George Washington Unit 1 in D.C., which is not an eUnit, shared their participation in the Military Times hashtag #myveteran campaign celebrating the service and sacrifice of our servicemembers.

In tweets highlighting three of their own members who are American Legion eligible in their own right, Unit 1 made sure to highlight their dual ALA membership. All three tweets were retweeted and used in the Military Times own communication, of course, mentioning the ALA.

Hashtags were made -- were used by many ALA members during the Washington DC Conference at hashtag #aladc, at the Department Leadership National Conference at hashtag #dlnc, and even this week during the convention at hashtag #auxcon.

Of course, Facebook is the biggie. Let me share some successes there. The Department of Washington uses Facebook to post meeting notices, membership standings, and reporting information. Their president, Terri Angell, states it is amazing how many positive responses we have gotten from people who didn't have a clue what the ALA was all about.

The entire American Legion family in California --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: -- sponsored the military children's spring dance this past April in Los Alamitos. Department Public Relations Chairman Tami Bell had the event plugged in in every outlet available from traditional means of flyers, newspapers, and bulletins to the more technologically based Facebook, Twitter, and even Eventbrite.

This event held in honor of the military children was a huge success and even caught the attention of the California National Guard and First Lady Michelle Obama. Can't get much better than that.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: While visiting the Department of Maryland, National President Nancy Brown-Park was honored to attend and speak at a naturalization ceremony in February. This event coordinated with Maryland's

Americanism Chairman allowed 77 citizens to take their oath of allegiance to the United States.

Following the ceremony, they shook hands with President Nancy and others and this was the first naturalization ceremony Madam President had ever been a part of. And you could see the excitement in her eyes. And all of this was promoted on Facebook as it happened.

And the last on Facebook, who might have noticed the selfies that President Nancy has been posting the past few months?

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: They're going -- they're getting viral and that means we're getting noticed and in a big way. And so in turn, so is the American Legion Auxiliary.

And, finally, one last social media, YouTube. And speaking of viral.

VOICES: Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain, for purple mountains majesty.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Majesty. Madam National President, this concludes the platform remarks for Public Relations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: No, ma'am, there are not.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Lisa.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Please welcome Past National President Kris Nelson to introduce two very special guests. I am excited to introduce to you this morning Tom Hirschauer and Nancy Brennan from Publicis Group, global PR firm, MSL Group in Chicago.

VICE PRESIDENT NELSON: That's my part.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, that's your part. Sorry.

VICE PRESIDENT NELSON: Good morning. I'm excited to introduce to you this morning Tom Hirschauer and Nancy Brennan from Publicis Group, global PR firm, MSL Group in Chicago.

Many of you in the audience will remember Tom and Nancy who spoke to us at two recent National Conventions where they first introduced a proposal for a three -- three-phase plan to build American Legion Auxiliary awareness and then returned the following year to report on initial results with a recommendation to broadcast our awareness and that message nationwide.

They are here with us again today to give an additional status report based on positive learning experience from the first two phases of the awareness plan and they will also share how the Awareness Campaign moving forward can become a dynamic component of the collaborative effort with our five-year strategic centennial plan.

Tom and Nancy, welcome to Charlotte. We look forward to finding out more about the Awareness Campaign.

Please help me welcome Tom and Nancy.

(Applause.)

MR. HIRSCHAUER: Good morning, everybody.

VOICES: Good morning.

MR. HIRSCHAUER: I don't know how you can sit there for three hours. I'd be moving all over the place. So kudos. No. Yeah. Yeah, there you go. Don't encourage it.

Madam President, it's a honor and a great pleasure for Nancy and I to be your guests here today. We've been given a task and an assignment that is so vital not only to the organization but to every veteran that has served in the United States. So thank you for allowing us to be in your presence.

We're really here to talk about the Awareness Campaign, the National Awareness Campaign is best served to now think about collaboration and coordination with the five-year strategic plan.

I thought it would be useful, though, for us to step back a bit. I know that some of you have seen this data before. Many of you have not. And I think it would be important for us to look at the information again.

Ronald Reagan said freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it on to your children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on, passed on for them to do the same.

The mission of this organization is really very short and to the point. It's all about service, not self, and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve for God and country. And by doing so, the organization advocates, educates, mentors, and promotes patriotism.

This is a vital and necessary mission with great purpose and resolve. We came to you about two years ago, two conventions ago to talk to you about that because there were some very, very strong concerns about where this organization was going in the future.

And let me give you some facts. The average age of an Auxiliary member is around 60 years old. Seventy-two percent are over 50. Fifty-five percent are over 60 and 35 percent are over 70 years old.

Now, why is that important? Because from the years 1977 to 1999, there was only two percent decrease in membership which is really quite good. However, from the year 2000 to the year 2010, there was almost a 16 percent decline. And in the last three years, the total decline from 2010 now stands at almost 24 percent.

That's 69,000 individuals that have left the organization in the past three years. That's a rate of about 23,000 per year. The organization cannot sustain itself if that decline continues.

Now, it's interesting because we're gaining new members, but that's not a net gain obviously. Those who have come to join the organization in the first year, even though you had a dues increase recently, have stayed. But it's those in the second year and third year who are leaving and that's what we've got to stop. Unfortunately, based on this rate of decline, we'll be extinct by the year 2031. Not good.

And for our veterans, quite frankly is why we're here, if the conflicts were to end today, veterans still need our services for at least 60 more years. However, at the current rate of decline, we'll only be here for 20 years. That's a 40-year gap that's not acceptable.

And if you think of it in a different way, the 198,000 fewer members represents 2.4 hours of service. If we were a company, that would equate to about 1,100 full-time equivalents. It's a huge company that just left. We can't have that happen.

And, quite frankly, the bottom line is we're under-serving our current veteran population. So we ask the question we asked two years, we asked it last year, and we're going to ask it again, if not now, when, if not you, then who? Let's pass it on.

This is not just a national campaign. Quite frankly, I think it's one of the great learnings that we had over the last two years. And what I mean by that -- oh, sure, we're out talking to people across this country, but it can't be done at this higher level only.

It really takes a coordination effort of National, department, unit levels. And if we're all singing off the same hymnal, we've got a great opportunity to move this forward. When any one of those groups doesn't pull their weight or doesn't understand how to pull their weight, it's not as if all of the units in the United States for the American Legion Auxiliary have a question about moving forward or passing on, I think what we found out is maybe the -- at the level and the department level, they didn't feel empowered to work on public relations in the way that we think they should.

So we want to make sure that, in fact, everyone in this organization feels empowered to use the power of public relations and that's how we want to move forward.

As I said, you need to embrace it, commit to it, and follow through with it to pass it on. Over the last two years, we've learned a lot -- I'm going to get to that in just a second -- about ourselves as an organization and also about our potential new members.

So how did we start to build awareness for the American Legion Auxiliary? Well, we had a plan, a three-phase plan to build awareness. We've completed the first two phases with, quite frankly, astonishing learnings that are going to help us really move forward.

And now what we're suggesting is that we collaborate and coordinate within the five-year strategic centennial plan. It seems to be out of step if we move forward doing work from a national advertising standpoint while the organization decided, well, wait a minute, maybe we should step back just a little and reassess what we're doing across the whole continuum of programming, leadership, learning in the organization.

And what was the basis of that public -- national public relations plan? Well, there are really three channels of attack. And this had not been done before in the organization. Certainly PR both at a local level, which you do well and you've

heard some of the reports about, but also at a national level, to do some television advertising or at least provide that advertising.

And if we don't do it as a paid standpoint, we can certainly do it as PSAs. And that's one of the learnings that we want to bring to you. And then also there's a national direct mail effort that's really quite effective raising lots of money for the Foundation.

So the objectives of the plan were this. Build awareness of who we are, what we do, and why it matters. And it's interesting, and I'm going to show you some quotes from some individuals why that's important.

So the plan was always to test, learn, and then proceed in these three phases. The objectives are the same going forward. There's no difference in the public relations objectives of what we started with and what we think will be built into the strategic plan. We just -- we think it's a new path to move forward.

So what did we do in the first phase? Well, we created and tested some messages. And you'll see a commercial here in a second. We also determined three to five geographic markets for this test. And we wanted to build awareness about the ALA and its membership. And then we obviously wanted to be measured on the success or lack thereof.

So we said, well, what are these five markets? What's the best way to do this? Well, we came up with the criteria. We wanted markets with a large military base or installation, VA hospitals were present. There were a number of ALA national award winners and a high percentage of young men and women enlisting in those markets.

Well, we found five. And I think those of you may remember what those are. It's Colorado Springs, Lexington, Norfolk, San Antonio, and Seattle. And we also decided to do some research in those five markets so we'd have a benchmark. Let's find out where we are regarding awareness and here's what we found out.

Colorado, only 13 percent of the -- of women 35 plus were aware of the American Legion Auxiliary. Lexington was 16 percent and you can see the numbers. They're relatively low. So we knew we had a lot of work to do and there were a number of things that we wanted to create, one of which was a series of print ads that ran in those particular markets using your volunteers as subjects.

We also created a television commercial where we provided a 800 telephone number so somebody could call or we set up a micro site which was step-up ALA. So if somebody wanted more information, they could go to the micro site. And, importantly, we revised the PR toolkit.

What did we expect? Well, we thought we'd get about a thousand responses. In fact, we received close to 1,200 responses which was about a 20 percent increase. And here's how we did it. We did it with this TV commercial and hopefully you've seen it.

VOICE: There are lots of unmet needs out here and while I can't change everything, I can change some things. So I stepped up and became an American Legion Auxiliary volunteer.

For nearly a hundred years, they've been helping our veterans, military, and their families here and abroad. Military deployment can be tough on a family, so we

do what we can to help. And every injured and homeless veteran deserves the compassion we can give them.

VOICE: We are here to help.

VOICE: Plus, we also have programs to teach our youth how to be good citizens and young women how to be leaders at ALA Girls State. I wanted to give back like the other 800,000 American Legion Auxiliary volunteers.

There's history here, patriotism, pride, open arms. It doesn't take much time to make a difference. Will join me and please step up to help our country's heroes and their families? Call the number to volunteer today.

MR. HIRSCHAUER: So here's what we learned from the first -- yes, yes, thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. HIRSCHAUER: We're proud of the work and -- and you should be proud of -- of who you are and be willing to shout to the -- to the whole United States what we do.

So here's what we learned. Well, women 35 plus are not aware of who we are or what we do. However, when we tell them what we do, to see a commercial, look at a PR, they're at least willing to consider it. And that's extremely important. They don't pass it by. They actually act and respond to something.

So we believe we can also and found out that we can create action from a younger female audience. Now, remember the numbers that I showed you earlier. Seventy-two percent of the membership currently is over 50 and 55 percent over 60. We really do need to find and attract a younger audience.

And here's why we say that, because this was one of the key learnings. Female respondents overwhelmingly use the website versus a telephone to connect. So we might say, oh, my gosh, somebody that's 65 years old doesn't know anything about the Internet or doesn't carry a smartphone or doesn't tweet or -- well, that's a bunch of bologna.

And this is -- this finding proves it, that we are an internet digital society and we're savvy in that. And, therefore, we as an organization have to be able to know how to communicate and work with individuals.

And why did they go to the internet do you think versus pick up a phone? Well, we think it's a couple of reasons.

Number one, they want more information and they know they can go to the internet to find out that. So we better be prepared on the internet to have that kind of information. It's also a time saver. It's a lot simpler to go to the internet than maybe go through an 800 number and it's also easy to use.

So 80 percent of the individuals that responded did so via the internet, but here was the fascinating part about that. Of those people who went to the -- on the internet or used digital, nearly 50 percent used a mobile phone or tablet to access the micro site. Again, they want more information.

And I can just envision an individual sitting watching television in their -- in their family room with their phone by them or a tablet on their lap 'cause we all do it, looking at the television commercial and immediately dialing. I mean, that's -- that's good information and good learning.

So what did individuals say about the commercial when they saw it? And I think this is so compelling. And if you think that we're up here giving you dire information and saying doom and gloom, not at all. This is so positive and so opportunistic moving forward.

For example, in Colorado Springs, a 56-year-old female said I didn't know it existed, but it's right up my alley. I need to look into it, or from Lexington, Kentucky, had mostly known about American Legion where veterans gathered to drink and have bands. Again, a misperception of who we are and what we do.

This puts a whole different twist of what the Auxiliary is about, knowing they are there to help with families in need who have dads and husbands taking care of our country, or in Norfolk, a 48-year-old said I wasn't aware of the ALA until I saw the commercial. I've been looking for a volunteer organization that my family and I could participate. I've intended to call ALA to get more details on volunteerism. We live in a heavily military community. My close family members have served. I would like to give back in some way.

And in San Antonio, this 44-year-old said wasn't aware of the good work that they do, or finally in Seattle, a 40-year-old, I never heard of them and what they do till I saw the ad and now I know and I'm interested.

So it isn't a question about the purpose, the resolve, the mission, the passion of this organization. Quite frankly, it's an issue about telling our story, getting out into the marketplace, being more visible, being willing to talk to people and proud to talk to people about what we do.

So then we moved on to phase two. We said good learnings, let's see what we can do nationally. So we moved on to a national television cable program for four weeks that ended not quite so long ago in November of 2013. And we revised the local PR kit and we actually wrote some national op-eds.

Here's some of the stations on which this commercial ran, the one that you just saw. So what were the results of that?

Forty-three million impressions nationwide with women 35 plus, 4,600 went to the website, and 422 called. Now, that -- if you remember, it was 80/20 before. It's now almost 90/10 in terms of going to the website.

Here's the number I want you to think about if you think we can't get people involved and interested in the organization. For the last three years, we have lost nearly 29,000 members net -- net decline. In four weeks, we got 4,600 people to at least say I'm interested. That says the message is right.

It also says when we get them involved in the organization, we need to make sure that we're relevant to what they want to do and how they want to help not only the organization but -- but veterans themselves.

However, it's been difficult to convert. While we had 4,600 people that were interested, we didn't convert nearly all of them at all. And that's something that we need to work on.

So what are the conclusions from the campaign over the last two years? Well, as I said, the message is relevant and resonates with women who want to serve. And there are many of them out there.

Active participation at the unit and department level is critical for success. We've been providing the tools that are certainly important, TV ads, press kits, print ads, et cetera, but training is necessary for members to feel empowered and motivated to act. Everything is there sitting ready to go. We need to give the little bit of nudge with some training moving forward.

And, lastly, the National Awareness plan must be now in concert with the five-year strategic plan. So good learning, good opportunity from a national awareness standpoint over the last year and a half to two years.

We think now our recommendation is to shift where we've been to follow and be in concert with the plan going forward the next five years.

And Nancy would like to talk to you about how from a public relations standpoint that's going to be possible.

Nancy.

MS. BRENNAN: Good morning.

(Applause.)

MS. BRENNAN: I am the Nancy in Tom and Nancy. So how do we move forward in building awareness? Well, as Tom said, we -- we stopped after we ran the advertising and we looked at the results of all the efforts, the direct mail, the development of the tools, and we assessed where we were in achieving our goals and we also looked at what was happening with the five-year Strategic Centennial Plan.

And it became clear as we looked at the goals of that plan that PR, public relation, plays an incredible role in reaching all those goals. In fact, if you look at that plan, excelling at communications, which certainly public relations is a big part of it, is an important strategy for achieving the goals of the plan.

So as we thought about it, it made sense not to move forward on a parallel path with an awareness initiative, but instead to refocus our efforts on integrating our efforts into the plan, into the strategic plan.

So first of all, we didn't think it would be prudent to continue with the advertising program as it stands, but instead to redeploy those dollars and make them work harder in support of developing strong communications as part of the strategic plan. And I'm going to take you through what that means as we move forward.

By redeploying those dollars from phase three of our initial plan, we would support the thorough assessment of the department and unit needs and develop the training modules to really build the capacity and the expertise that's needed at that local level to really help attain those goals.

So we want to make sure that all those communications tools that we've developed in the past phase, that everyone has the confidence and the understanding to deploy them to the maximum benefit of the organization.

And as part of that effort, one of the training modules that we would develop would be a public relations training module. And what this would enable all those members on both the department and the unit level is to really seize public relationship opportunities when they become available, to deliver the messages that we need to deliver with confidence, and to really present a compelling case for why this organization matters and why what it does matters and why the right people should be members and supported.

At the same time, while we understand and one of the learnings was that we really need to activate and motivate on a department and unit level, we understand that public relations on a national level and building that brand identity and awareness on a national level remains important.

So one of the things that we're going to do to move forward is to continue in a more focused way to develop opportunities for PR on a national level where we are working on stories and features that support not only local efforts but tell a story on a national level and major outlets.

Now, this is not to say that the -- that the wonderful broadcast advertising that was developed in the first phases is not -- will not be useful going forward. In fact, this -- this advertisement is available to those on a local level to be used as a PSA. I think that's an important point to bring out.

But also as we move forward and as the first phases of the training take place, there's an opportunity to consider again where we -- whether we can run the national advertising program now that we have all the training that we need and we've empowered people at every level to deliver the messages and support of the larger advertising campaign.

So what are we trying to achieve? It all goes back to those desired outcomes that relate so importantly to your strategic plan or our strategic plan.

First of all, we want to increase awareness of who we are, what we do, and why it matters. We want to honor those who have served. We want to reverse the decline in membership and we want to hit that goal of a million members.

And communications and public relations is an important platform in achieving each and every one of these goals. But it's only one piece of the puzzle. As you look at your strategic plan, we all understand how important it is at every level to promote a culture of good will, to develop a new generation of leaders. That's all part of your strategic plan because it is with overcoming those barriers and good public relations and good communications we can all succeed at attaining all the goals listed in the Centennial Plan.

If not now, when, and if not you, then who? So I leave you with that message from today. Pass it on. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kris, Tom, and Nancy.

I think the information that they shared with us is so important and what we've learned and where we're headed having spent the last year visiting departments and units and really realizing how broken we are internally and what we need to do to try to fix ourselves.

So I think we are truly headed in a really positive, strong direction, and I'm really, really excited about this.

So, again, thank you, Kris, Tom, and Nancy.

Strategic planning produces a framework of high-level directorial goals that enable the organization to focus its energy on effectively serving its purpose. Strategic planning helps an organization prepare for the future, anticipate and manage change, improve decision making processes, and identify existing strengths.

Here with her report is our Long Range Strategic Planning National Chairman, Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Madam President, what's been done to date with strategic planning? What's the ALA's plan for the future? So I will pass it on.

Our original ALA strategic plan concluded December 2013 and included the following initiatives: Gateway to Services, Resources for Veterans and Military Families, technology update, Unit and Department Standards team.

Highlights include the new ALAMIS membership system, the Gateway to Services, Resources for Veterans and Military Families, and the new operations guide for departments.

The work of the three breakout strategy teams has been successfully completed by implementing the goals of their individual plans.

The one carryover from the original strategic plan was the development of a smaller NEC board that would have a voice but not vote, to research and vet matters to be presented to the NEC.

Our National Constitution was amended at the National Convention in 2013 to allow for the addition of a smaller NEC board. At this National Convention, the delegates approved the adoption of this smaller executive board.

So next steps for the ALA, development of a plan for the future approved by the NEC in March 2014 at the D.C. Conference. This plan was developed by leadership but with input from a member survey.

The 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan that was adopted has five goals, Attain a Million Members. One of the strategies, invest in opportunities to attract, engage, and retain members.

Goal number two, Create an Internal Culture of Goodwill, define and cultivate and sustain a culture that fully reflects the ALA core values.

Number three, Develop Leadership at All Levels. Remove barriers for considering and selecting leadership.

Number four, Strengthen Departments and Units, collaborate with departments in developing innovative ways to improve organizational and financial performances.

Number five, With The American Legion, Build Brand Loyalty, define our brand identity and promise.

There are more strategies under each goal. These just give you one for each goal listed. These five goals must be done at all levels and depend on each other so that we can become a thriving organization.

The strategic goals will be supported by an implementation plan, guided by goal champions and strategy captains.

The national budget for the next five years will address the needs to accomplish these five goals. It will also support and reflect the need to implement the Centennial Plan at the national, department, and unit levels.

The implementation team consists of President Nancy Brown-Park, Vice President Janet Jefford, Kris Nelson, and Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan.

Additional goal champions, strategy captains, and members have been added to each goal in all the strategies designated.

The phone calls with our consultant took place early in August. A breakout session to help departments with their plan was held on Monday, August 25th, at this Convention.

The implementation team will continue to be involved in the development of each department's strategic plan.

So what does success look like to us? By 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary's million members will be making a difference for veterans and their families and every neighborhood. Repeat that with me: By 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary's millions members will be making a difference for veterans and their families and every neighborhood.

What must we achieve to reach our vision? Achieve these five goals nationwide. The future is ours. There is no time like the present. We must succeed. So pass it on. Everyone has an opportunity to be involved in the process and reap the rewards of attaining our goal of one million members by our hundredth anniversary.

Madam President, that concludes my platform remarks. I have no recommendations or resolutions.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you so much, Jan.
(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Just really quickly, each of you received on your chair this morning the five goals and our mission of where we --

VOICE: Vision.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: -- our vision of where we want to be in the year 2019. So you have that. Please carry it with you. It will always be handy.

And then one other quick thing on our implementation team that Jan announced. There is one additional member and that's our National Secretary, Dubbie Buckler.

CHAIRMAN PULVERMACHER-RYAN: I'm sorry.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That's all right. I just wanted to make sure that people knew that they had -- that Dubbie was there.

So, in fact, our -- the committee or the strategic planning team is really a representation of volunteers at every level along with staff. So we're all working together as one team.

The strength and influence of the Auxiliary comes from its membership. The Membership Program works to ensure the future growth and prosperity of the organization by partnering with units, departments, and divisions to develop strategies to retain current members, recruit new ones, and engage members in mission-related activities.

Please welcome National Chairman Kathy Daudistel with the Membership Committee report.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

The year started off with a huge challenge from President Nancy, race to a million members by our centennial year. In addition to this huge challenge, it was announced that the main focus would be on renewals. New members are always going to be important, but keeping our current members and rejoining our former members is vital to our organization.

At the Department Leadership National Conference in May of 2013, everyone was asked to write down three things they have in common and three things that make them different. These were placed on paper links and joined together to form a single large chain.

As the commonalities and differences were reviewed, the attendees began to realize that we really do have a lot in common regardless of our differences. By joining together for one common purpose, we can make a difference.

Departments went home and excitedly put on their race gear, laced up their running shoes, and eagerly took off from the starting line.

Nevada, Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, and Tennessee led the pack, but by lap five, Iowa had sailed by and steadily held the pace position for the next 28 laps.

Nebraska, Minnesota, and Wisconsin stayed on Iowa's heels for several laps with Oregon, Florida, and New Jersey right behind.

In lap 34, Vermont slid past Iowa to take the lead where they stayed for the next two laps until Oregon bumped them out for the lead. New Jersey overtook Oregon in 37 with Florida and Delaware biting at their heels.

Each lap was exciting and everyone looked forward to membership Wednesdays for the results. Now, every race has a longshot and this race was no different. In lap 39, Hawaii jumped from 51st to 33rd position.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: By lap 40, they took the lead where they remained for the next few laps.

Now, as I said earlier, the main focus this year was on renewals. At this time, I'm going to have the winning Department President and their Membership Chairman take the stage. All of the winners will have official pictures taken backstage later. And please hold your applause until the end. But if I call your department, please make some noise.

As of June 1st, the leading departments in each division with the highest percentage of new member renewals are Central Division, Department of Wisconsin.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Eastern Division, Department of Rhode Island.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Northwestern Division, Department of Nebraska.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Southern Division, Department of Louisiana.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: And Western Division, Department of Hawaii.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: As of June 1st, the leading departments in each division with the most senior renewals are Central Division, Department of Iowa.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Southern Division, Department of Louisiana.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Northwestern Division, Department of Nebraska.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Eastern Division, Department of Vermont.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: And Western Division, Department of Hawaii.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: That is not all. As of 30 days prior to Convention, I am excited to announce the top five departments with the highest renewal percentage and the best seats in the house, fifth place Department of Minnesota.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Fourth place Department of Nebraska.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Third place Department of New Jersey.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Second place Department of Vermont.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: And the department with the highest renewal percentage as of June 1st -- or 30 days prior to Convention is Department of Hawaii.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: The top two departments with the highest numeric goal percentages as of 30 days prior to Convention are second place Department of Hawaii with 100.5 percent.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: And the number one department with 101.13 percent is Department of Mississippi.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: If you've noticed, the Department of Hawaii has received quite a few honors today. At this time, I am honored to present the Department of Hawaii President, Laura Hashimoto, and her Membership Chairman Frances Au (phonetic) with a special plaque noting all of their achievements. And accepting for them is Department Secretary Elizabeth Lee.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Congratulations.

We are not done yet. In early July, departments were asked to step it up. The Extra Step Award is presented to any department that increased their membership percentage by one percent or more from July 2nd to August 20th. These departments will receive a citation in the mail after Convention for their effort.

The following departments met this challenge: Nevada, Washington, Maine, Missouri, Virginia, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, North Dakota, Colorado, Delaware, Oklahoma, Alaska, New Jersey, Oregon, Alabama, California, and Kentucky.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: And the winner of the Golden Step Award, the department that made the highest percentage increase is the Department of Mississippi with an increase of 4.6 percent beating out Department of Alaska by .1 percent.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Thank you all for stepping it up.

Okay, everybody, give everybody a big congratulations for our winners.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Thank you, ladies.

Now, each year, we honor those members who recruit 25 or more new Senior members with a Silver Brigade Award. This year, there were 33 winners and they received a special gift from President Nancy. One member went the extra mile. The winner of the 2014 Silver Brigade Extra Award is Kathy Falk from the Department of Arizona.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Kathy recruited 75 new Senior members and was the winner of the \$250 cash drawing.

Congratulations, Kathy.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Junior members who recruit ten or more new Junior or Senior members are entered into a drawing for \$100. This year, we had two Juniors qualify, Ariana Adkins from Ohio and Bethany Cresl from Nebraska.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: A drawing was made and Ariana won the \$100 prize.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Congratulations and great job, girls.

Every department is committed to this race and will continue to work hard to reach the million member goal.

Madam President, I know that your shoes have to be worn out by now.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, yeah.

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: So at this time, I would like to present you --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, my God, look at these.

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: -- with your new shoes.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: These shoes aren't made for walking. They're made for racing.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: How did you know my size?

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: I have secrets.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, my God, look at these.

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: We are not stopping now. The race has just begun. Together we will win this race.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: On behalf of the entire Membership Committee including our National staff, thank you for working so hard to pass it on and keep this challenge rolling. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kathy.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow, these are great. Thank you. These are great.

Are there any resolutions or recommendations?

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Yes, Madam President, we have one Resolution.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kathy.

So Diane is going to come out here. Yay.

CHAIRMAN DUSCHECK: Madam President, resourcing American Legion Auxiliary five-year strategic centennial plan.

Whereas, the past 40 years, membership in the American Legion Auxiliary has steadily declined and despite efforts by new Membership Committees annually, membership has now fallen below 750,000 and,

Whereas, the biggest loss of membership is among new members who leave the organization within the first three years of becoming a member and,

Whereas, if membership continues to decline at the rate it has over the past 40 years, the organization will have fewer than 300,000 members in 17 years and be extinct in 30 years and,

Whereas, National Presidents for many years have reported observing that, A, the American Legion Auxiliary is not known by the very people for whom the Auxiliary exists to serve; B, that departments and units have reported difficulty in attracting candidates to serve as officers and chairmen at the department and unit levels; and, C, there is a lack of awareness about the Auxiliary among women who unknowingly are eligible to belong and,

Whereas, over the past five years, more than 2,000 members have participated in surveys and focus sessions addressing the issues and needs of the organization, citing consistently key factors contributing to the steady decline in American Legion Auxiliary membership and,

Whereas, the most prevalent issue cited served as the basis for creating the five strategic goals of the new five-year American Legion Auxiliary strategic plan and,

Whereas, the American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee in March of 2014 duly adopted the 2014 through 2019 vision and five strategic goals

for the American Legion Auxiliary that depend on each other and must all be done at all levels so that we can become a thriving organization, which are vision, by 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary's million members will be making a differences for veterans and their families in every neighborhood, goal five with The American Legion build awareness and loyalty as a brand family, goal four strengthen departments and units, goal three develop leadership at all levels, goal two create an internal culture of goodwill, goal one achieve a million members and,

Whereas, the Centennial Plan goal teams have identified critical strategies and initiatives that must be accomplished in order to achieve the five goals including an objective professional assessment of our capacity building needs and professional development of organizational effectiveness and awareness advocacy training modules and train trainers to help districts and departments and,

Whereas, the budget proposal for resourcing the centennial plan has been painstakingly developed and represents an investment in ourselves of a million dollars for a million members to reallocate one million dollars in reserve funds originally set aside for phase three of the Awareness Campaign to instead provide resources needs for phase one of the centennial plan to benefit all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary and,

Whereas, the budget proposal includes resources applied across each of the five goals including incentives to departments for successfully implementing their department's strategic plans,

Now, therefore be it resolved that the 2014 National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary held August 26th through the 28th, 2014 in Charlotte, North Carolina supports the American Legion Auxiliary making an investment in itself to accomplish the five goals of the American Legion Auxiliary 2014-2019 Strategic Centennial Plan,

And be it further resolved that upon adoption of this Resolution by the 2014 National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary, the National Executive Committee take action at its first 2014-2015 meeting to appropriate funds not to exceed \$1 million to resource the needs identified to be accomplished in phase one of the American Legion Auxiliary 2014 through 2019 Strategic Centennial Plan,

And be it further resolved that the American Legion Auxiliary National Conventions in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 be apprised of the achievements of the American Legion Auxiliary five-year Centennial Plan and determine the desire to proceed with relieving reserve funds based upon successes and needs for implementation of the Centennial Plan over the course of the five years,

And be it finally resolved that the National Organization and departments commit to implementing initiatives to accomplish the five goals of the American Legion Auxiliary five-year Strategic Centennial Plan adopted by the National Executive Committee so that the organization may realize reversal of its declining membership and achieve a million members by the 100th anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary in 2019-2020.

The Pre-Convention Committees on Finance and Membership both recommended the resolution be adopted.

Madam President, on behalf of the Resolutions Committee, I move the adoption of the Resolution just read.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The question is on the adoption of the Resolution as read. The Pre-Convention Committees on Finance and Membership both recommend that the Resolution be adopted.

Is there any discussion?

VICE PRESIDENT NELSON: Madam President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Chair recognizes mike number three.

VICE PRESIDENT NELSON: Kris Nelson, Department of Minnesota.

I speak in favor of this Resolution. The American Legion Auxiliary staff and Finance Committees have been very fiscally responsible and we have healthy reserves. Reserves are used for two different things, to fund things that come up outside of the average year budget and to -- for big projects.

It's raining on the American Legion Auxiliary. As we heard in the last 15 years, we've lost over 200,00 members. We need this money. We need to support ourselves to preserve the American Legion Auxiliary. If not now, when? If not us, who? Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Is there any other discussion?

MS. BOYER: Madam President, microphone number three, Janice Boyer (phonetic) from the Department of Pennsylvania.

We have a question whether the monies being spent are going to be spent with a public relations firm or is this going to be an in organization expenditure.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: A combination of both, right? You want to answer it? It's a combination of both, am I right?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: The money is not going to go to a public relations firm. There may be some expenditures for things that would be done by professionals in that field, but the million dollars is not an expenditure in -- in one big lump sum to an outside entity. Is that the gist of your question?

MS. BOYER: That's the gist of the question. Thank you.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thanks, Dubbie. Thank you. Any other discussion?

(Whereupon, there was no response.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Stand, please. Come on. We've been sitting for a long time.

Those in favor of this Resolution, please press the number one on your voting keypad. Those opposed, please press the number two on your keypad.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The voting is now closed. Please show the results.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The affirmative has it and the resolution is now adopted.

Thank you, Kathy and Diane, and thank you, American Legion Auxiliary, for helping me reach my number one goal to secure the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. Sorry.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. Next. Yay. Oh, no. National Secretary is here with her report. Please welcome National Secretary Dubbie Buckler.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It's really a whole lot more fun dancing, but I only have 80 pages, so we'll get through it quickly.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I've asked the National President to stay up here with me because the first thing I would like to report is that we have a wonderful National Headquarters staff. You have a wonderful National Headquarters staff.

Okay. We have one person applauding. If anyone else agrees. Thank you, Elizabeth.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you.

Earlier you might have noticed in the magazine that we recognized one of our employees, Sue Stewart, who had -- has been now with the organization over 35 years.

VOICE: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Stephanie Abisi who was actually remembered in the tribute that -- that Carlene gave, there was a cover of National News. The -- the younger girl on that -- on that cover was Stephanie Ayers Abisi. Just a little piece of trivia.

And something that we'd like to do right now is honor your national treasurer who is a treasure.

Marta, would you come up here?

She totally doesn't know we're going to do this. Marta has --

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Marta joined the organization when Helen Gardner was National President.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Helen Holcomb.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Helen -- I'm sorry. Helen -- oh, my gosh. Who's nervous? Helen Holcomb was president. I'm so sorry. So obviously that tells you that she has been with the organization 20 years. And we have a special pin recognizing her 20th anniversary with the organization. And this one has more than a Swarovski jewel in it. It doesn't have a big one, but it has a little one.

TREASURER HEDDING: I love this pin. It's nice. Look at the size of this.

(Applause.)

TREASURER HEDDING: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So, Marta, thank you for all your years of service and all that you have done for this organization. And I know that all the Past National Presidents who have -- who have served with you, you have been a treasure and a jewel and have helped each and every one of us along the way. So thank you so much, Marta.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you.

Marta is just a great asset to the organization and I appreciate you really a whole lot. So now I got to try to get composed here for a second.

So speaking of online resources -- how's that for a bad transition -- one of the things that I hope you've noticed that we've been doing for the last several years at National Headquarters is coming up with resources to help the organization.

And what you just did in voting to support resourcing the Centennial Plan is in a big nutshell, we have a lot of good tools. We need a lot of hands-on empowerment for people to use them. And if we're not using the tools, it doesn't matter if we have them.

But what we do know is that people are starting more and more to take advantage of them. More members are utilizing the website including viewing the magazine online. How many of you know you can view the magazine online? Okay. And you can download a lot of resources.

So our number one download are scholarship applications. Over 16,000 have been -- applications and brochures have been downloaded in the last eight months. Wow. Membership applications, nearly 8,000 in the last eight months.

The Unit Guide -- Unit Handbook -- over 4,600 in the last eight months. And the Department Operations Guide in just under three months, 1,400 downloads and that's for a full 500-page publication.

We now have put that up on the website broken out in chapters as one document. It's about a 23 meg -- megabyte file. So we've now broken that down. So if you want to download that, it's easier because you can do it chapter by chapter and not crash your computers. We're very thoughtful.

The Planned Giving Guide has been downloaded almost a hundred times. Thanks, everyone, who's taking sustaining our organization seriously. And more members are viewing the magazine online. It's been online for about two years. About 7,500 of you looked at the February issue online and 9,000 of you looked at the May issue on line.

Now, remember that email message I sent out some time ago about the member portal and how -- that was supposed to be an enthusiastic yes.

VOICES: Yes.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you.

Well, remember how I said that that was really one phase of things to come? Well, I'd like to share some exciting news. We continue to make improvements to the website to better tell the story of who we are, what we do, and why we matter. And now in the coming weeks, we will be launching our new responsive website.

This means that the website will adjust to the layout of the display -- to display on whatever device you're using whether you're viewing on a computer, a laptop, tablets like an iPad Galaxy and Kindle, even smartphones like the iPhone Android and Microsoft phones.

So would you like a sneak peak?

VOICES: Yes.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Good answer, or that would make the rest of this report really boring.

So -- so let's look -- so look at the screen. So that's our website. That's -- and that's going to be what it's going to look like. Not a lot different, but a little different.

So you can see -- let's look at the develop -- it's hard for me to follow this. This is note to backstage. So let's look at our development site where we are currently testing and building the new website.

So you've re -- you'll see recent ALA headlines and important news. Is that where we are?

VOICE: Yes.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. I've got a big glare right here which is making it just a little bit different. So you can click and see recent issues of the magazine. You can even bookmark things in the magazine when you click on there and you can send the magazine -- you can forward it. You can forward things out of it. So you can save things out of it, so it's really kind of cool.

And you can view the upcoming events calendar all from the home page without having to go from page to page or searching through the website because these are the things that people look at most frequently.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You can -- on our YouTube channel, you can view our ALA commercial and connect to all of our National Headquarters social media pages.

Now, let's take a look -- is it the part where I'm supposed to slow down? Okay? So let's take a look at the top menu. Look at all the things you can see under the about us tab. I'm not going to read through all of that.

You can read about our focus. We do so much, it's hard for us as an organization to tell people who we are, what we do, and why we matter. So we've reorganized it a little bit to our focus.

You can access our scholarships which continue to be the most popular pages on the National website. Now you don't have to go traipsing through 25 pages to find them.

You can learn more about how to donate. So let's take a look at all the things you can learn on the donate page. You can make an online donation with your credit card. You can view videos. And we have a new thank you video up. And we won't show it right now, but -- but I urge you to go look at it. It's really -- it's pretty moving.

You can learn about the ways to give. You can connect with ALA Amazon Smile which is something new. If you -- if you do -- follow the instructions for

Amazon Smile and you purchase things on Amazon -- this would be a better question. Who does not -- had never purchased anything on Amazon?

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. Now, who has purchased something on Amazon?

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. We can get an air conditioner movement going with all those hands that are up right now.

Well, now your online purchases through Amazon can benefit the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. That's kind of cool. Okay. For the two people who applauded on that, it is -- it is a good thing.

And you can get all the information you need about planned giving. Now, here's the cool part. Well, planned giving is really cool, but this is the responsive part. Let's look at how this -- how the website responds to different screen sizes.

So here's -- wait a minute. I wasn't there yet. Hang on. Okay. Well, there's how it would look on a -- are we back full? Is that tablet? Okay. There's how it would look on a tablet and watch it go down to the size of an iPhone. And you don't lose anything. Isn't that just cool?

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So now when you're looking at it on -- on your iPhone, all the information is there. We're going to be launching this in a few weeks. And -- and another cool thing, instead of having to click the like button on Facebook -- oh, here's a good question. Okay. Nancy, note to self. How many of you use Facebook?

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Another air conditioner moment. Okay. That's just about everybody.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: How many of you are my friend?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: How many -- okay. Nancy -- Nancy wants to know how many of you are her friends on Facebook.

(Whereupon, there was a show of hands.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Now, you can just -- you can watch the Facebook postings live. You can just scroll down and see them and not have to click into that. So is that cool too?

VOICES: Yes.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. So we'll be launching this in the few -- in the coming weeks. So be sure to visit the site often and share on your social media sites. And be sure you're linking your own department and unit sites to the National Headquarters website.

Everything in the centennial plan requires technology in some way as do many of the strategies developed by the million member task force. So really cool.

Now, I know some of you want a phone app. This is the next best thing to a phone application. Oh, Nancy is saying back here it's actually better because you have the -- everything on the website is now available on your smartphones.

So, anyway, we're really excited about that. So is this a yay moment? Yay.

VOICES: Yay.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. So we're really proud of some of the things we've done in the last five years. We have vastly improved our technical capabilities. ALA MIS is up and working now. We now have nearly 800 users who are supported by a remarkable two-person National Headquarters IT team.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Now, the new member portal is on the website. It's tied to ALA MIS. We're now going to be going to the smartphone and tablet responsive website. And the next goal is that members will be able to pay renewal dues online.

VOICES: Yay.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It'll be ready when it's ready and you'll know, so I'm not giving you a hard and fast time date, but it's -- but it's the next thing coming up.

And our ultimate goal which really is probably off on the horizon is to eventually be able to join new members online. So we're halfway through a four-phase really big project.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So -- and we do stay connected. I think I've told you this before. Well, nothing has changed. We get a lot of emails and phone calls at National Headquarters. We have over 90 ALA National Headquarter electronic mailboxes. We have a staff of a little over 30, 90 mailboxes.

So, yes, occasionally something ends up in the wrong mailbox and it takes us a while to find it. I just want you to understand how many mailboxes are being monitored. We have over 26 email distribution groups.

Now, let's talk volume. For the month of July alone at National Headquarters, we had almost a hundred thousand emails come in. We deal with well over a thousand emails every day. And in any given year, Marta and I alone receive about a quarter million emails.

So, if you email us and you're concerned why you have not heard from us, I will just say we're humans. We try to stay up with all of it. It is the reason why you get responses from me at 1 o'clock in the morning sometimes. It's a lot -- it's a lot of volume. We try to -- we try to stay on top of it, but we're human.

So if you ever try to contact us and you're wondering why you never heard a response back, most of the time it's not personal. That's a joke. It's never personal. It's just -- sometime -- we're human. If we overlooked it, remind us so that we can get there.

Now, another thing that I want to draw to your attention is the discount program that we have called Abenity. It's gone through a new upgrade. So if you haven't tried to log in or take advantage of our ALA discount program, I really encourage you to do that because it's redesigned. It's much easier to navigate. A lot more discounts have been added. Plus now you get a monthly e-newsletter with special deals that say, hey, as an ALA member, you can get this.

And I have taken advantage of it and I will tell you there really are some -- some good discounts in there.

Now, I'm going to skip over to this part. One of the things that was talked about is -- was the Department Operations Guide and some of you have asked about ordering a copy of that. I will tell you the actual cost to reproduce that is about \$60 for the binder and the tabs and printing all the material that was in there.

So that's why we don't have an order form for it yet. We -- and that's why we put it up online in chunks where you -- it might be more cost effective for you to download it yourself or send it to a local printer.

If there's still a great demand for that, we will try to do that. We will -- we will come up with a way to make it available. I just want you to know that whatever the pricing ends up being, that's -- that is the actual cost to National Headquarters. So we will try to make it available at a lesser cost.

Now, one of the things that I have been oft to say when I've been up here is we get audited a lot at National Headquarters. And I'm proud to say again, Madam President, we have not been visited by a 60 Minutes crew.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: We've had many big multi-year projects culminating with some big achievements. As we mentioned, Department Operations Guide, the revised Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules are in a -- in a user-friendly publication. That will be updated. You will be able to order as soon as possible the updated version from Emblem Sales.

So is it handy the way that it's been formatted in the -- kind of the smaller version? Is that useful to all of you?

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: For those of you who read it every day. As we mentioned, we -- we launched the members only portal. And two years in the making, the branding guide is now on the website. Now, the branding guide tells you everything you need to know about the proper way to use the American Legion Auxiliary emblem and name.

So for the few of you who have discovered that, I think it's helped answer some questions. Just know that it is up on the website.

We again have achieved in maintaining a stellar record of clean audits in an

--

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- in an environment of increased public and regulatory scrutiny of nonprofits. That really is a big deal. And because we just say it's been another good year, another good year of clean audits, when you read things in newspapers about what happened in other -- what happens in other organizations, I really do want to compliment all of you. I want to compliment our National Headquarters' staff. We really do take our mission, our purpose seriously and we really do good -- try -- do a good job of managing your -- your money and --

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- and how we do business and conduct things. We are audited on our finances, our financial processes, our federal grant

compliance, our Foundation's finances, our benefits, and the magazine, plus we had our first external IT, information technology audit review. Again, no criticisms, no complaints. If they were going to be given grades, we have an A on every audit that we've had done.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And, again, nearly 90 percent of the budget supports mission delivery. There is only about -- I think it's actually 11 percent that goes to support fund raising and the administrative operations of your National Headquarters. This is outstanding. It's no small accomplishment and it's kudos to our National Headquarters staff.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And speaking of our National Headquarters staff, last year collectively we as your National Headquarters staff volunteered over 820 hours. We supported our ongoing Headquarter homeless veteran service project, plus we donated \$1,200 worth of items for a Marine Corps unit assigned to Okinawa.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I'm not going to repeat some of the things that you just learned in our Awareness Campaign report. The big news is if we get our message out, people do like it. So we got a big job about getting our message out.

Our American Legion Auxiliary Call to Service Corps reached a five-year milestone. Four point three million in grants have been awarded now to National Headquarters and we've placed now over 200 VISTAs in several departments and some 40 consortium organizations. We are the broker of these resources resulting in greatly expanded national awareness of the American Legion Auxiliary, who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

Now -- and without a development director for the past five years, National Headquarters has raised nearly seven million in outside revenue that we did not have previously. So we are trying to do our part.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I want to talk just one more comment about our American Legion Auxiliary Call to Service Corps. If you've not been involved in the VISTA Program, that might be a disconnect for you. Don't participate in it, therefore don't tune in.

I do want you to tune in because our prominence and our recognition at the National level really has increased as a result of that. Forty organizations that are doing something to help veterans because the American Legion Auxiliary has made it possible for them to have a VISTA, a volunteer in service to America, to help them get whatever project or interest they have done.

And it's not gone without notice. We're -- we've been mentioned in Congressional hearings and we've been mentioned by the White House. And it is the reason that the National organization received an invitation to the Medal of Honor ceremony this year and it is the reason why Nancy Brown-Park got to attend and represent the American Legion Auxiliary at the Medal of Honor ceremony in the White House with the -- with the President of the United States.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Now, what I do want to talk about is what I get asked a lot of questions about. I get asked a lot of questions about Girls State programs. So I want to remind you that the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State programs and operations guide has now been in use for over two years. It was ratified by the NEC.

This program is being run in an entirely different era fraught with liabilities, religious accommodations, students with disabilities, students with medical and -- and eating special dietary needs.

The program has existed for over 60 years. It's an entirely different ball game now for doing that program. So I want to be clear about something. Many of your departments have incorporated Girls State programs. Notice I didn't call it a Girls State corporation. You have incorporated Girls State programs.

American Legion Auxiliary Girls State is a program of the department. The fact -- the fact that you have a board that -- or an organization that was incorporated for the purpose of raising funds for your Girls State program and the reason you did this, you incorporated for the departments that have incorporated Girls State programs, you incorporated to be a 501(c)(3) so that it would be easier to raise donations.

Doing that did not make you a separate entity not accountable to your department. You are still the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program. As an incorporated board, you are still wholly, W-H-O-L-L-Y, wholly, completely accountable to your department.

That means as a subsidiary corporation, you're not an independent body. You are a subsidiary, subsidiary to the department, subordinate to the department. The department is the parent corporation. You're an incorporated Girls State program, not separate but equal, and not getting that is causing some big problems.

Your officers and directors of your incorporated Girls State programs must be approved by your department governing board, must be, not because National says it must be, because corporate law says they must be.

The officers and directors of a subsidiary corporation must be approved by the parent corporation. The parent is the -- the de --

VOICES: Department.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. So if people are telling you we don't have to do that, they're wrong. Your Girls State programs' bylaws and policies must be approved by the department governing board, not if it's convenient, not only if somebody wants to, they must be.

And if they make a change to their bylaws, that change must be approved by your department governing board. So for most of you, your department governing board is what you call your DEC, correct?

VOICES: Yes.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. So if I say DEC, I'm referring to your department governing board in case you call it by some other name.

The department treasurer must be a signatory on all American Legion Auxiliary Girls State accounts for your department, must be. It's inadvisable -- it is advisable to have an additional signatory. If the department's secretary is not the

treasurer, if you have two separate individuals serving those positions, she can be a signatory on the account.

The department can determine the most appropriate person, but you must have the department treasurer as a signatory and you're highly encouraged to have another department official be a signatory on that account in addition to whoever is a signatory for the Girls State incorporated subsidiary.

The assets of an incorporated American Legion Auxiliary Girls State belong to the department. They do not belong to the subsidiary corporation. The subsidiary corporation controls them, raises them, manages them, but ownership of the assets of a subsidiary corporation belong to the parent corporation. The assets of a subsidiary corporation known as your Girls State program are -- belong to, are owned by the department. Again, that is corporate law. That is not National up here just talking.

Your incorporated Girls State board must report its activities monthly to the department even if the report is we didn't meet, we didn't do anything this month. That's a report. Our report is we took no action, there was no activity this month.

But if you have an incorporated Girls State board that has a bank account, there's going to be something to report every month because the financial statements must be reported to the department governing board.

Your incorporated Girls State program as a subsidiary must report its financial statements to the department governing board on a monthly basis. Now, departments who don't enforce this are going to face huge liability exposure at some point if you haven't already.

The National organization controls who may use the National trademark name, emblem, and logos of the organization. Girls State and a slew of iterations are all trademarked by The American Legion. The American Legion owns the names and the trademarks. The American Legion entrusts the National organization and specifically the -- the position of National Treasurer -- or National Secretary -- sorry, Marta, I just gave you a new job -- of National Secretary to ensure compliance with proper use of the trademark.

Remember I mentioned the branding guide is on the website now, so a lot of your questions are going to be answered in that branding guide.

If a department Girls State incorporated board is not behaving properly as a subsidiary corporation to the department, the National organization can and will file suit to protect the name and trademarks of the American Legion Auxiliary and request a court prohibit the corporation from using the name American Legion Auxiliary Girls State or any iteration or design of same.

One -- once one Girls State program is successfully sued for how it is conducting its program, I can assure you that's going to be the beginning of the end of this hallmark program for this organization. One expensive lawsuit, one big black eye can wipe it out for all of us. The damages a judge can award against your department will bankrupt -- can bankrupt your department.

Departments authorize the creation of your incorporated Girls State boards. Departments, your department governing boards have the corporate authority to dissolve them or remove any or all of the board members and to take control of the assets.

Department officers and directors, your Department Executive Committee are collectively and individually responsible and liable for the actions of the department. If you have a subsidiary corporation that is not complying with the corporate law governing subsidiaries, you as a department governing board are opening yourselves for personal and departmental liability for any court judgments.

These programs must be operated properly, legally, and departments need to have a competent staff consistently involved with this program. I'm pleading with you. You just can't ignore this and you just can't dismiss it because you don't like it. It is your department's reputation. It is the reputation of the American Legion Auxiliary.

And in the spirit of goal two, let's all keep in mind that comments that resort to unbecoming behavior are unbecoming to this organization. If you don't like it, calling me or anyone else a name is not going to make it any more palatable.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It's not going to make people love the brand American Legion Auxiliary. We have a lot of work to do. So this program is your biggest liability risk. You're responsible 24 hours seven days a week for the care and housing of someone else's child away from home. That's a big deal.

So that's where I've had a lot of my -- spent a lot of my time, Madam President. So now I will just try to turn that on a less -- less severe note. We have to invest in ourselves. And I applaud the action you just took to support the rec -- recognizing that we have to invest resources in ourselves.

We have done a good job of managing your finances. Your Finance Committee, your National officers have done a terrific job of managing the assets of your National corporation. You are in a blessed position to be able to have reserves to be at this moment in time in the history of the organization to say if that's a rainy day fund, we need to take care of some things to help turn this organization around.

Achieving organizational effectiveness is essential for achieving goal one. We're not going to get a million members in five years if we don't foster a culture of good will. We have to develop leadership at all levels and we have to strengthen departments.

We've done some pretty big things already aimed at goal three and four such as the department operations guide, the Girls State guide, the training that's been put on for departments and units. We just have to do more.

A huge problem coming back to goal two and that fostering that culture of good will, a huge problem negatively impacting our entire organization's effectiveness is the high turnover of department secretaries. We've had over 60 percent turnover in department secretaries in two years.

Department secretaries are part of the department leadership team. Frequent office management turnover is very costly to the department. It's costly to us because when a new department secretary comes on board, I can assure you we get a lot of questions at National Headquarters, what do I do, which is one of the reasons why we need to invest in this five-year centennial plan.

We need to come up with training other than it being one more thing on my plate or one more thing on Marta's plate. We need to come up with a really good

way to make sure that we've got the kind of training needed for organizational effectiveness at the department level.

It's also costly to our reputation. When you have turnover, some of it's due to -- because people who've been there for a while have retired. But candidly, frankly, a lot of the turnover is because of ill will. Don't need to go into who, what, when, how, where, why. But we have got to get a grip on what's important and it's not individual wins, individual losses. It's those five goals. It's preserving the mission of this organization to be here for another generation.

People are joining less and those who join will only renew if they find personal fulfillment in belonging or because they are so proud of what an organization does that they want to financially support it. So please let the spirit of good will lead us.

And now, Madam President, I'd like to talk about you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: What?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I'd like to thank you for quite a year of ideas and intense focus on developing this plan. When Nancy -- there are two things. When she came into Headquarters a couple years ago, and that's how far out we start planning things and start talking about, okay, what do you want to get your arms around, what's the big idea, what's -- and she didn't know what. She just knew -- she didn't know how. She just knew that we got to do something to preserve the future of the organization.

So that's behind what became the centennial plan. So I want to applaud her for that.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Now, the other thing that we talked about in that meeting is the American Legion Auxiliary, belonging to it, attending meetings, events, even National Convention is missing a word, a little three letter word, fun.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Now we get to have fun.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: We're going to get a picture of the board back there.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I'll tell you it's been a lot -- there has been a lot of work done this year. There have been a lot of laughs.

Nancy, you have brought fun, and brought some other things, too, but you brought fun mostly. Now -- so it's kind of been the year of selfies, but in a fun way.

Now, one thing I do want to talk about Nancy is she was handed a book of prayers earlier and -- and that's wonderful because I happen to know that God has a sense of humor, because when one of those things we talked about, she said I don't like cold weather. I don't want to travel if it's cold weather.

Did anyone notice we had the coldest, snowiest winter on record this past year?

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Just saying. He's got a sense of humor.

Nancy, I just want to conclude by saying I can attest that you care about the American Legion Auxiliary's future. We are all different.

Nancy and I didn't agree on everything all year long. We agreed on the big things and we got through the little things 'cause at the end of the day, the little things don't matter. The big things do. Being here for another generation matters.

I know that everyone in this room cares deeply about this organization. Nancy and I have discussed often that we all may have different ideas about how to get to the future, but we all agree there won't be one if we don't aim in the same direction.

So, Madam President, this concludes my remarks and thank you for the very special year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Don't go. Dubbie, thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It has been amazing to work with Dubbie who is absolutely so talented, has so much to offer this organization. And I learned so much from her and we worked so well together as our year progressed. And when Dubbie said I didn't know what it was that we needed to do, I knew that I was 4 days old. My family signed me up. It's been my life. And I saw my life going away and I just didn't know how to fix it or what we really needed to do.

And when I started to get out on the road and I started to meet members and I started to hear their concerns and what they needed, together Dubbie and I were able to put that together along with Janet and with Sharon and with Mary. And we came up and found the right person to help us to be able to create this five-year plan.

So I can't thank each and every one of you enough and, Marta, that we all got there together and we all got to the same place. So I can't thank you enough.

And I do have a special gift that I'd like to give to you, Dubbie.

You know, this year was a lot of change. A lot of things -- we did a lot of things differently. You know, this was California casual. This was an exciting year. And one of the things that we did this year in Washington, D.C. was to change.

We ended up not being able to go to Arlington on that Sunday or on Wednesday and staff was worried and they were afraid I was going to be upset. And I said great. It's time we do something different and we did.

So we went to the Lincoln Memorial and we did a flash mob. And it was incredible. It was absolutely incredible.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So, Dubbie, for you and for the office, here is our flash mob and on the bottom, it says pass it on 2013-2014. So it's something that we will never forget.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And realizing that change is what we need and together we can make that change. So, Dubbie, there's a picture for the office.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: This is a Kodak moment. Anybody remember what Kodak is?

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Oh, my gosh, this is awesome. Isn't this incredible?

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I got through that whole report without using the word incredible. Incredible. I have to tell you something funny. In the office, we -- we inject fun in what we do. So someone printed off this -- this picture, not nearly as nice as this, and then a little person who I think name is Tamara Shumate.

I'm looking at it one day and I'm seeing little red and white striped shirts in there. And she's got where's Waldo's figures --

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- strategically placed around there. It was just really cute.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. Thank you.

I am really excited about the website. I'm going to be able to go on my phone, go on my iPad, or my tablet and see the website. Is that the coolest thing? You can see it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's going to be far and away better than any application, whatever be. I promise you that.

So would Kendall Madsen from the Department of California, please come out to give me something.

CHAIRMAN MADSEN: Let's see. Good morning, ladies.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN MADSEN: Nancy, it has been an honor and pleasure to be your Scrapbook Chairman all year. It's been fun watching you go everywhere. You've done a lot of firsts. You were the first National President to take a selfie, so if you wouldn't mind. If you could just -- everybody in the --

VOICES: Woo.

CHAIRMAN MADSEN: Thank you.

It was your first year to Girls Nation.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MADSEN: And we had a great time with the senators and we served the cone. You are the first President from the State of California in 27 years. So I had to come up with something big, something gigantic to be a first for you.

Now, with the travels that you've had and the photos that have been taken forever, I couldn't make 17 scrapbooks. So I figured that you should be the first National President to get your scrapbook on a thumb drive.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yay.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I love this. Come over here. Oh, look at it. There it is. That is so cool. Thank you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, Kendall.

You know, in the very beginning when I asked Kendall to do this, I said I really want this to be electronic because I don't want 17 books that my daughter who's now in the house will have to worry about when I'm no longer here.

So this will be easy to take care of, Chloe. It shouldn't be a problem.

Kendall is an incredible artist. She is a photographer. She does websites. She does it all. She's absolutely incredible. She took my national portrait. She does all the photos at Girls Nation and puts the journal, the journal for the girls together. She actually was at California's Girls State this year and took pictures. She just has given back a lot.

And I'll tell you a little bit. I met Kendall when I was National Membership Chairman and I got the reports. And I read this report about this woman in California who signed up 300 members. And I went are you kidding.

Well, I didn't want to report on her if it wasn't true because somebody would have told me and -- in the spirit of goodwill. And --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I called her and I said how do you do this. She goes, well, I get on my bike and I ride down to the yacht club which is the post and I meet people and I sign -- I just sign them all up. So she truly works membership. She's an incredible photographer. She has become an incredible friend, she and her partner, and I am so thrilled. And I love my scrapbook.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So, again, thank you, Kendall. It's pretty cool.

She dressed pretty cool, too, huh?

I am pleased to introduce the members of the very hard working Resolutions Committee. Diane DeLashmit, chairman; Donna Fuelling, vice chairman; and Pat Kranzow, member.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DeLASHMIT: Thank you, Madam President.

The Pre-Convention Resolutions Committee meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. on August 23rd in Room 207D of the Charlotte Convention Center by the presiding officer, Diane Delashmit, Chairman of the Convention Resolutions Committee.

Honorary Past National President Miriam Junge brought greetings from National President Nancy Brown-Park. National Parliamentarian Chris Dickey was present to help answer questions. Past National President Carlene Ashworth and National Treasurer Marta Hedding were also in attendance.

Fifty department representatives and ten guests were in attendance. Pat Kranzow, member of the Pre-Convention Resolutions Committee from Illinois, was appointed as secretary. Margie Keller from Minnesota and Lorraine Jorgensen from New Mexico served as sergeant at arms and assistant sergeant at arms respectively.

Vice chairman of the Convention Resolutions Committee, Diane Rousseau from Florida, served as chaplain and offered the invocation. Chairman Diane read the convention rules pertaining to resolutions for the 2014 National Convention as found on Page 125 of the convention book.

Diane announced that the five resolutions sent out in advance have been dealt with as the Constitution & Bylaws issues and are the responsibility of other committees. So they would not be discussed in this meeting.

A Resolution on the subject of resourcing American Legion Auxiliary five-year strategic centennial plan was distributed but not read. The Resolution was sent to the Pre-Convention Finance Committee. Later the committee received word that the Finance Committee approved the Resolution and sent it to the Pre-Convention Membership Committee. It was also approved by the Pre-Convention Membership Committee and will be directed to the Convention body for adoption.

A general question and answer time followed. A parliamentary quiz and leadership word search were distributed and discussed. With no further business to come before this meeting, Chaplain Diane offered the benediction and Chairman Diane adjourned the meeting at 12:01 p.m.

And this was the minutes for the committee meeting. Madam President, may we consider courtesy resolutions number one and two with one vote?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DELASHMIT: Madam President Diane Rousseau, vice chairman of the committee, will present courtesy resolution number one. The second will be presented by Pat Kranzow, member. And I will present the third.

VICE CHAIRMAN ROUSSEAU: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam National President, Whereas, the American Legion Auxiliary is completing its 94th Annual National Convention being held here in the great City of Charlotte, North Carolina and,

Whereas, dedicated delegates, alternates, and guests gathered here in the beautiful host City of Charlotte to listen, learn, and consider the issues placed before them and,

Whereas, National officers and national chairmen stepped up to President Nancy's theme of Pass It On as they proudly reported on the accomplishments of the dedicated volunteers who indeed passed on to others what the Auxiliary is by their service to our veterans, their families, and others in need and,

Whereas, our Past National Presidents provided assistance throughout this convention by their hands-on support and by sharing their great wisdom and friendship to all and,

Whereas, Convention Chairman Martha Corriher, local Convention committees, and the members of the Department of North Carolina have provided countless hours of selfless service to make this a great Convention and,

Whereas, National Secretary Mary "Dubbie" Buckler and the National Headquarters staff have worked tirelessly to prepare for this Convention to ensure its success in every way and,

Whereas, the city, its hotels, local citizens, and the Charlotte Convention Center have warmly welcomed the American Legion Auxiliary into their community with great hospitality,

Be therefore -- now therefore be it resolved that all attendees at this American Legion Auxiliary National Convention assembled here in Charlotte, North Carolina expresses its sincere appreciation and grateful thanks to all the participants

who have made this 94th Convention an outstanding success by our roaring applause.

(Applause.)

MS. KRANZOW: Courtesy Resolution number two, Whereas, this 94th National Convention has been graced by many distinguished guests led by The American Legion National Commander, Daniel Dellinger, and his staff, who are building today for tomorrow, Sons of The American Legion National Commander Joseph Gladden, whose members were united in service, the Sweet Potato Pie Band, representatives from The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, representatives from the Veterans Affairs Commission from the Republic of China, former POW Captain Mike McGrath, and the honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States and,

Whereas, representatives from Girls Nation and our own Juniors, Little Miss Poppy Nanny and her dressed alike doll, Ms. Poppy Taylor, Department unit members of the Year Honorees, the Woman of the Year recipient, Lieutenant General Michelle Johnson, and four active-duty servicewomen and,

Whereas, representatives who directly benefitted from our Auxiliary programs have expressed their appreciation for the many hours that were contributed by our volunteers this year to pass it on, the results of which are too numerous to mention,

Now therefore be it resolved that by our applause, we thank these very important participants for contributing to the success of our convention.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DeLASHMIT: Madam National President, Whereas, one year ago, the Department of California loaned Nancy Brown-Park, a 66-year member of this great organization, to lead us for an incredible year of discovery and,

Whereas, her theme of pass it on prompted us to share information and innovative ideas with others and,

Whereas, she demonstrated this concept by always sharing her adventures and selfies on social media with all members and,

Whereas, she served as an ambassador throughout her travels to inspire others with our many programs of service to veterans, our military, and their families and,

Whereas, her mother, California Past Department President, Jean Brown, along with her father Richard have looked down from above with pride and admiration for her accomplishments and,

Whereas, her loving husband, Jim, First Dude, has shared this amazing journey with her,

May it be resolved that we pass it on for a job well done by showing our appreciation by a standing ovation.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DELASHMIT: Madam National President, this concludes my report.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

Wow. Okay. I guess I'm supposed to say this. All in favor of adopting the courtesy resolutions, say aye.

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: With your enthusiasm, you've adopted the courtesy resolutions. Thank you so much.

Okay. Now we're going to move on.

THE NARRATOR: The American Legion Auxiliary proudly presents the National President's Award for Excellence. This exclusive honor is awarded to the best of our best. The award epitomizes service, not self, by recognizing efforts in planning and implementation of our programs.

Here to present is your National President, Nancy Brown-Park.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'm back.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So all year, you've heard me talk about the good work that can be accomplished when we pass it on. Now, through the National President's Award for Excellence, I get the opportunity to introduce you to a few special members that can teach all of us a thing or two about passing it on.

But before I announce our winners, I need to give a big thank you to our National Headquarters team for creating a system that allows members to apply this - - apply for this award online.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: That didn't quite come out right, did it?

By having an online application process, we not only increased the number of applications, we also increased the quality of the application by allowing members to upload digital photos. Now, how cool is that? A little more technology.

So this year, because I wanted to showcase our membership across the country, I decided to pick a unit winner from each division. Hopefully after seeing this year's winners, units from all locations will be excited about nominating their unit for the National President's Award for Excellence.

Before we get to today's winners, I would like to recognize all the units and departments working the Auxiliary mission and the programs every day. Your hard work day in and day out is what our organization is alive for and we're able to carry out our mission. I applaud each and every one of you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So here today to bring -- to help me bring you the highlights of every -- of all these award winners, things they've accomplished this year -- oh, now I can't read.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So first is National Vice President Janet Jefford, VA&R National Chairman Sharon Conatser, and Children & Youth National Chairman Mary Davis.

Ladies, will you please join me on stage? Okay. I'm going to get these things going with our first winning departments, so don't come.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It gives me great pleasure to announce the first winner of the National President's Award for Excellence. From the Northwestern Division, please put your hands together for Spearfish Unit 164 in Spearfish, South Dakota, Unit President Micheline Nelson.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Spearfish Unit 164 did some great things this year. Here are just a few of my favorites.

Spearfish Unit 164 concentrated on educating the community about flag etiquette by hosting flag folding and unfolding ceremonies for almost 200 first graders, increased participation in youth activities by visiting local schools to promote their Poem and Essay Contest. They received over 300 poems and essays from various local schools and held award ceremonies for the students that participated in the contest.

Created a mentor system where every new member is paired with an experienced member and a team they create and lead a local community project. It's a great way to give new members a sense of belonging and accomplishment for all while carrying out the mission.

They volunteered over 645 VA&R hours. They engaged student veterans organization Black Hills State University in a fund raising event that benefitted more than 250 veterans.

They created fun and entertaining programming for the Veterans Day celebration at the local VA hospital. They cooked Christmas meals for the 47 local veterans all housed in a nursing home.

Ultimately this unit volunteered 2,000 hours, spent nearly \$5,000 in donations, assisted nearly 5,000 veterans, and over 270 military families.

This unit increased youth participation in Auxiliary programs, brought organizational awareness to the community, donated countless dollars and hours to the mission, and to top it all off, their membership was to gain three new members for the year and instead increased their membership by 18 new members. Way to go Spearfish Unit 164.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So I'd like to present this to you. It's National President's Award for Excellence 2014 Spearfish Unit 164, Unit President Micheline -- Micheline Nelson, Spearfish, South Dakota.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT NELSON: It's great. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Congratulations.

And now our National VA&R Chairman Sharon Conatser will present the next award.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: I'm next.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, that's not what this says. Oh, you took it out of here. Oh, so she stole her script. See, she's already trying to be in charge.

(Laughter.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Okay. So now I have the privilege of announcing the second unit to receive the National President's Award for

Excellence. And the award goes to, from the Eastern Division, Dupont-Holmes Unit 82 in Gorham, New Hampshire.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: President Linda Dupont. Dupont-Holmes Unit 82 chose to spend this year focusing on membership, leadership, Children & Youth, education, community service, public relations, VA&R, Poppy, National Security and Legislation. So basically we've got a group of over-achievers here.

Here are just a few ways Dupont-Holmes Unit 82 was able to participate in nearly every ALA program. They cut, sorted, and shipped nearly \$18,000 worth of coupons to military families overseas, participated in walk off the war, a program that uses exercise and hiking on the Appalachian Trail as a form of therapy for veterans suffering from PTSD.

Dupont-Holmes Unit not only mailed 25 soldier boxes for the Christmas holidays, but they also made sure that each box contained a personal letter thanking each soldier for their bravery and service, donated toiletry items, 30 lap robes, over 150 greeting cards, and drove nearly 600 miles to the local VA hospital, donated over 10,000 hours in community service volunteers.

On Veterans Day, they passed out over 150 hand-made cards directly to their local veterans. Their Junior members led an awareness campaign in their local schools for Operation Military Kids.

Dupont-Holmes Unit 82, you have accomplished tremendous things this year. We are all very proud of you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Lisa, I am so proud to present this National President's Award for Excellence 2014 to Dupont-Holmes Unit 82, Unit President Linda Dupont, Gorham, New Hampshire. Thank you for all your hard work.

PRESIDENT DUPONT: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And now our National VA&R Chairman Sharon Conatser will present the next award 'cause she didn't steal my script.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: I didn't steal it.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, okay.

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: Wow. I am already so impressed and we've only heard about two units. Okay. Well, it only gets more impressive from here, so let's hear about our next award winner.

The third National President's Award for Excellence goes to from the Central Division Peter Wollner Unit 288 in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, Unit President Maggie Geiger.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN CONATSER: This unit is truly focused on membership. Their membership application is always paired with a welcome folder that contains a welcome letter, calendar of events, and contact sheet for all the unit officers in case the potential member has any questions. Listen to what else this unit does and what they've accomplished.

They participated in a roundtable discussion with other military and veteran organizations. During this event, they identified veterans' needs and created programming that either addressed that need directly or raised funds to support the organization's dealing with specific medical needs of veterans, partnered with Goodwill Industries to highlight the attributes of veterans recovering from deployment and PTSD, worked in the local community to educate residents on the stresses felt by children when a parent is deployed.

They worked with local schools to have children make over 1,500 hand-made Valentine cards. They created a trees from home project that brought the entire community together to decorate craft size Christmas trees and then for the troops in Afghanistan, they sent them to them.

Finally, this unit raised and donated nearly \$2,500 to the Camp Hometown Heroes, an organization that provides a child of a fallen hero a week at camp to help heal with other children who are also dealing with the loss of a loved one.

Thank you, ladies, for all that you do for our veterans, active-duty servicemembers, and their families. This organization truly would not exist without angels like you. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's my pleasure to present the National President's Award for Excellence 2014 Peter Wollner Unit 288, Unit President Maggie Geiger, Cedarburg, Wisconsin.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And now please welcome Children & Youth National Chairman Mary Davis to present the fourth unit award.

CHAIRMAN DAVIS: Thank you.

The fourth unit to receive the National President's Award for Excellence is from the Western Division, Lake Stevens Memorial Unit 181 in Lake Stevens, Washington, Unit President Karen Morea.

This unit sent in what looked like a book of accomplishments and I would love to tell you each and every one, but unfortunately we only have time for a few highlights. So here goes.

When a devastating landslide hit the Oso community, Lake Stevens Memorial was one of the first volunteer groups on the scene at the hospital with water and blankets. Unit 181 continued to volunteer with the hospital and the landslide victims by donating food and hygiene products, created a kitchen rotation so that the first responders and National Guard could have home-cooked meals and worked with the community collecting donations and needed supplies.

During the landslide, Unit 181 along with community raised and donated over 13,000 in both monetary and in-kind donations and gave over 200 hours of service to the community and National Guard.

They volunteered with local family center ensuring that over 200 children in need received backpacks filled to the brim with new school supplies. Unit 181 collected with the community to ensure that 350 military children had a wonderful Halloween complete with candy, toys, costumes, and a carnival, held a military Christmas carnival where they provided games, food, activities, and a visit from

Santa for nearly 150 military families, sponsored a homecoming for the USS Nimitz where they donated nearly \$2,000 worth of food and supplies and gave nearly 50 hours of their time.

Unit 181, not only do you understand how important it is to be involved in your community, but you've seen firsthand how building community awareness works to build your membership. You've accomplished so much for our veterans and servicemembers while still managing to grow your membership. We are very proud of all you've achieved this year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So it's my honor to award the National President's Award for Excellence 2014, Lake Stevens Memorial Unit 181, Unit President Karen Morea, Lake Stevens, Washington. Thank you for all that you did for those people who really needed your help.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much.

PRESIDENT MOREA: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much. That was incredible.

Wow. We've heard of four excellent units today, and now it's time to present one last unit award. The fourth unit to receive the National President's Award for Excellence is from the Southern Division.

J.W. Mathers Jr. Unit 163 in Melbourne, Florida, Unit President Ann King-Smith.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Like all the other units we honored today, Unit 163 accomplished so many amazing things this past year. However, I was lucky enough to take part in one of their projects and I just have to share it with you.

Unit 163's project was actually borne from another VA&R project, Suds, a coat drive where Unit 163 collected almost 600 coats for local veterans. It was during this coat drive that Unit President Ann King-Smith worried about how the veterans would be able to keep their coats clean.

After much research, Ann concluded that their area was lacking an organization that assisted homeless veterans with their laundry and so Project Suds was born.

Unit 163 located a laundry facility, started collecting donations of quarters and empty laundry detergent containers and soon they were able to provide laundry service along with a hot meal every week. The project was so successful that their story ended -- ended up in a number of USA Today Gannett publications across the country.

This unit is basically holding a mini stand-down each week -- each and every week. They found a way to fill a need, honor our mission, raise awareness for homeless veterans, and involve the community in their cause. What an amazing example of our mission in action.

This unit saw a need and with a simple plan, they were able to not only fulfill that need, but to bring awareness to our homeless veterans and get the community excited about the work of the Auxiliary. Just amazing.

Members of Unit 163, thank you for allowing me to be part of your wonderful Project Suds. It is my pleasure to honor you and your achievements with the National President's Award for Excellence.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT KING-SMITH: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It is my honor to present to you the National President's Award for Excellence 2014, J.W. Mathers Jr. Unit 163, Unit President Ann King-Smith, Melbourne, Florida.

Thank you, Ann.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

You know, Ann -- after I had the chance to be there and be part of Operation Suds, Ann kept me posted weekly through Facebook, you know, private messaging about what was going on. And I'll share this story with you now. I didn't really want to share it earlier for lots of reasons.

But there was a note that came through on regular Facebook that there was a dog named Rosy who really needed a crate. It was a homeless veteran who needed a crate because the dog would get scared and run away. And the dog was his life. You know, his dog was a service dog. He really didn't want to lose his dog.

So when I saw her post that, I right away sent her a private message and said would you just send me a list of three pet stores in your area and she did. And I called and ordered that crate for Rosy. I'm pretty attached to my dog and I couldn't imagine my dog living in that kind of situation, Willy.

So she -- I went -- called them, got the crate ordered, and Ann went down and picked up the crate and took it to Rosy. So Rosy now when it gets cold, and we know it -- or when it gets thunder and lightning in Florida, Rosy has a place to go and Rosy is really happy in her crate.

So thank you, Ann, for doing that for me.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And now for the moment you've all been waiting for. It's time to celebrate the department recipient of 2014. This department has achieved so much this year. They embraced the phrase Pass It On in ways I never imagined possible.

It is my absolute pleasure to announce the 2014 department recipient of the National President's Award for Excellence, the Department of Kansas, President Karon Cook.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The Department of Kansas achieved so many great things this year and so many that I have -- I had to spread out across two tables just to look at all their great pictures, read all their reports, and watch all their DVD submissions. Let me share just a few things with you.

They revamped their website in order to enhance -- ensure that up to the minute membership data and National materials like the plan of action was readily available for all members because pass it on includes passing down information from the National and department levels.

In an effort to bring awareness to veterans suffering from PTSD, the Department of Kansas realized that help was lacking for children of veterans struggling with PTSD. Through media outlets including a cover story in their local newspaper, Kansas made their communities aware of this increasing need.

During their annual golf classic event, over \$7,000 was raised to support veterans' needs in Kansas. Kansas's gift shops ensured that veterans and their families had a memorable holiday complete with food and gifts. Combined, the units in Kansas raised \$50,000.

The Department of Kansas was recognized as a trailblazer for their efforts to support Operation Military Kids by the organization's vice president.

And, finally, in the spirit of civility, the Department of Kansas worked with their Junior members to initiate an anti-bullying campaign using phrases like love is louder, mean stinks, and this is a bully free zone. And I just love that.

Do you see what I mean? Just reading about all their accomplishments -- accomplishments makes me want to get back to my unit and my community and start working.

Department of Kansas, I am thankful for all your efforts and being passionate and active and engaged members of the American Legion Auxiliary. You have so much to celebrate. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: National President's Award for Excellent 2014, Department of Kansas, Department President Karon Cook.

And I will tell you Karon did so much in her department for PTSD to create awareness. She chose not to have a special project to raise money, but a special project to raise awareness and she did such a good job.

So thank you so much, Karon, for what you did.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much.

It is difficult to be limited by time and only able to share briefly about these amazing achievements, but there is good news. You'll be able to read a full story of the National President's Award for Excellence winners on our new website.

So let me encourage all of you to consider joining these units and the Department of Kansas on the path to excellence by planning how to submit your application for next year -- next year's awards.

I'm already looking forward to the celebration. Let's give all of our National President's Awards for Excellence recipients one more big round of applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Would the national secretary please make any announcements.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Why surely.

Following this session, would the 2014 National President's Award for Excellence recipients please come to the stage for a few photos to be taken by National Headquarters staff.

At 1:30 p.m., there will be a meeting for the 2014-15 National officers in the Headquarters office which is Ballroom A and B. So you -- hopefully by now you know where National Headquarters office is. No? What?

Okay. After -- after the picture taking, head on over there. So we'll just get started as soon as everybody gets over there. So it would be more like 1-ish, 1 o'clock-ish. Is that okay? So I can stick with the script? Okay. You can head on over there whenever you want. We'll probably start somewhere between 1:15 and 1:30.

The States Dinner head table reception starts at 6 p.m. in Room 332AB and that's here in the consent -- in the Convention Center.

The 2014-15 Membership Committee, would you meet after this session by the California sign. California, make some noise.

VOICES: Woo.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Now, for tomorrow for the installation portion of the -- of the convention, will all the incoming department presidents for 2014-15 assemble near the rear of the room by 7:45 a.m. You will be proceeding to your seats at the beginning of the installation. So if you're an incoming department president, please assemble near the back of the room by 7:45.

States Dinner tickets, we have sold out at National Headquarters office for States Dinner tickets. I understand the Department of New York has a few from -- from their department secretary Kathleen Shepard. So let's do it this way. If you are looking for States Dinner tickets or you have States Dinner tickets to sell, if you -- see that big fire exit sign back there? Just kind of congregate back there and do your hawking and buying and selling in the back of the room.

Departments, please remember to pick up your convention mail. I have been notified there is a lot of it piling up. It hasn't picked up for a while. So if your department hasn't been picking up your convention mail, please do so.

And if I -- unless I've missed something, I believe, Madam President, those are the end of the announcements. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

Well, we are getting ready for the close of the Convention. We will be resetting stage. I ask the National officers to leave the stage at this time, find a seat down in front, and we will get ready to see my national president's report.

(Whereupon, a video ensues:)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's more than just a theme, clever marketing phrase, or cool pin design. It's a way of life for American Legion Auxiliary members, units, and departments.

The most important part about being an American Legion Auxiliary member is passing on our legacy of service, not self, to the next generation.

Traveling around the country this past year, I really saw the need to rebuild our infrastructure so that we may continue our amazing work. I also understand now that the American Legion Auxiliary doesn't belong to us. We are only caretakers for the next generation.

My story begins with you, the American Legion Auxiliary member. Last summer when I was working with National Headquarters on my itineraries, I wanted

the departments to dictate how we would spend my visit to their states. Their wise planning made every single department visit a memorable and moving experience.

While I have hundreds of stories from my travels that I'd like to tell you about today, time allows me to focus on only a few.

Since 1919, our veterans and servicemembers have been a major focus of the American Legion Auxiliary. While in Oregon, I met a veteran named Steve who was living in a veterans home. During the Auxiliary's visit to the home, this gentleman asked to meet me.

I asked him when he served and he said he was drafted right after high school and served in Vietnam. His job was working in the morgue. There were too many dead bodies he said to me, still visibly shaken after all these years.

I asked that veteran when he graduated from high school and he said 1965. I walked away and thought about that and realized that I had graduated in 1965. I thought about his life and I thought about my life and what I've been given. The short conversation I shared with that Vietnam veteran is something I'll forever carry with me.

I had the most amazing Veterans Day at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. I shared the day with a young woman named Ashlyn Haycock who lost her military dad during a training mission when she was ten years old and her veteran mother who committed suicide when Ashlyn was 20.

She's a staff member of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors organization and does so much to help others. I know her parents were looking down on her that day and were so proud. She and I laid a wreath together at the Tomb of the Unknowns. What an honor for me.

If you ask me which veterans-related moment I remember most from my travels as national president, it's the Project Suds program created less than a year ago in the Sunshine State of Florida. Every week, Auxiliary members meet at a laundry center to wash the clothes of homeless veterans living in camps.

Publicity from Project Suds has attracted many community residents including nonmembers to help with money, goods, and support. Talk about passing it on.

Auxiliary units and members across the country can easily implement a Project Suds of their own or start an equally amazing mission focused program to benefit homeless veterans.

While in Florida, I was so impressed with the Auxiliary members who came together from different units and connected with area dentists to provide free services for veterans in desperate need of dental work.

Because of these Auxiliary members' actions, several veterans have brighter smiles.

I was so inspired at my visit to homeless veterans' camps in Florida that I will be working with my Congressman on starting a stand down in the Coachella Valley in California following my term as national president.

As Auxiliary members, we raise awareness about homeless veterans. But to actually see how these heroes live following their sacrifice to this country, well, it's time we start passing it on and helping them.

In my action-packed visit to the Department of Maryland in February, I attended one of the most inspiring patriotic events during my National President's travels. Thirty-six new citizens were sworn in during a ceremony at the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, an event hosted by the American Legion Auxiliary.

For some, naturalization was a process years in the making. I met one man who had been in America for 14 years. He was a teacher. He finally became a citizen and said next year, "I'm going to run for office." That was so cool.

As a first-generation American, I thought this event was full of patriotism and Americanism so much that it brought tears to my eyes since my grandparents became citizens. I especially loved that the United States flags were provided to all people in the room.

I've mentioned before that my journey with the American Legion Auxiliary started when I was just 4 days old. My parents passed on their values of patriotism and service to me. As members, we need to guide our Juniors, mentor them, and involve them in our unit activities. Engage your younger members throughout their years as Juniors and leave them with a big impression, the family that will continue to guide them into Senior membership, the American Legion Auxiliary.

By now you know that the American Legion Auxiliary members make a difference in their communities. Numerous departments and units held Walk, Run, Roll events for veterans and their families, bringing new recognition to the American Legion Auxiliary's name within those communities.

Approximately \$58,000 was raised from these events to accomplish the goal of assisting our veterans and all the money stays within those communities. Thank you to everyone who participated.

The American Legion Auxiliary is always ready and willing to make life better for those we serve. But in order to build our capacity to deliver our mission for the next generation, we need to increase our membership and be fully committed to the American Legion Auxiliary's four founding principles of justice, freedom, democracy, and loyalty.

That's why I am so excited about our five-year Centennial Strategic Plan. By 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary's 1 million members will be making a difference for veterans and their families in every neighborhood. Auxiliary departments will pass it on by implementing their own centennial plan.

I can't talk about pass it on without mentioning acceptance. From knowledge to patriotism to the love and respect of each other, we cannot be a successful organization if we don't become more accepting of each other.

The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program taught me about the importance of diversity and tolerance. Each year, nearly 16,000 young women attend a program that embraces the differences in all of us. It's time we all pass on that feeling to all of our members and those who would like to be part of what we do.

Now, how can I talk about my term as national president without mentioning fun. I love that technology allowed me to Skype my welcome message to the Department of New York and that the young women attending the California and Louisiana Girls State sessions were able to face time of fun, banter back and

forth. I also loved that social media can instantly take a special moment from an event and turn it into an unforgettable snapshot.

Those who followed the National President's Facebook page know that I love to take selfies and post them online. Say "cheese!"

In March, social media became queen of the ALA during the Auxiliary's annual Washington DC Conference. On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, more than 200 American Legion Auxiliary members joined by several Legionnaires and Sons of The American Legion paid tribute to our own forces with a flash mob of military anthems and other patriotic songs. The video was posted on the National Headquarters Facebook page and was seen by more than 30,000 people.

I leave you today with a set of thank-yous to some very special people. First of all, our veterans, the military, and their families, especially Sarah Smiley whose inspirational book *Dinner With the Smileys* tells a story about how the community passed it on to help her military family.

If it weren't for all these heroes and the people who stand by them, we couldn't enjoy the freedoms and peace that we have been given thanks to their sacrifices.

I heard that firsthand while on my Far East and Normandy visits. The people of those far away places thanked me countless times about how much they appreciate the freedoms they enjoy today.

A special thank-you to my husband, Jim, the First Dude, for his love and continuous support.

And thank you to The American Legion National Commander Dan Dellinger, his wife Margaret, and his aide, the Second Dude, Robert Renner, and the Sons of The American Legion National Commander Joe Gladden and his wife, Bobbi.

Once again, please remember that accepting each other no matter our age, race, religion, or who we love is so important. Acceptance is a big part of the American Legion Auxiliary's survival.

Thank you to all The American Legion family members and National Headquarters staff for everything you do to support the American Legion Auxiliary's mission. And please continue to pass it on.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

I have to get out my trusty -- my binder shrunk. I -- I'm here to -- that's a beautiful video and I need to thank J.P. because he made me look good, made me sound good. He really did a great job and the staff who helped me put it all together.

Our staff, our National staff is incredible and I want to thank the entire National staff, J.P., and all the sound and lighting and camera and production crews that made this convention visually beautiful and so successful. So thank you, everybody.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I want to thank the Convention Committee, Martha Corriher, Department of North Carolina. You rose to the occasion. This was I know a very difficult time. Thank each and every one of you. You know, with the

loss of Jerry and what we all experienced at the very beginning, but you -- you made it all perfect and thank you all so very, very much for that incredible --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I want to thank Neal Burgess who's my driver this week. He's a great guy. He took a week off without pay to be here to be able to -- to drive -- drive me and Second Dude and Janet's dudes --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: -- and everybody that needed to be somewhere. So thank you so much.

Chris Dickey for keeping us on track, thank you, Chris. You do such an incredible job and we all feel so much more secure when we're up here with what we need to get accomplished.

I want to thank the National officers for everything that you did all year long from the historian to the chaplain to the Division Vice Presidents who really, really support membership this year that we asked you to do. Thank you so much for every single thing that you did.

And the national chairmen, you were awesome. You all did a great job. You worked hard on your plans of action and you followed through on everything. I -- I couldn't have asked for more.

Karen Boehler, Karen worked actually with Delta Airlines to do -- to get Delta to donate the airline ticket so that Captain McGrath could be here for that incredible pass it on moment.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So thank you, Karen.

I want to thank my Department of California, my awesome ladies in California.

VOICES: Woo.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you so much for all your support. I can't wait to get back home, my Unit 472, and I'm sure they're watching. So Unit 472, thank you, and they're sitting out there, too, but thank you so much.

I want to thank the Melgard family for being here to support me. You've supported me all along. Josie was always my biggest campaigner, my biggest supporter, and they continued that when we lost our dear Josie. So thank you, Melgard family, for being here and being here to share this with me.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I have to thank my four pages, my four pages who took really good care of the Poppy. I had a code name and it was the Poppy and the Poppy was on the move. Janet became Little Poppy.

VOICE: Poppy, Jr.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Poppy Jr. And then when my daughter arrived today, she became Little Poppy. So they've done a really good job. I can't thank you enough, the four of them, for taking such good care of me all week long. So thank you so much.

And I want to thank my friends back home because I know they're watching. And I have some really close friends at home who have taken care of the home front, taken really good care of my husband, Jim, while I've been gone.

So I thank Margaret and Rob McGushin (phonetic), Kathy Graph (phonetic), and a very, very close friend, Anna Loughlin (phonetic), who actually lives in Toronto and has flown out three times to take care of Willy, the First Dog. And she comes out and spends three weeks at my house. She came when we were in the Far East. She came when we were in Europe and then once again for Convention.

So, Anna, thank you and I hope Willy is doing okay.

So I'm thrilled and I need to thank my family, my daughter, Chloe, who I have not gotten to see much this year, but she's absolutely beautiful and a wonderful young woman. And I'm so thrilled that she's here. I'm so proud of her and the First Dude, who, my husband, Jim, who --

(Applause.)

MR. PARK: Love you. Good job.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I never could have gotten through this without him. I started this journey on the National level ten years ago and he has been with me every step of the way. We've been through a lot together, lots and lots of different things throughout the years, and I have been absolutely blessed to have Jim in my life.

And I want to say a special thank you to the Past National Presidents, each one of you, who have helped me along the way, who believed in me when my journey started. Thank you, each and every one of you, for your help, your mentoring, your advice. It's been incredible.

And a special thank you to my rat pack, Chris, Janet, Jan and Krisann. We started out together. Here we are. It's the end of the -- end of the administrative year. And we had a lot of fun together. We worked really hard together.

And now I'm ready to pass it on to Janet. Janet and I have -- come up here, Janet. You've been trying to do this all day.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Janet and I over the last ten years have become incredible friends. We both have a love for this organization that's -- it's over the moon and back as Kris Nelson would say.

And I couldn't think of a better person to pass on the organization to than you, Janet. And I think I said I had two goals and the first one was the most important. And that was to secure the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. And I think we've done that. I think we're on the road to success.

And I'm ready to pass it on. I'm really ready to go to my own hairdresser and sleep in my own bed --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: -- and get my nails done at my own girl because I will tell you that's some of the hardest things. So, Janet, I know it's going to be an incredible year for you. I'm here to support you in anything you do and you know that. You can call me any time.

And the thing I do hope I don't pass on to you is the crummy weather and the cancelled flights.

(Laughter.)

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: And all those phone calls at night.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And all those phone calls at night. So I am absolutely here for anything you need. I know that you'll do an incredible job.

VICE PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And I know that we'll continue to work together. So thank you so much.

And thank you, everybody, for your love, your support, your -- everybody I met and everything that I had the chance to do, the homeless veterans I met, my veteran from Oregon, the diversity that we started -- that we've really worked to create, my visit to Girls Nation, just the members I met every single day. Thank you, thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: So as usual, I didn't stick to the script. So they said -- in fact, in the back, you know those little things in their ears like the Secret Service and I'll start talking and they go here she goes rogue again. So poor J.P. is going what do I do now.

So thank you, everybody, again. I hope we see you all tonight because -- who are we, Fred and --

MR. PARK: Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Fred and Ginger will be in the house. So we hope to see you tonight. Thank you very much, everybody. We'll see you tomorrow morning at eight a.m. for the installation. Thank you so much. Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, at 1:11 p.m., the above-entitled convention was adjourned.)

**INSTALLATION CEREMONY
THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2014**

ANNOUNCER: Good morning and welcome to the Installation Ceremony for National officers of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Please welcome your National President Nancy Brown-Park.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Wow. Isn't this exciting?

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It's a new beginning. Okay. Hold on. I have to have my last selfie. Okay. Are you ready?

VOICES: Yeah.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh, wait a minute. I can't see you. Who are you? Oh, there you are.

VOICE: Yeah.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. This meeting of the 94th Annual National Convention will now come to order. And good morning, everyone.

We are assembled this morning for the installation of the 2014-2015 newly elected officers. What a very special day it is for the Department of Connecticut, and of course for our great organization, as it is once again we are ready to record in history the 95th National President being installed to the highest office of the American Legion Auxiliary.

I am so happy and proud of everyone here that will witness this once in a lifetime experience for our newly elected officers.

It is now my honor to introduce the Installing Officer for the ceremony, Past National President Virginia Hobbs from the Department of Kentucky.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you, Madam President. What a wonderful day this is to see the exchange in our organization where we install a new corps of National officers and thank those who have served us so capably in the previous year.

It is a very special privilege for me and with great pride that I welcome all of you to the installation of our new National President Janet Jefford from the Department of Connecticut and the National Officers and Department Presidents who will serve with her this year as we begin a new year of service for God and country.

Today marks an extreme day of pride for the Department of Connecticut as we witness the installation of a second National President from that department.

It was at the 1944 National Convention when another member from Connecticut, Helen Lee Gilbert, was installed as the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Participants in this morning's ceremonies are the following: Sergeant at Arms from the Department of Connecticut Marie Delaney and Karen Sheffield.

I lost a page.

Installing Chaplain -- okay. I found my page.

Color Bearers of the Flags of the Department of Connecticut Jeanne Berry and Jackie Evanson. Soloist Anita Biggs from the Department of California.

The Installing Chaplain Past National President Carol Van Kirk from Nebraska.

Past National President Kris Nelson of Minnesota will be sharing a reading with us.

And the MC for remarks and presentations from the Department of Connecticut American Legion Family will be National Executive Committee Woman Nancy Hansen.

Will the audience please stand as the Sergeant at Arms and the Color Bearers present the colors of the Department of Connecticut.

Sergeant of Arms, please advance the colors.

(Colors of Connecticut presented.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you. Please be seated. As part of our Installation today, we also have our department presidents who will be installed by our National President Janet.

Will the sergeant at arms please escort the 2014-2015 department presidents to their seats?

Please join me in welcoming President-Elect Janet's family and other distinguished guests from the Department of Connecticut who will be seated on the platform this morning.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: The sergeant at arms will now present the officers-elect to the Division National Vice Presidents escorting by the -- escorted by their predecessors.

Please join me in welcoming these new officers and thanking our retiring officers for their year of service.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Please join me in greeting National Vice President-Elect Sharon Conatser and her husband, Marty, from the departed -- Department of Illinois.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the lady for whom we have been waiting.

The National President Elect Janet Jefford escorted by her sons, Willy and Christopher.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Will everyone please rise for the opening prayer to be given by Carol Van Kirk, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Morgan and Lucas Jefford, Janet's grandchildren.

Carol?

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT VAN KIRK: Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the blessing you have bestowed upon us this day.

We are grateful that you have watched over our leaders and brought us together this morning in celebration of another successful year. You have walked beside President Nancy keeping her safe and well so she could perform her responsibilities with grace and distinction.

Please, Lord, place thy loving arms around the members of our military who are serving in dangerous places around the world while protecting our country and our freedoms.

We ask that you help us work together to assist them and their veterans in the days ahead.

In God's name we pray. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

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

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you very much, Carol, for that beautiful opening prayer and Morgan and Lucas, thank you for the great job you did in leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Now, please join me in welcoming Anita Biggs who will sing for us, "Lean on Me".

(Applause.)

MS. BIGGS: Good morning.

(Applause.)

MS. BIGGS: As I attempt to sing "Lean on Me" for my friend, our new National President Janet Jefford. You know I can jazz it up, right?

Sometimes in our lives

We all have pain

We all have sorrow

But if we are wise

We will realize there's

Always tomorrow

Lean on me, when you're not strong

And I'll be your friend

I'll help carry on

For it's won't be long

Till I'm gonna need

Somebody to lean on

Please swallow your pride

If I have things

You need to borrow

For no one can fill

Those of your needs

That you won't let show

Lean on me, when you're not strong

And I'll be your friend
I'll help carry on
For it's won't be long
Till I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on
You just on me sister
When you need a hand
We all need somebody to lean on
I just might have a problem
That you'll understand
We all need somebody to lean on
Lean on me, when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help carry on
For it's won't be long
Till I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on
We be jammin'
We be jammin'
We be jammin'
We be jammin'
We be jammin'
We be jammin'
Come on
Just call me
When you need a friend
Call me now
When you need a friend
Oh, baby now
Call me
When you need a friend
Call me
Lean on me
Lean on me
(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you, Anita, for that wonderful song. I think that makes us all want to get up and get moving today. And moving something that we're going to do this year is we move our organization forward in its 95th year.

Now please welcome Past National President Kris Nelson with a reading of "Climb 'Til Your Dream Comes True" written by Helen Steiner Rice.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Thank you, Jenny.
Often your tasks will be many,
And more than you think you can do.
Often the road will be rugged

And the hills insurmountable, too.
But always remember,
The hills ahead
Are never as steep as they seem,
And with Faith in your heart
Step upward
And climb 'til you reach your dream.
For nothing in life that is worthy
Is ever too hard to achieve
If you have the courage to try it,
And you have the faith to believe.
For faith is a force that is greater
Than knowledge or power or skill,
And many defeats turn to triumph
If you trust in God's wisdom and will.
For faith is a mover of mountains,
There's nothing that God cannot do,
So, start out today with faith in your heart,
And climb 'til your dreams can come true!
Thank you.
(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you, Kris, for the beautiful reading.

Last year at the Installation of Officers, then-National Vice President Janet shared with you that I had served as her mentor and had gone so far as to convince her that she possessed the dedication, experience and ability to serve as Department President.

The conversation where Janet decided to aspire to the office of Department President took place during the National Convention here in Charlotte in 2002.

Now she ascends to the Office of National President in the same city. Now how's that for a coincidence?

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: To our new National Officers, today represents a great achievement for you and a significant commitment by you.

Each of you enters a position which has been held by 94 women before you.

You are committing your efforts to furthering the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary and you're perpetuating the legacy which it has built.

At this time, would the newly elected National Officers please rise to take your oath of office.

The members of the American Legion Auxiliary have entrusted you with great responsibility. You have been elected to provide guidance in the activities of our organization. You will familiarize yourself with the duties of these respective offices.

Always remember that the welfare and success of this organization depends upon you. Every American Legion Auxiliary member assumes the obligation of

preserving the integrity of both the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, contributing to the aims and purposes of our organization.

Please raise your right hand and repeat after me giving your name where I give mine.

I, Virginia Hobbs --

VOICES: I, (names of officers) --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- promise to perform faithfully

--

VOICES: -- promise to perform faithfully --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- all the duties of the office --

VOICES: -- all the duties of the office --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- I am about to assume.

VOICES: -- I am about to assume.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: And I further pledge --

VOICES: And I further pledge --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- that I am now a member of --

VOICES: -- that I am now a member of --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- and do not subscribe to --

VOICES: -- and do not subscribe to --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- the principles of any group --

VOICES: -- the principles of any group --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- opposed to our form of government.

VOICES: -- opposed to our form of government.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you. You may now lower your hands and be seated.

Now would our newly elected Department Presidents please rise?

President Janet, would you please come forward and give the Oath of Office to your Department Presidents who will be serving with you this year?

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Please raise your right hand. Repeat after me.

I, Janet Jefford --

VOICES: I, (names of officers) --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- promise to perform faithfully --

VOICES: -- promise to perform faithfully --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- all the duties of the office --

VOICES: -- all the duties of the office --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- I am about to assume.

VOICES: -- I am about to assume.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: And I further pledge --

VOICES: And I further pledge --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- that I am now a member of --

VOICES: -- that I am now a member of --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- and do not subscribe to --

VOICES: -- and do not subscribe to --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- the principles of any group --

VOICES: -- the principles of any group --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- opposed to our form of government.

VOICES: -- opposed to our form of government.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: You may lower your hands and congratulation ladies and have a wonderful year.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you, Madam President. You, the members of the American Legion Auxiliary, have chosen outstanding officers to lead you this year. I have charged them with a serious responsibility and I likewise charge you.

Would all members of the American Legion Auxiliary please stand and raise your right hand and repeat after me?

I solemnly promise --

VOICES: I solemnly promise --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- to renew my pledge of service --

VOICES: -- to renew my pledge of service --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary --

VOICES: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- and to give wholehearted support --

VOICES: -- and to give wholehearted support --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- to these newly elected officers.

VOICES: -- to these newly elected officers.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you very much. Please lower your hand. Would the remainder of the audience please rise and I will ask Installing Chaplain Carol Van Kirk to offer prayer.

Carol?

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT VAN KIRK: Please join me in prayer.

Oh mighty God, we ask that you guide our newly elected national officers to provide wisdom, knowledge and leadership to our membership so we may successfully continue our work on behalf of our military, their families, our veterans, our communities, our children and young and our great Nation.

Remind each of us to serve with love, faith and devotion.

Protect National President Janet in her travels throughout this great land and beyond. Keep her well and strong so she may make others aware of the high principles and ideals of this organization.

Help her to motivate our members so that our actions honor thee.

Keep safe all of our attendees who will be traveling home. Be with those who are ill or suffering and were unable to join us.

We thank thee for the work that was accomplished this week. May our words and actions reflect our commitment of patriotism and good citizenship in support of justice, freedom, democracy and loyalty.

This we pray in thy name. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you. You may be seated.

Now comes the time that the retiring officers will transfer their pins and ribbons to their successors.

Would the retiring officers please come forward and present the newly elected officers?

Following the presentation of their pin and ribbon, the outgoing officers will return to their seat after they have received their pin and ribbon from Past National President Nancy.

We will begin with the National Chaplain Shelley Riggs.

Shelley, will you and your successor?

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: It is indeed my honor to present to you Karen Boehler from the Department of Colorado, your newly elected National Chaplain for 2014-15.

Karen?

(Applause.)

CHAPLAIN BOEHLER: Thank you.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Good luck to you.

CHAPLAIN BOEHLER: Thank you, Chaplain Shelley and many of those other National Chaplains who I am honored and humbled, as well, to follow.

I wanted to especially thank my Department of Colorado for support over the past so many years.

I thank all of you ladies of the Auxiliary and I would just say when I think about our organization, there is just one scripture that always comes to mind for me.

And thanks to you, I believe that this will happen. It is happening. God exalts a faithful nation.

I hope to do my best job for you this year. Please be in touch and I would covet your prayers.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN DORAN: It gives me great pleasure to introduce Lorraine "Rani" Gray from the small but great state of Vermont.

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN GRAY: Thank you to all the delegates who had the faith and trust in me to elect me as your national historian.

Would the Department of Vermont delegation please stand?

(Applause.)

HISTORIAN GRAY: Thank you for all your kindness, love and support in all of my endeavors throughout the years.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

VOICE: It is indeed an honor that I introduce my friend, Laura Mosby, from the Department of Missouri as your elected Central Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

CENTRAL DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT MOSBY: I want to thank my unit, Smithville Unit 58, the Department of Missouri and all of you in Central Division for giving me this opportunity.

I pledge my support to our incoming Janet -- President Janet. And thank you very much.

(Applause.)

EASTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT McMAHON: It is with great honor that I present the new Eastern Division National Vice President Sandra Neylon, Department of New Hampshire.

(Applause.)

EASTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT NEYLON: Thank you, Maggie.

Madam President, I want to extend my best wishes and congratulations on your election. It's an honor to have an opportunity to serve with you.

To my American Legion family in New Hampshire, where are you?

(Applause.)

EASTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT NEYLON: Thank you for your support and will the Eastern Division please stand to be recognized? Hampshire, where are you?

(Applause.)

EASTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT NEYLON: Thank you very much.

VOICE: I would like to present Lori Skallerud from the Department of Minnesota as the next Northwest Division National Vice President.

Good luck.

(Applause.)

NORTHWEST DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT SKALLERUD: Thank you Pat and thank you to my unit, my district, the Department of Minnesota. Where are you?

(Applause.)

NORTHWEST DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT SKALLERUD: And all of the Northwest Division and my special angel for putting your faith and trust and confidence in me to take on this new position.

And I pledge, Janet, I will fulfill my duties to the best of my ability and thank you to all the members too.

(Applause.)

VOICE: It gives me great honor and pleasure to present to you the Southern Division National Vice President Sue Heil from the Department of Oklahoma.

(Applause.)

SOUTHERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT HEIL: Good morning and thank you.

I'd like to thank the Department of Oklahoma. Would you please stand?

(Applause.)

SOUTHERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT HEIL: And the Division, the Southern Division, would you all please stand?

(Applause.)

SOUTHERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT HEIL: Thank you.

President Janet, in this coming year we pledge our support. We know that this is a pivotal year, year one of our Centennial Plan, and we pledge to assist you in the success with Southern spirit.

(Applause.)

VOICE: With great pride and honor, I present to you your newly elected Western Division National Vice President Sue Diaz from the Department of Alaska.

(Applause.)

WESTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT DIAZ: Would the state of Alaska please rise?

(Applause.)

WESTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT DIAZ: I'd like to thank all of you for the years of support. You have my heart and I will see you next year.

Would the Western Division please stand?

(Applause.)

WESTERN DIVISION VICE PRESIDENT DIAZ: Thank you for the honor to serve you. I look forward to the next year.

And to Janet, I look forward to serving with you.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: We also have two members on stage who are -- on stage today who are officers of the American Legion Auxiliary who serve behind the scene and will be nominated to continue their service at the National Executive Committee meeting, which will take place immediately following the close of this Installation.

Those individuals are our National Secretary Dubbie Buckler.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: And National Treasurer Marta Hedding.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: During the course of the year ahead our National President and the remaining National Officers have numerous opportunities to meet our members and individuals from the general public.

They have opportunities to install drive, desire and enthusiasm for our organization.

They have the opportunity to demonstrate care, understanding and support for our members.

Among your travels and opportunities, you will encounter people who will become your friends. Throughout the year ahead, please carry with you these words by Helen Steiner Rice, the poem entitled "The Gift of Friendship."

Friendship is a precious gift
That can't be bought or sold,
But its value is far greater
Than a mountain made of gold.
For gold is cold and lifeless,
It cannot see nor hear,
And in your times of trouble,
It is powerless to cheer.
It has no ears to listen,
No heart to understand.
It cannot bring you comfort
Or reach out a helping hand.
So when you ask God for a gift,
Be thankful that he sends,
Not diamonds, pearls, or riches,
But the love of a real, true friend.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Would the National Vice President Sharon Conatser from the Department of Illinois please come forward, along with National President Janet Jefford.

Congratulations, Sharon, what a special day this is for you and the Department of Illinois. And now you will receive your pin and ribbon from our newly installed National President Janet.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Congratulations, Sharon.

May I present to you the newly elected National Vice President of the American Legion Auxiliary Sharon Conatser from the Department of Illinois.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Thank you, Janet.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Madam National President Janet, I'm so thrilled and honored to stand before you as your National Vice President.

This amazing experience will continue to help me grow with our organization.

I need to thank my family. My husband, Past National Commander Marty Conatser, our three sons and their families at home, my sister and her husband, Butcher, here and my many family memory -- members from Illinois. I cannot thank you enough.

And a special shout out to all of you watching us streaming live at home. I received many comments yesterday, Janet, that they were so pleased to be able to watch it streamlined and sent their congratulations to you.

I'd like to thank the entire Department of Illinois for the support and the love as we embark upon an awesome endeavor.

Throughout my life, you have all been there to help me. And as you can see, the entire Legion family from Illinois is a part of this.

Illinois, please stand.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Thank you. I love our organization and what we stand for. Thank you all for being supportive of my dream.

I also want to thank my great friend and mentor, Peggy Thomas. Who would've thought in Las Vegas that one day I would be standing here as National President.

Thank you, Peggy. You're a great friend and a great mentor.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: President Janet, we've gotten to know each other better over the last two years. We've roomed together. We've played together and we've shopped together.

I look forward to serving with you and helping your visions and dreams for our organization come true.

Our Centennial Plan is in place and we are ready to continue to help our organization grow.

Your theme of Faith, Family, Freedom and as National Vice President, I pledge to you my faith in our American Legion Auxiliary, our family as we continue to grow together and the freedom to support your visions, our members and our veterans.

My wishes for you, Madam President, is safe travels and many successes and may God watch over you. May God bless America and the best country on Earth.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you, Sharon, for those great remarks.

Past National President Nancy.

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: You know, when we had National Convention in Anaheim --

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Yeah, I remember.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: -- did you ever think that this would happen?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: No. Never.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: She (unintelligible). At the head table reception in the Anaheim convention, Nancy says to me and to my National President Josie Melgard, "You know? I think I could do this."

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: "It's not as -- it's not as boring as I thought it was."

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: And I did think it was pretty boring.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Yeah. Madam President, Madam Past President, would you please present the pin and ribbon to new National President Janet Jefford?

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: It is my pleasure to introduce to you Janet Jefford from the great state of Connecticut, my home away from home.

The National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, the 95th, from sea to shining sea.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Shining sea.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: National President Janet, I present to you this gavel, your symbol of authority. May you use it in a fair manner, always remembering that justice is a cornerstone of our organization and fairness is a premise upon which our nation was founded.

Janet, I know that you will use this wisely and my very best to.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: So in the elevator this morning, Peggy Thomas was there and she said, "Don't cry on stage because it makes you look ugly."

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: So no --

VOICE: I guess I look ugly.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: No crying. Please be seated.

Good morning everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: First, I need to start with a lot of thank yous.

To the Eastern Division, thank you for your support and here's to us being first in membership next year, right Sandra?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Okay. You know, the Eastern Division has a strong history of producing awesome National Presidents, three of whom are here this morning; Phyllis Sickmond, Linda Newsome and Kris West.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: My friends, with your help and advice I can only hope to follow in your footsteps.

Now, will the Department of Connecticut please stand?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: You know? We are a small state. Some of our districts, both in the Legion and the Auxiliary, are only as big as some of your units and posts in other departments.

But you know that saying? Small but mighty. That's us.

And part of the reason is that we do things as a Legion family. We actually live the word "family".

If it wasn't for the emotional and monetary support of the American Legion, the Sons of the Legion and the Auxiliary, this day would not have been possible.

Thank you for making this start of an incredible journey a reality.

I will try my best to make you proud. I love you all.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: To my two sons, Willy and Christopher, my daughter-in-law Carlyn, and of course to me the two best grandkids in the whole world, Morgan and Lucas, thank you for your love and support.

Morgan and Lucas, I know I missed a lot of birthdays and events over the past few years but give me one more year and then you won't be able to get rid of me. I love you.

And to two very special people that are celebrating above, my parents Stella and Bill.

You know for many years after I moved back to Connecticut in the early 90s I didn't really have a name. Everyone just called me Bill and Stella's daughter.

As I look back today, I am proud of that. My mom and dad brought me into the Legion family. They taught me about service and about giving back.

I have often heard Legionaries say about my mom, "She was one classy lady." I cannot think of a better way to be remembered.

To Carol Van Kirk, you gave me my first appointment. Thank you. And thank you for being part of my installation this morning. I have learned a lot from our talks together.

I have three other family members here today. I think of them as my sisters.

To Kris Nelson and Nancy Brown-Park, we have seen, done, laughed, talked and talked about so many things.

It just doesn't seem that long ago since we were all relatively new chairmen and bonded together with Krisann Owens and then added Jan to our pack.

We worked hard but boy, have we had fun. I look forward to your support and guidance this year.

And last but surely not least, to Ginny Hobbs, thank you for a beautiful installation. You are a great friend and mentor.

You know? When I would ask Ginny for advice, you know, and I'd say, "Just tell me what I should do," she would drive me crazy because she'd never tell me directly.

She would, instead, lead me to talk about the options, the pros, the cons and then say it was up to me to make the decision that was right for me and what I felt was right for the organization.

Thank you, my dear friend, for helping me become a better person.

Now congratulations to all the new officers who have been installed this morning.

To the new department presidents, let's, together, make 2014-2015 a great year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: We are embarking on a -- an incredible journey together. The leadership of this organization is in your hands.

Goal four of our strategic plan calls for strengthening units and departments.

Goal three, to develop leaders at all levels.

The real work of making that happen begins with you. I know you are up to the challenge. It will take a lot of hard work. But remember, it can be done.

To the National Division Vice Presidents, please stand.

And can I have any members of the National Department or unit membership teams and committees, please stand in -- out in the audience.

To you is given the task of being the true cheerleaders for Goal one, achieving a million members by our centennial year.

This, a lofty goal but one that is achievable if we do it together.

This team can provide the tools and encouragement, but membership can only grow if each and every one of us truly believes it is our job.

We are here today because we love the American Legion Auxiliary. We believe in its mission and we enjoy the camaraderie and the fun that it brings to our lives.

Why wouldn't you want to share that with others?

Just ask people to join. Tell them why it's important. Tell them your stories. And remember, it can be done.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: You know, I heard someone say recently, think about this, if you think it can be done or if you think it can't be done, you are absolutely right.

And to Vice President Sharon -- how's that sound, Sharon? (Unintelligible) you like that?

Congratulations to you. Your department and your family are so proud.

I will need your advice and support as we lead this organization together.

As I work to decide on a theme for this year, three words kept coming up. Three words, that for me, describe the American Legion Auxiliary; faith, family, freedom.

Faith. We being our preamble for God and country. Our nation's founders were deeply grounded in their individual faiths.

Faith also stands for the belief and the trust we place in each other. Our brave service men and women must have faith and trust in each other as they continue to defend our freedoms every day. They need it to survive.

And we must have faith in those women that we elect as leaders. When you elect someone, have faith that they will do the right thing.

There are many ways to get to the same destination. Some may be easier, some may be quicker. But in the end, we will get there.

Don't be so quick to criticize. Let those you put in office find their way. Support them. Be there to advise them if they ask, but give them a chance.

In essence, be nice.

Help us to reach that goal of achieving a culture of good will. Our survival as the American Legion Auxiliary depends on it.

Family. The Legion family. Think what we can accomplish if we do it together. Our organizations will grow and prosper if we work together.

Commander Helm, Commander Moss and I will be emphasizing the Legion family this year and encouraging you to work membership, fundraising and our missions together as the Legion family, a family that will someday measure over four million strong.

But family can also apply to the family we call our communities. We must become good community partners. We must be visible in our communities.

That is the way people will know who we are, what we do and why we matter. That will make them want to join us.

And so you will find a different emphasis this year on our community service program. The Legion Family Convention Service Project at the Pine Valley Community Center is a great example.

Get out there in your communities. Wear your Legion family shirts. Be proud of who you are.

I ask you to close your eyes and think of your community, your town without the American Legion Auxiliary unit or without an American Legion post.

Will it look the same? Will the quality of life for the veterans and their families be the same? Will students be receiving scholarships, learning about patriotism and the flag, attending Girls State and Boys State and so on and so on?

I think not.

Freedom. The freedom to be who we want, to say what we want, to worship as we want. Many men and women have died so that we can have these freedoms.

It is only right that we, as the American Legion Auxiliary, continue our great history of service. That we continue to serve those who have served to protect us, that we serve their families and their communities.

As Nancy has said this year, we must continue to pass it on. We must pay it forward. We must ensure that the someone is here for the next 100 years working the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Will you help make that possible?

I know the answer is yes.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: I chose the word celebrating in my theme because I believe we need to celebrate our accomplishments and recognize the people that are doing the good work.

As I travel on my visits, I would love to meet and recognize those members who quietly go about doing our mission.

It doesn't matter what offices they hold or might have held or might never have held.

It matters that they are making a difference in peoples lives every day. They are serving our veterans. They are educating our youth and they are supporting their communities.

That is what matters.

The bell represents the sounds of faith, family and freedom. The bells that gather us to worship. The joyous sounds of family celebration, the bells that rang out on Independence Day.

When we gather again in Baltimore, I hope to hear bells ringing as we celebrate our accomplishments in a job well done.

Before I close, I want to invite all of you to join us in Connecticut for Homecoming on October 16th, 17th and 18th.

The committee has planned a great weekend and we have been assured that the weather will be beautiful and the fall colors will be gorgeous.

As many of you know, my family lost a wonderful member a couple of years ago, my daughter-in-law, Shay (phonetic).

As she was fighting her battle with cancer, she once posted on her care page what she called the real to do list.

I have carried that with me each and every day and I swore if I ever got the chance to share it with others, I would.

We all work so hard for the American Legion Auxiliary. We have a lot of work ahead of us. We have a lot to do. But please, don't forget the real to do list according to Shay.

Number one, sing.

Number two, smile at strangers.

Number three, keep learning.

Four, notice kindness.

Five, and my favorite, eat ice cream

(Laughter.)

VOICE: Yes.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Six, hope.

Seven, count your blessings.

Eight, laugh.

Nine, love.

And number ten, love some more.

May you each have --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: May you each have a successful year. May all your dreams come true. And may your days be full of fun, laughter and love.

May God keep you and your family safe. May God bless our men and women in uniform and may He continue to bless the best country on Earth that each of us proudly calls home, the United States of America.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Madam President, thank you for those words of inspiration and guidance.

As we move to toward the centennial anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary, we must remain mindful of the founding purposes of our organization and to continue to build upon the legacy of those who have preceded us.

There are many people who shared in building and perpetuating that legacy who are not with us today.

I can think of some within your immediate family and your Legion family who would be bursting with pride at your ascension to the office of National President.

Naturally, the first people that come to my mind are your parents, Bill and Stella Lucas, who were both steadfast members of the American Legion Auxiliary and who I met before I met you.

Then there's also Hugh and Joan Graham and our mutual friend, Kathy Reardon, who each played a role in developing your leadership within the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Connecticut. I know that each of them is looking down today and beams with pride at your accomplishments.

I'm having to survey our -- our group up here to see if one of our guests has arrived. But since I don't see him, we'll make a little detour.

Madam President, have you thought about that you're going to have to number your commanders this year?

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Oh, Mike 1 and Mike 2?

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Mike 1 and Mike 2, uh-hm.

When's that going to happen? You know that you have both the Commander of the American Legion and the Commander of the Sons of the Legion having the same fist name. Oh well.

This is a year of new things.

Today, we have a gentleman who will be a very important individual this year in the American Legion family.

On Sunday, the Sons of The American Legion elected an outstanding member of the detachment of Colorado to serve as their National Commander.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you the National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion who will serve with Janet for the year 19 -- excuse me, 20 -- oh well, I'm a century behind -- 2014-2015, Mike Moss from the Detachment of Command -- of Colorado. I'm getting too many Cs.

Mike?

(Applause.)

COMMANDER MOSS: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

COMMANDER MOSS: This is going to be a wonderful year. I'm looking forward to working with Janet. We're going to accomplish so many things together.

Mike Helm, working as a family.

We're going to be building our bridges to the future, linking our American Legion Family.

Again, I'd just like to say thank you. You've elected a wonderful woman.

Thank you, Janet. I look forward to working with you and we're going to continue to build those bridges to our future, our American Legion and our American Legion family.

Thank you again.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you, Mike, for joining us with -- with us today.

National President Janet, there are a number of people with you today from your home department who wish to share with you their well wishes for you and for the year ahead.

It is my pleasure to introduce the retiring National Executive Committee Woman of the Department of Connecticut Nancy Hansen who will introduce the special guests that are here with you today.

Nancy?

MS. HANSEN: Good morning everyone. Thank you, Ginny.

The members of the Department of Connecticut are so proud of you President Janet. You have been an exceptional leader and a mentor in our department and we know that you will bring the same dedication and passion with you as you travel across the US and abroad representing the National American Legion Auxiliary and its members.

I would like to introduce some of our members of the Legion family Department of Connecticut that are with us today.

Will you please hold your applause until I have introduced all our non-speaking members?

And will you please rise as I say your name?

Janet's grandchildren, Morgan and Lucas Jefford.

(Applause.)

MS. HANSEN: Her daughter-in-law, Carlyn Jefford.

Her Aunt Emily Bicoskis (phonetic). Sorry.

Her cousins, Marie Delaney and Megan Delaney.

Our Alternate NEC, Wayne Morgan.

And our current National Americanism Chairman, Richard Anderson.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HANSEN: To bring the greetings from Janet's unit, the Unit President Donna Anderson.

UNIT PRESIDENT ANDERSON: Good morning.

VOICE: Good morning.

UNIT PRESIDENT ANDERSON: When Janet first came -- moved back to Connecticut in the early 90s, her mother, Stella Lucas, referred her membership to Unit 56 in Goodale Rameker in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

She told Janet there were two special ladies who would take care of her, and I know Janet wishes they could be here today to thank Bernice Bergeron and Alice Beebe for their mentoring and their cheerleading. We are a small unit, only 34 members, and we are so proud. The first Department of Connecticut female commander Marianne Bergeron Ruskinsky came from our unit and now we have Janet Jefford our National President.

Janet, unit meetings, I heard the second Tuesday of every month.

(Laughter.)

UNIT PRESIDENT ANDERSON: Good luck and Godspeed with your journeys.

(Applause.)

MS. HANSEN: To bring the greetings from the First District, District President Lydia Degumbia and District Commander Dennis Beauregard.

DISTRICT PRESIDENT DEGUMBIA: Good morning everyone.

VOICE: Good morning.

DISTRICT PRESIDENT DEGUMBIA: I hope you guys are a lot cooler out there than we are up here because it's pretty hot. Janet, I want to bring the congratulations of the First District.

Enjoy the journey that you're about to embark on because it's once in a lifetime. You have 94 other ladies that have embarked on it, so you're one in a million that's going to do this.

And just remember that you have to come home sometime, okay?

(Laughter.)

DISTRICT COMMANDER BEAUREGARD: Good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

DISTRICT COMMANDER BEAUREGARD: Janet, I have a very short speech for you but I think it's very appropriate.

Since the American Revolution, Connecticut is known as the Provision State providing the country when needed.

Now Connecticut is providing you to the Ladies Auxiliary and to the American Legion family, thank you and God bless.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thanks.

(Applause.)

MS. HANSEN: Next I would like to introduce the Department Commander Harry Butch Hansen and Department President Joanne Jackson.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER HANSEN: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER HANSEN: I've been waiting a couple years to say this.

Madam President, it kind of rolls off your tongue. I like it. I like it.

Distinguished guests, delegates and friends and family, I've known Janet for about ten years now and I really got to know her over the past three years as part of Team Janet.

Some of you may remember a couple of years ago in Washington, the infamous Red Solo Cup song.

(Laughter.)

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER HANSEN: This past year, you served as a -- we had a dinner. We dressed in tuxedos and served dinner to the past National Presidents.

We've tried to make this a fun adventure along the way and we've made a lot of friends while promoting Janet and her vision for the future of the Auxiliary. And hopefully we've been able to accomplish that.

The American Legion Department of Connecticut has made a commitment to Janet, support her any way possible and we are all extremely proud of Janet and what she has accomplished as only the second person from Connecticut to be elected to the high office of National President.

I am here today as a newly elected Department Commander -- I'm sorry. (Laughs.) I thought I had this all down pat.

To offer our support for your year as National President. Thank you. (Applause.)

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT JACKSON: Janet, a lot of people have mentioned mom and dad for good reason. They were before it became a family, a name in the American Legion. They were The American Legion Family and they espoused those principals and passed them on to Janet.

And I promise you that Butch and I will continue to try to uphold those same kind of principles for you and have a successful year in your travels. Travel safe. And come home with lots of wonderful experiences.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime for most of us. We weren't members of the American Legion when Ms. Gilbert was elected president. So this is still a once-in-a-lifetime for the Connecticut people.

(Applause.)

MS. HANSEN: We also have with us today our Junior Past President and my successor as the NEC Helen Goewey and our immediate Past Commander Robert Murray.

(Applause.)

MR. MURRAY: You go first.

NEC GOEWY: Oh, thank you.

MR. MURRAY: Ladies first.

NEC GOEWY: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

NEC GOEWY: National President Janet, what a beautiful sound.

You have worked very hard in the American Legion Auxiliary at all levels and is well deserving to serve as our leader.

We are all very proud of you that you've reached this pinnacle.

And as mentioned before, you're only the second person from Connecticut. This is quite an honor for Connecticut, quite an honor.

And I know that Stella and Bill are here in spirit and celebrating with you.

And I want to say thank you to the Jefford family for giving you to us this year to be our leader. May you have many fond memories, great accomplishments, lots of fun as you journey throughout the country, across the oceans as our ambassador.

And as another late family friend would say, "Godspeed." You know who that was, Joan Graham.

(Applause.)

MR. MURRAY: It's been a long road. Good morning delegates, alternates, members of the American Legion and guests.

It's my great honor and certainly my great, great pleasure to stand before you today to represent the Department of Connecticut home of your new National President Janet Jefford.

As we know, Janet's only the second person ever from the state of Connecticut to hold this high office and the first one since the middle of World War II way back in 1944.

I've personally known Janet for many years. In fact, I knew her late father, Bill Lucas, very well. Bill was a past Department Commander in Connecticut from 1980 to 1981.

So Janet has had an early lifelong relationship with both the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary and she truly understands, as we said before, what is meant when we say the American Legion family.

She works unselfishly every day to fulfill that important commitment.

We in Connecticut have watched with great admiration Janet's many accomplishments over the years on the district, department and national levels and could not be prouder or more excited that you've chosen her to represent the world's largest women's patriotic organization.

We know the measure of her personal dedication and her tireless devotion and we know that you've chosen wisely in selecting her as your National President.

Madam President Janet, we want you to know that as always the Department of Connecticut stands behind you 100 percent and we are second to none in wishing you all the success in the world as you assume your new responsibilities.

May Godspeed you in your travels.

(Applause.)

MS. HANSEN: And we have another speaking guest with us today, someone who's probably known Janet longer than most, our Past Department Commander/Current NEC D. Joe Jackson (phonetic.)

(Applause.)

NEC JACKSON: Members of the American Legion Auxiliary, Past National Presidents, members of the Legion, Legion Auxiliary -- I mean the SAL, juniors, we have some writers out there today, this is huge for the Department of Connecticut and our time to have such a fine person aspire to the office as she has today.

Janet has been a big sister in the Department of Connecticut and she's been a great friend and she has got the ability to take us to the next level.

Over the years, a lot of you people have wondered if there's a connection between Janet and I. You've seen me as her escort and just have a good time a lot of times, well there is a connection. It's called the Legion family.

Bill Lucas was the greatest mentor that any Vietnam Veteran could ever have. He stood for what it was all about.

Stella Lucas was a definitely the classiest First Lady of our Department as she served with Bill and she went on to work in our Department. She did a unit district and she was our finance chairman for years and she always kind of -- I think she wanted to adopt me according to a lot of people because she thought Janet should have a brother.

(Laughter.)

NEC JACKSON: And if I could've been Janet's brother, I'll tell you what. I'd have a beautiful sister.

But today, for me to stand here, Janet, I just think this has been a tremendous trip and I -- you've shared it with me and my wife and the state of Connecticut and everybody got into it in the end.

In the beginning, we didn't know what to do. I think that's a real honest statement and -- but I think we pretty well got it now and we're going to help share it next year we liked it so much.

(Laughter.)

NEC JACKSON: So I think that as Janet takes her theme -- her theme of faith, family and freedom I don't know, are you people good at doing a cheer?

VOICE: Yes.

NEC JACKSON: Okay. Janet, you've got to come up here.

(Laughter.)

NEC JACKSON: It's customary in all the sport -- you know Janet is an avid UConn Husky fan?

(Cheering.)

NEC JACKSON: And if there's a game playing, your meetings will rush right through. I can tell you that.

(Laughter.)

NEC JACKSON: Well anyway, before most sporting events start there's a voice comes on the PA system and I don't know -- even know who the person is that does it but it goes like this.

And if you just listen and do this (indicating), you'll be overwhelmed with your (unintelligible).

It says, "Ladies and gentlemen, we're about to start. Everybody on your feet. Take off your hat. Wave your program. You've got to have a favorite out there somewhere. Today is Janet Jefford. Let's go!"

(Cheering.)

VOICE: And last, but certainly not least, Janet's sons, Willy and Chris Jefford.

(Applause.)

MR. JEFFORD: As you heard a lot today mentioned, we're two people. And those two people were the American Legion to me, Bill and Stella Lucas. And that's no surprise that my mom followed in their footsteps and made the American Legion a great part of their life.

When friends ask me what my mom does, I talk about all her work at Goodwin College. I talk about her taking a very small school and growing it into what it is today being very successful.

But I stop there and I pause and I think about my grandparents and say, "But what she's really passionate about is the American Legion. She is the American Legion."

I'm proud of her today. I know she will do a good job representing Connecticut and the entire country.

Congratulations, Mom.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. JEFFORD: And just very briefly, I want to say that I didn't know what to expect coming here for this -- this conference and this event and to honor my mother but I didn't know I'd be moved to tears so many times, whether it'd be the story yesterday about the prisoner of war or the speech that my mother gave and -- and the ten ways to live your life by Shay.

But it's happened multiple times and I think that just shows the passion that you all have and the commitment and the pride that you have in the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary and I know that my mom will carry on both those -- both those themes of pride and commitment.

She's always been very proud of us growing and today is a day for us to be very proud of her and to show our love and commitment to her. And I know as -- as your National President, she will be committed to all of you.

And when in her speech, what really stuck out for me was when she talked about it didn't matter what office you have held or what office you presently hold but that you're all here and you're all committed to your organization and to helping what -- what the American Legion and the American Auxiliary stand for.

And I know that that comes from her heart and -- and that's the way she's taught us to live our life and I want to thank you all for being so courteous to my family while we've been here.

This has been a really great experience and we're proud of you, Mom, and we love you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

VOICE: Okay. Surprise. I have a courtesy resolution that I was told that I could go ahead and present today. And this was introduced by our Past Department Presidents Rita Baryliski and Karen Thomson.

Whereas the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Connecticut has the honor and privilege of having a candidate for National President. And whereas our candidate will be -- I'm sorry -- will only be the second National President from the Department of Connecticut after Helen Gilbert in 1945.

And whereas Janet Jefford will be installed as National President at the upcoming National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina on August 28th, 2014 be it resolved that the members of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Connecticut proudly loan her to the National Organization for one year only.

And be it further resolved that we all wish the best for her to reach all of the goals that she has set for the organization.

And be it further resolved that the American -- that the Auxiliary members congratulate Janet and wish her safe travels as she takes a once in a lifetime experience as National President of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

VOICE: And Janet, thank you for the privilege and the honor of being your MC today.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Thank you so much, Nancy, and the wonderful members from the Department of Connecticut. I'm sure you're bursting with pride as this special lady begins her memorable year as National President.

It is now my privilege and honor to welcome Past National President Nancy Brown-Park into the ranks of Past National Presidents and to thank her from the bottom of our hearts for a very special year of service and for everything else that you have accomplished during your tenure.

It was indeed an incredible year of service and one that leaves us with rich memories of our service, and yours.

Past President Nancy, if you would please come forward there's some special presentations to be made at this time.

Presenting Past National President Nancy with her Past National President's pin will be representative -- representatives of the family of Nancy's friend and mentor, Past National President Josie Melgard.

On the platform today, we have Josie's husband, Bob, and their daughters, Diane Rapport, Debbie Hurado and Doreen Young.

If you all would like to come forward.

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Hm?

VOICE: It's Long, not Young. That's okay. (Unintelligible.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: I had Long.

(Applause.)

VOICE: I know. You said Young.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Oh, okay. I can't read my own writing.

And they have a special story to tell you about Nancy's pin.

MS. HURADO: First of all, I'd like to say that it's an honor for me, the middle child, Debbie, to represent the Melgard family in passing on our mom's Past National President's pin to you, Nancy, our honorary sister.

You have been an inspiration to us all and you've never missed an opportunity for thanking -- for thanking us for supporting you, but it's us who should be thanking you for the joy and comfort you have given us in completing what Mom had hoped she'd be able to do herself.

Now, Nancy, you're the fifth person in the history of the American Legion Auxiliary to become National President from California and the teacher in me can't let this teachable moment pass without a little history lesson.

As it's been hearing the stories of how others have served that inspire us all to step up our own service, Eliza London-Shepard, the stepsister of author Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*, was fifth president in the American Legion Auxiliary's history. She served from 1925 to 1926.

She was a pioneer for many patriotic causes helping to establish the observance of Memorial Day and putting flags in every classroom.

Jump ahead 16 years and we meet the 1942-'43 President Ruth Mathebat. Before her presidency, Ruth was one of the pioneers instrumental in creating Girls State.

It is Ruth's pin from the -- from 1943 that her husband requested be given to the next National President from California after her passing that you will be receiving today.

It took until the 1968-1969 term of Estella Hanell for the pin to get passed on.

Estella, as you know, as both of our mothers were very active at that time of her term, she worked for Veterans Rehab and was a very strict certified parliamentarian.

But it was her trademark of stunning hats that I remember most from that time of her presidency.

Mom took office in 1985. It's very comforting for our family to be here amongst our second family, the American Legion and Auxiliary.

Like Ruth and like you, Nancy, Mom's passion started in Girls State.

Missing Children and the Flag Alliance were also programs that she invested her time and talents in.

Now the time between Mom's term and yours has been the longest stretch for presidents coming from our state. You've brought us a long way through your Pass It On programs and work for veterans.

So it is with great pride and love -- oops. Dropped it.

(Laughter.)

MS. HURADO: That I pin you with this Past National President's pin and hope someday that you will be the first to be able to pass it on to a new California president in person.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: This is an incredible honor for me to have Josie's pin and all the history from California. Thank you everybody. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Past National President Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan will present Nancy with her Past National President's Ribbon. Jan?

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Past National President Nancy, this ribbon that I hold represents so much.

The red stripe stands for the courage of your convictions.

The white stripe stands for pride in the knowledge that you've helped develop a plan to move our organization forward and sustain it for future generations.

The blue stripe represents the bravery of our men and women who have served and continue to serve for our great country in the Armed Forces.

So when you wear this ribbon of the office in the future, please know that it is embedded with the love and admiration of our members for your incredible year of service.

It is not just a piece of cloth. Rather, it represents all of our hopes and dreams and the promise for a bright future for the American Legion Auxiliary. Guard well its destiny.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT PULVERMACHER-RYAN: Go with God.

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.
(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: May I go now?

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: No, you may not go yet. Past National President Kris Nelson will present our colors to Past -- to retiring National President Nancy and her husband, Jim Park, and their daughter, Chloe.

Kris?

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT NELSON: Nancy, please ask Jim and Chloe to join you between your pages, Linda Workman and Sherry Snyder, for the presentation of your colors.

Nancy, one year ago I stood with you on this stage and was honored to read two prayers as you began your journey.

I'd like to read a segment from that opening prayer.

A strong woman has faith that she is strong enough for the journey, but a woman of strength has faith that it is in the journey that she will become strong.

As you traveled across our country and overseas as an ambassador for the American Legion Auxiliary, the journey has indeed strengthened you.

As your installation and the closing prayer challenged you to remember the jobless, you accomplished this by motivating Auxiliary members to join the American Legion at veteran's job fairs across the country.

To remember the homeless, you shared with us your pride in the programs members across the country hosted, stand downs, project suds, veteran's soup kitchens and food pantries and the list goes on.

To remember those who suffer, you challenge members to seek out veterans, military and their families who need assistance in communities across the nation to help destroy complacency and be compassionate.

The Million Member Challenge and Centennial Plan will strengthen member's units and departments for years to come.

Nancy, as you stand between these beautiful flags I know you will remember not only in your mind but also in your heart these many -- these and many more pass it on moments that you experienced while serving as our American Legion Auxiliary National President.

You shared with us at your installation your love of America and our country's flag and I know you will treasure the memories of when you stood at the podium between these flags presiding as our National President.

Nancy, one year ago these beautiful flags were entrusted to your care to guard wisely for one year. They stand, as they have for years, for patriotism, for an unrelenting love of country and service to a cause greater than all of us.

May they always hold a place of honor in your hearts and in your home.

You have challenged all of us to share our knowledge and commitment of the American Legion Auxiliary and to pass it on to encourage others to share in the passion you have for our Auxiliary mission.

You and Jim represented us with dignity and pride as you journeyed beyond our shores to foreign lands as our ambassadors of good will, not only for the American Legion Auxiliary but for the United States of America.

You two answered our Nation's call to service during an incredible year.

When you took the oath of office one year ago, the road of your presidency stretched before you with as limitless possibilities and now it has come to a close with many chapters written.

With memories to be cherished and wonderfully fulfilling moments to be treasured you have lived your dream.

When you arrive home, your colors will be waiting for you.

The American flag carries American ideas and ideals, American history and American feelings.

Although it is only pieces of materials sewn together to form a design, every color, every thread, every star, every stripe means liberty and justice and stands for our unrelenting quest for fairness and equality.

We cherish in our hearts an unquenchable love and devotion to the unseen which it represents.

The stars and stripes are our dreams and our labors. They are bright with cheer, brilliant with courage, firm with faith.

As a symbol of our nation, our flag is as much a thing of the spirit as it is a thing of the cloth.

And then there's our own Auxiliary scarlet and gold banner symbolizing our organization and our members who serve with conviction for God and country.

It represents our mission and purpose, our ideals and ideas for the future.

It represents the dedication of members across the country, our beliefs and love of our organization.

It symbolizes our past, present and the reality of our organization's future.

Nancy, I am honored to express the appreciation of the American Legion Auxiliary members for your year of service.

Thank you for the courage, wisdom, diversity and dedication you've shown while you challenge each of us to make a difference every day and to pass it on.

Please take with you the heartfelt thanks of every member of the American Legion Auxiliary. Cherish the memories and friendships you made on your journey.

And, Jim, on behalf of our members thank you and your family for sharing Nancy with us this year.

Nancy and Jim, may God grant you many blessings, continued good health and safe travels home.

Nancy, as you take your seat you will also take your place as a Past National President of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Please welcome back Ginny Hobbs to the podium.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Yes, you can sit down a minute. Thank you for all the beautiful presentations; Kris, Jan and the Melgard family.

We will once again hear from Anita Biggs singing “God Bless the USA.” Please feel free to join Anita in singing this wonderful song.

MS. BIGGS: Okay. I’m not singing this song. Everybody’s going to sing this song, okay?

If tomorrow all the things were gone I’d worked for all my life
And I had to start again with just my children and my wife
I’d thank my lucky stars to be livin’ here today
‘Cause the flag still stands for freedom and they can’t take that away
And I’m proud to be an American where at least I know I’m free
And I won’t forget the ones who died and gave that right to me
And I’d gladly stand up next to you and defend her still today
‘Cause there ain’t no doubt I love this land, God bless the USA
From the lakes of Minnesota, to the hills of Tennessee
Across the plains of Texas, from sea to shining sea
From Detroit down to Houston, from New York to LA
Well there’s pride in every American heart
And it’s time to stand and say that
And I’m proud to be an American where at least I know I’m free
And I won’t forget the ones who died and gave that right to me
And I’d gladly stand up next to you and defend her still today
‘Cause there ain’t no doubt I love this land, God bless the USA
And I’m proud to be an American where at least I know I’m free
And I won’t forget the ones who died and gave that right to me
And I’d gladly stand up next to you and defend her still today
‘Cause there ain’t no doubt I love this land, God bless the USA.

(Applause.)

MS. BIGGS: You all sound beautiful.

(Applause.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Because we close this morning’s session and Nancy closes her convention, there are two announcements that we need to make.

First is the reminder of the NEC meeting, which will commence immediately following the close of this convention in Room --

VOICE: Oh Lord.

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Ah ha, caught Dubbie.

VOICES: (Unintelligible.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Well, nobody told me.

VOICE: 217.

VOICE: 211.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: 211. Room 211 for the NEC --

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Ha ha, beat ya.

Secondly, please show courtesy by remaining in your seats until the official close of the convention and the recessional of the retiring officers is completed.

No presidents pins will be available until after the office close of the convention, so if you lose -- leave early, ha ha ha, you don't get a pin.

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: At this time, Madam President Janet, would you please return the gavel to Past National President Nancy so she may close her convention?

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Wait a minute. We had Gypsy Rose lead last night. We don't need a stripper today, Madam President -- Madam Past President.

VOICE: (Laughs.) Oh, goodness. Okay.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Okay.

VOICE: Here you go.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT HOBBS: Okay. You see that.

VOICE: Thank you.

VOICE: Good luck. Close your convention.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I am -- okay.

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you. Thank you, Madam President Janet. Boy that sounds really good by the way.

I want you to know that I did cry a lot but I'm not sad to be leaving. I am so excited to be handing this over to Janet and to go home with my husband and my daughter.

I said to my husband, Jim, last night as we were dancing to that really cool music -- in fact, they played our song "When I Fall in Love," and I said -- for those that you don't know, Jim and I are together 24/7. I don't need this in my hand. What am I doing.

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We are together 24/7. We obviously live together.

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: We work together. We own a business together.

So this has been a tough year for both of us, but I think we've both grown. We've both grown to love each other more, but we've really missed each other.

So we are excited to be going home to our little guy, Willy, and our little house and our friends.

This experience has been incredible for me and for Jim and we thank each and every one of you for all your love, every courtesy that you've shown us.

I was overwhelmed with love yesterday from everybody and I just want to say thank you.

Janet, I wish for you a most successful year filled with opportunities that you will have and I know that you will serve our organization well and that we will all work together as we pass it on and your -- your theme of celebrate faith, family and freedom could not be more appropriate, and especially right now.

So I wish you all the best.

And I want to thank you, Janet, for your love and support. It's going to be great.

I'm trying to read this thing and I can't.

Okay. I'm going to skip part. I already said it. Okay, so --

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I believe that National President Janet and her officers are off to a great beginning in planning a year of fulfilling our mission and strongly supporting our motto of service, not self.

Janet's comments and everything -- every comment, her speech that she made, it wove our new strategic plan into it and that's really how we will be successful.

So at this time, I would ask the retiring officers, the newly elected officers, the family and platform guests of the National President be retired along with the colors of the Connecticut delegation.

By y'all.

(Music playing.)

We are family

I got all my --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Okay. So, I just went rogue, JP.

MR. PARK: Yes.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: My husband has a gift for me.

MR. PARK: Yeah, but first -- first I want to thank the National staff of the American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion Family and especially the -- the Auxiliary.

They've made this an incredible year for us and we really enjoyed it. We had a lot of fun.

So now that you're coming back home --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Uh oh.

MR. PARK: -- I have this little present to -- to give you.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Oh.

MR. PARK: (Laughs.)

(Laughter.)

MR. PARK: Dare I say they --

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

MR. PARK: (Laughs.) (Unintelligible.)

So now that -- now that she's back home, she'll be able to take care of the -- another dog --

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you.

MR. PARK: -- so I -- (laughs).

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Thank you, honey.

MR. PARK: You're welcome.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: I'm so excited, another Willy dog.

(Laughter.)

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: The National -- oh God, here I go again.

MR. PARK: Okay.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: Peggy, I'm really trying.

The National Chaplain, Shelley Riggs, will give the closing benediction.

CHAPLAIN RIGGS: Let us pray.

Dear God, we thank you for watching over President Nancy during her -- this past year of traveling.

She has taught us to pass it on and we thank her.

Your goodness over -- we thank you. We are so blessed by your goodness over and over again.

As our year comes to an end, we thank you for being there for us at all times.

We know it is by your grace that we have been given this opportunity to serve our organization for God and country.

We have accomplished our mission, Lord, and offer you praise.

We thank you for reaching out to our bereaved.

And finally, we thank you for enriching our lives every day.

Go in peace, serve our Lord and our country.

All this we ask in your most holy name.

Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT BROWN-PARK: My national pages will retire the colors, the national president's colors, followed by our daughter, Chloe.

And when Jim and I reach the back of the room, this 94th National Convention will be adjourned.

Thank you, everybody, for everything. Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, at 10:07 a.m., the above-entitled Convention was concluded.)

**POST-CONVENTION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2014**

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: This National Executive Committee Meeting will now come to order.

I don't have a gavel.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Please, before we begin, disable all electronic devices or place them on silent mode.

For the opening ceremony, we will rise and -- and remain standing.

Karen Boehler, national chaplain, will lead us in our invocation and moment of silence for our fallen heroes and those serving our nation today for the protection of our freedom.

Following the prayer, Americanism Chairman Kathy Daudistel will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem, followed by Constitution & Bylaws Chairman Lisa Williamson leading us in the Preamble to the Constitution.

Karen?

CHAPLAIN BOEHLER: Would you bow your heads please?

Father God, you've given us another beautiful day in your creation and we thank you for that.

Lord, too often we forget to thank you for all the gifts you've given.

Help us each day to focus not just on our pain but on our blessings to remember from whom those blessings come and to actively work to bring those benefits to all people on this earth.

Thank you, too, Father for blessing us with the wisdom and grace we find in our new National President Janet.

Help us as a group to support, encourage and pray for her constantly.

We ask blessings on our active military veterans and their families. Lord, please keep them safe as they serve our country faithfully.

And now, Lord, I'd ask you to bless our time as we gather with excitement to begin our new year.

But first, let's just take a moment of silence and please, in your hearts, offer up thanks and prayers for those who have given and who have served.

(Moment of silence.)

CHAPLAIN BOEHLER: God, you are so good. We bless you and we love you.

Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

CHAIRMAN DAUDISTEL: Please join me in repeating the 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.

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 through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's 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.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAMSON: 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 and 100 percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and goodwill on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;

To participate in and contribute to the accomplishments of the aims and purposes of the American Legion;

To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Did Nancy steal the gavel? I just asked if you took the gavel.

This meeting of the National Executive Committee is convened.

Before we begin our business, I'd just like to take a few minutes to welcome the new National Executive Committee members to your new role this year.

Now many women have sat in those chairs before you for the last 95 years and through their commitment and their knowledge, they've moved this organization forward and I know that same thing will happen this year.

I encourage each and every one of you to read everything that is sent to you, to not be afraid to ask questions.

In fact, I encourage you to ask questions. I want you to understand what you're voting on or what we're trying to do.

I will appreciate any comments you have, any questions and when an issue is brought forward, I encourage you to speak your mind.

Please take the time and make the effort to tell us how you feel about the issue that we're voting, whether you're against it or for it.

There's nobody's going to hold it against you if you're -- if you, in your heart, feel that what is brought forward is not good for this organization.

So don't be afraid to go to the mike. Don't be afraid to ask questions because we need to be informed so that we could make the right decisions for this organization.

I really -- I truly believe that.

So thank you for your service for this coming year and I know we'll have a great one.

It's so good to see so many familiar faces out there.

Okay. Those present who are eligible to vote today and at subsequent NEC meetings are the NEC members.

NEC members include and are limited to the National Executive Committee women from each department.

The five Division National Vice Presidents, the national chaplain, the national historian, national vice president and the national president.

Those allowed to be present at the NEC meeting with voice but no vote are the Past National Presidents and the national treasurer and secretary.

We welcome our visitors and remind you that you may listen to the discussion but are not permitted to participate in debate, nor to vote.

I would also, at this time, like to impress upon the members of the National Executive Committee that you are now serving in a national role as the board of directors with fiduciary responsibility to the National Organization.

As a member of the NEC, you no longer have the interests of your department as your primary focus.

You are serving as national representatives of the National Organization and you must be making decisions and casting your votes according to what is in the best interest of the National Organization.

For future meetings, you will get, again, receive information in advance and you will be expected to have read those materials in preparation for your next meeting.

This is an important role and we appreciate your diligence in attending to your duties thoughtfully and responsibility on behalf of the National Organization and all its members.

Now to get to the business at hand, the Chair asked those of you wishing to address this meeting to make your way to the microphone in the center aisle as this is the only way your remarks can be heard for recording by our professional court reporter for the transcripts of this meeting.

Also, please make sure that in making any remarks you address the Chair.

Attendants at previous NEC meetings was each member's responsibility.

However, thanks to our amazing convention team and National Headquarters Office, we are now tracking your participation via the QR codes on your name badges.

Did we scan them all in our -- all right.

VOICE: Is there anyone -- any NEC member that didn't get scanned, show of hands.

VOICE: I didn't.

VOICE: Okay (unintelligible). Okay (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Serving as parliamentarian for this meeting is Chris Dickey, our professional registered parliamentarian. For this meeting and future NEC meetings, the minutes will be approved by a Minutes Approval Committee.

The Chair appoints the NEC from California, Illinois and our winning department of the National President's Award for Excellence, Kansas, as the Minutes Approval Committee responsible for approving the minutes for this year's NEC meetings.

Our next business in order is the confirmation of the national secretary and the national treasurer.

One of the first responsibilities of the national president is to present the national secretary and the national treasurer to the NEC for confirmation.

So, the question is on the confirmation of Mary "Dubbie" Buckler for the Office of National Secretary for the 2014-2015 administrative year.

All in favor, say "aye".

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Any opposed, say no.

(No response.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: You have confirmed Mary "Dubbie" Buckler your National Secretary for the 2014-2015 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Now I am pleased to present for confirmation Marta Hedding for the Office of National Treasurer for the 2014-2015 administrative year.

The question is on the confirmation of Marta Hedding for the Office of National Treasurer.

All in favor, please say "aye".

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Any opposed, say no.

(No response.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: You have confirmed Marta Hedding as your National Treasurer for the 2014-2015 administrative year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Congratulations, and thank you for your service.

And I just have to take a minute that I -- I have to tell you. It has -- you just cannot realize the amount of work and the devotion that these two women have to this organization.

Over the last couple years and -- and especially this year, I've been amazed. Sometimes like 12:00 midnight, 1:30, I'm -- I'm going, "Dubbie, go to sleep" because I'm getting an email. What -- don't ask me why I'm up at that time either, but --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- you know, and it's like, "You need to stop sometime" but I -- I do have to say and I have to thank them for their devotion to this organization.

VOICE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: It's incredible.

Can I please have all of our National Officers stand and be recognized?
(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: They're a pretty handsome bunch of young women.

VOICE: Young.

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Young

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: We're all young at heart.
(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Would all the very young-at-heart Past National Presidents please stand and be recognized at this time?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Thank you, ladies, for your continued service.

And here is the group that have sat in these chairs at one time and they are here to advise you. Don't hesitate to call any of them. I'm sure they would love to answer your questions and to help you in anyway they can.

All right. The next item of business is the approval of the standing and special committee appointments for the 2014-2015 administrative year and Foundation board appointments.

You have each received a copy of the appointments list.

I know you haven't had a lot of time to review it and I'm sure, as in the past years, this year there's probably some misspellings on there and it might not be exactly right. So if you do find -- Tamara, want to raise your hand? Tamara is the back and if you -- if you do see something on that list that needs to be corrected --

VOICE: May we have the list? We did not get them in our packet
(unintelligible).

VOICE: Yeah, we didn't get it (unintelligible).

VOICE: They're on your chair (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All right. We will get -- we will get you a list. Here she comes.

(List distributed.)

MS. VAN KIRK: Madam President?

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Yes?

MS. VAN KIRK: Carol Van Kirk from Nebraska. You had asked for changes. Are you not ready for those?

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Sure. We could get them into the minutes or we could do it afterwards and she will make sure that they changed on the list.

MS. VAN KIRK: Okay. Well, I do have --

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: But did you have one
for --

MS. VAN KIRK: If you're asking for approval of the -- the appointments -

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Sure.

MS. VAN KIRK: -- I don't think my committee's current.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Okay.
MS. VAN KIRK: Okay.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Will you like -- would you like to --
MS. VAN KIRK: Well, at least I was told that Vickie Thrower is my vice
chairman --
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Yes.
MS. VAN KIRK: -- and you have her down as vice chairman of Children
& Youth.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Yes, we -- I'm sorry, Carol, I did not get a chance
to tell you. We did move Vickie because Karen -- Karen Boehler was --
MS. VAN KIRK: Okay.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- the vice chairman of Children & Youth and --
MS. VAN KIRK: Okay.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- we moved Vickie in her place.
MS. VAN KIRK: All right.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Moved Kenya up to vice chairman and put
another -- and I can't remember who --
MS. VAN KIRK: Oh well --
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: -- else (unintelligible).
MS. VAN KIRK: Okay. That's fine. I just --
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: You are.
MS. VAN KIRK: -- is that you're approving them --
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: No. That's fine. I'm glad you caught it.
MS. VAN KIRK: Thank you.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: See how well they pay attention?
(Laughter.)
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All right. The question is on the motion to
approve the complete list of appointments to standing and special committees for the
administrative year 2014-2015 and foundation board appointees as presented.
Is there any other discussion?
VOICES: (Unintelligible.)
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Are you ready for the question?
VOICE: Yes.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: All those in favor, please say "aye."
VOICES: Aye.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Opposed, say no.
(No response.)
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: The ayes have it and the motion is approved to
approve the complete list of appointments as listed.
Congratulations to everyone.
VOICE: Thank you.
PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Now, Sharon, since I believe in sharing the
wealth, I have to run over. The Legion is way ahead of schedule.
So, Sharon, would you please take the chair?

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Excuse us one second, ladies.

The chair of the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee, Kris Nelson, will now report.

CHAIRMAN NELSON: Madam President, I have a resolution. Should I read it in its entirety?

PRESIDENT JEFFORD: Does everyone have a copy? Did they get that when they came in on their chair?

CHAIRMAN NELSON: Do you want me to read it in its entirety or just the resolve clause?

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Resolve.

CHAIRMAN NELSON: Okay. Okay.

Resolved, upon adoption of the resolution by the 2014 National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary held August 26th-28th, 2014, in Charlotte, North Carolina, 2014-2015, that the National Organization and departments commit to implementing the American Legion Auxiliary Five-Year Strategic Centennial Plan that the 2014-2015 National Executive Committee appropriate funds to resource the needs identified to be accomplished in Phase 1 of the Centennial Plan.

And be it further resolved by the National Executive Committee and its meeting held August 28th, 2014, in Charlotte, North Carolina, 2014-2015, that the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization appropriate reserve funds not to exceed one million dollars to resource the needs identified to be accomplished in Phase One of the American Legion Auxiliary 2014-2019 Strategic Centennial Plan.

And be it finally resolved that the American Legion Auxiliary National Convention in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 be apprised of the achievements of the American Legion Auxiliary Five-Year Centennial Plan and determine the desire to proceed with relieving reserve funds based upon success and needs for implementation of the Centennial Plan over the course of the five years.

I move the adoption.

VOICE: I second.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: It's been moved and seconded to adopt the resourcing of ALA 2014-2019 Strategic Centennial Plan resolution.

Is there discussion?

(No response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: All those in favor of the resolution, say "aye."

VOICES: Aye.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Opposed, no.

(No response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: The affirmative has it and the resolution is passed -- is adopted.

Please now welcome Finance Committee Chairman Nicole Clapp to present the proposed FY '15 budget of the American Legion Auxiliary.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Congratulations, Madam President. I guess she's had to step away.

But Vice President Sharon, we're looking forward to having an exciting year under your leadership.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: As the incoming National Finance chairman, I'm very honored to present the 2014-2015 fiscal year budget of the American Legion Auxiliary for you, the NECs, consideration on behalf of the National Finance Committee Vice Chairman Jenny Hobbs, committee members Desi Stoy, JoAnn Cronin and also Past National President Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan.

We would be remiss though if we did not thank the National Headquarters staff and national chairmen for your input, your guidance and ideas to make sure that we are able to develop a very comprehensive, yet realistic, budget.

We need to continue to meet our goals, our obligations and expectations of providing services for you, our members, our veterans and their families while being able to balance the governmental requirements of comparing ourselves to the national benchmarks which we will share with you.

Tim Bresnahan, our controller, has been spending countless hours preparing the documents, which he and I will go over with you this morning.

So these documents are going to be projected onto the screen so that you all can see.

But, NEC, if you did not print off a copy of the budget and you'd like one, we do have some extras available.

And if we don't have enough copies, obviously the office will, in turn, will email that to you. All right?

So here we go. Are we ready?

VOICE: We're ready.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Okay. So with the budget you will see that our goals are of getting -- what are you getting in this year's budget.

And key to us is to be able to maintain the visits by the Divisional National Vice Presidents, that the vice presidents attend the National Developmental -- excuse me, Department Leadership Conference.

We did away with the per capita a few years ago because we feel it's very important that that money remains with you in your departments, that 15 cents per capita.

We are able, this year, in the budget to double the number of departmental trainings.

We had five in the last fiscal year and we have put in the budget for 10. And it is my understanding from the office that we've had 12 requests. So we'll be able to fund 10 of those this year.

We are also, I mean you've heard about the Centennial Plan and our mission for a million members, able to increase awards to departments for achieving renewal targets and member milestones.

In this upcoming budget, I do remind you and those that are new the NEC, that we do have an annual obligation of \$120,000 that we give to VCAF and so we

want to make sure, and that's the National Creative Arts Festival, that we meet that obligation.

And from there, then we have two years ago started with the divisional -- what the Divisional Vice Presidents attending and then with the Department Leadership National Conference we were able to support three department representatives attending.

So traditionally that's been the department president, the secretary and their Membership chairman.

And the last point, which was a question mark until yesterday so thank you, that is the relieving of the million dollars for the Centennial Plan of the resolution you just passed a moment ago.

Any questions on the highlights so far?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Okay. We'll move on.

In the budget, you will see that programs and member services, it's over \$8 million that we do spend in offering the programs that our organization needs to offer in Member Services, youth magazines, as well as supporting military veterans and their families.

The personnel budget, we have 38 FTEs in the organization. We have vacancy rate currently. And in the Centennial Plan, you will see that there were additional FTEs supported in that ongoing effort.

The Foundation, the Auxiliary, as a Finance Committee we support and endorse the Foundation budget, but we do not approve the Foundation budget. That comes to you as the NEC for approval.

The big thing in that, as you can see in bold, that we were able to pay out grants over \$11,000 for the efforts in the veteran's service projects this year, which was an exciting first year step for that.

Then moving on down, you'll see a comparison of where we were.

Seven years ago back in '08, if you recall how all of decided those that were ready to retire didn't retire because obviously the stock market took a nose dive.

Now as we've been able to tighten our own budgets, then in '13 when the dues increase went into effect, you can obviously see how that did help us going forward but I have to tell you, we are asking you to approve a negative budget.

And you're probably going to say to me, "How can that be? We approved the dues increase."

Well, we did approve a dues increase but we didn't approve it at a level that the Finance Committee felt we needed based on research of where we needed to be in this organization.

And so it is a slight deficit budget of \$156,000 but as we support the Centennial Plan that's what this is all geared towards to turn this organization around.

So the rainy day fund, as you've heard throughout the week, we will be tapping into that this year.

Any questions on this page?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Okay. Moving over to the reserve funds, as I was just starting to articulate about our rainy day fund.

Our reserve funds are there for the big projects that we have up and coming. National histories that we will continue with our \$20,000.

The one area of change this year is in professional fees. We realize that we have to have the protections we need of unanticipated legal or auditing expense, so we want to make sure we have those identified.

Moving down to the marketing milestone events, we've added another \$10,000 into that category because as we know in five years it will be our 100th anniversary.

So the total of our reserves is \$370,000, a net change this year of \$85,000. I'm sorry, Tim?

CONTROLLER BRESNAHAN: Designated.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: Designate -- yes, designated funds versus undesignated.

Designated are those that are designated for a specific purpose.

Undesignated are what's left to be used as we see fit.

So having \$21 million, I know at home that's a lot of money.

Even in my corporation of a hospital, \$21 million is a lot of money.

But we know \$21 million can go through very quickly if we have another economic downturn as we had a few years back.

So that is the overall of our reserve funds and then the million dollars that will be relieved.

I'd like to move on to the next slide if we could, which I think is a great way for people to look at what we're here to do.

The numbers tell you one thing but I think the pie charts at the bottom, a lot of people are visual.

I know numbers are very scary for people.

I want to remind you I'm just a nurse and I can understand it, you can understand it right along with me.

So as we look at where 2014 is projected, you'll see the pie chart really isn't that much different. And the difference is we're about 3 percent difference in our expenditures this year then where we will be in the past year.

But most importantly, and I know Dobbie spoke about this yesterday from the platform, is how do we compare ourselves with other not-for-profits across the country.

In mission delivery, as you can see, 88 percent of what we spend is given back to what our mission is, which is tremendous.

But in industry standard, that number shouldn't be quite that high at 88 percent. It should be closer to 65 to 75 percent.

Which some of you may say, well, why would that be?

Because we have to look at the other two pieces of the pie.

In fundraising, for example, we're at 4 percent. We should be at 10 to 12 percent to offset what we have to do to give our mission delivery.

So as I talk every time to you twice a year about how important it is for those direct mail campaigns, they are very, very important. And if you recall this year, it was \$303,000 that came in through direct mail.

So we have increased that from about 2 to 3 percent. We're up to 4 percent in our budgeting.

And the last category then is management, in general. That's what I look at that takes to run the organization. Mission delivery and fundraising run the programs, but what's it take to run an corporation, and that is then on this chart 8 percent, which is right where we should be between 3 -- 5 and 10 percent.

So we're inching our way to where the outside people looking in on us, called watchdog and different organizations, for not-for-profit tax exempt organization, what does that mean?

We're approaching where we need to be and that's a good feeling and a good sign compared to where we were several years ago.

So I hope this chart kind of helps you get a perspective of where we're headed and where we've come from, okay?

All right. Moving on then, we have the detail of the budget.

Are there any items that people had a question about that you would like for me to -- or Tim to address?

We did not have any questions posed to us prior to the meeting today.

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: If not, we can scroll down. You'll see for the revenue, we're about 5 percent under revenue where we had been compared to this past year. And as I mentioned overall, our expenses and the bottom line, the difference in the bottom line is 3.16 percent from where we were a year ago.

So realizing that the economy is picking back up and inflation is hitting, we're still holding the course.

All right? Then I would like to move on if we could to looking at the Centennial Plan -- or we got the vista grant. Okay. That's fine.

We have two grants, Exhibit A and Exhibit B, and those are VISTAs and it is the AmeriCorps Call to Service, and that is our organization where if you have AmeriCorps volunteer, then we are able to place those young individuals throughout the organization across the country, as well as in the Headquarters office.

And so it's somewhat of a past through but we have to manage a grant just like any organization would. And so this information you'll see, if we scroll down to the bottom, we have expenses that go along with it.

So it looks like there's a net expense of \$76,000 but realizing what that contributes to our bottom line if we had to pay all those expenses and every aspect.

I think \$76,000 is a pretty good investment and it has proven for us for -- I think we're going on our fifth year -- our fifth year to be an invaluable resource.

The second exhibit is Exhibit B, and that is where because of our success with the vistas we were asked to become a conduit, a consortium to funnel other granting sources, other organizations through us so that we are now sitting at the -- I would call the -- the adult table of conversation, including at the White House when

it comes to opportunities of looking at what this organization has in our internal resources and what we then, in turn, are able to give back.

And so this grant is a lot more complex. It's been in existence I think three years and going forward.

And so you'll see that investment for us is only \$105,000. But once again, you're talking an investment for us that is distributed more at an internal level of the organization then you would see it at the external level in your departments.

But we definitely need to report those back to you so you have an understanding, as well.

Moving on then to the Centennial Plan.

This was what you saw as you reviewed the Centennial Plan with the five goals, the budget for 2015, totally breaking it down.

If you were in my finance pre-con, we had individuals ask line by line. So we went through this for about an hour and a half. And then, in turn, sent that to Membership Committee.

And so you'll see that overall though at the very far end of the plan is the one million dollar investment in our -- and I look at that as a reinvestment in ourselves.

And so for us, tapping into our rainy day fund, it's nice to have a rainy day fund. And I look at the rainy day fund is our savings account.

We have to pare our operations out of checkbook and we only dip into our savings when it is a rainy day.

And so we are very excited to be reinvesting in ourselves and the Finance Committee wholeheartedly supports this and will be planning for the future as we look at the results on a quarterly and annual basis.

So questions for me regarding that? And then at the end, you'll -- you will see from Linda Boone, Past National President, the Foundation budget. But for us currently, we are in support of approving their budget, as well.

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: If there are no questions, Madam Vice President, I move to adopt the 2015 Fiscal Year Auxiliary budget.

Thank you.

VOICE: Second.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Since the motion comes from a committee, a second is not required.

The question is on the approval of the proposed FY '15 budget as presented. Is there discussion?

(No Response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Are you ready for the question?

VOICE: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: The question is on the adoption of the FY '15 budget as presented.

All those in favor say "aye."

VOICES: Aye.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Opposed, no.

(No response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: The motion to approve the proposed FY '15 budget has passed.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CLAPP: And thank all of you. We appreciate it. Now let -- we can let our committee get to work.

So thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Our ALA Foundation Board President Linda Boone will present the Foundation budget.

PRESIDENT BOONE: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

PRESIDENT BOONE: Okay. You should all have your Foundation budget. Okay?

It came in the email to you.

VOICE: Yes.

PRESIDENT BOONE: Okay. Just a couple things I'd like to remind you that Nicole went over a little bit is that the Foundation, a lot of the administrative sort of things are covered by the American Legion Auxiliary.

And some day when we're really grown up, they won't have to do that.

But right now, that's how we share, you know, staff and resources that way. So a lot of the administrative things get done by the American Legion Auxiliary staff.

A very simple budget. It's a push. It comes out net.

So it's \$266,408 is the planned revenue and expenses.

What is not in this number is the endowed money.

You see that note there that it's not -- the endowed money is not anticipated income is not in there.

We're in this stage of trying to go out and do more, you know -- do grants applications so that we can get grants, that sort of thing, to increase the revenue but it takes a long time.

It's a big, huge project as Dubbie would say.

So I'm not sure. Are there any questions anybody has about the Foundation budget? Is there anything you'd like to know?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: Okay. Okay.

Tim reminded me, in our platform remarks for the Foundation, we -- we noted that this year we gave twenty-two fifty, \$2,250, to the American Legion Auxiliary in a grant.

And this budget includes an anticipated increase for our investment interests that we would -- to be able to give the American Legion Auxiliary \$7,400, so keep going up there.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT BOONE: And the more donations we receive, the more grants we can give out. So just remember that.

Okay. I guess I move for the adoption of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget as proposed.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: The question is on the approval of the proposed FY '15 budget as presented. Is there discussion?

(No response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Are you ready for the question?

VOICES: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: The question is on the adoption of the FY '15 Foundation budget as presented.

All in favor say "aye."

VOICES: Aye.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Opposed, no.

(No response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: The motion to approve the proposed FY '15 Foundation budget has passed.

Thank you, Linda.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Is there any other business to come before this NEC meeting?

(No response.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: Hearing none, the Chair now calls our National Secretary Dubbie Buckler for announcements.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Thank you, Madam Chairman and Madam Vice President.

VOICE: Thank you.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So the first -- my first thing is not really an announcement but some of us received little corsages up there.

Some of us will not be able to keep them in good shape.

So I would like to toss mine.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I would like to -- so we can pretend this is a --

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: -- wedding.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: But I want to remind you that for the first time, they have metal on them this year.

VOICE: Yeah, they (unintelligible).

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So --

VOICE: No pins.

VOICE: No.

VOICE: That's interesting.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: No. You don't have a pin but it's a -- it's a wrist one so, I mean -- so usually I would get silly and just toss it, but I don't want to hurt anybody because they do have metal on them.

So we're going to fling them this year.

VOICE: Everybody ready?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So if anybody wants a corsage -- ready?

VOICE: Three. Ready?

SECRETARY BUCKLER: One, two, three.

(Corsages tossed.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Oop.

(Laughter.)

VOICE: We want a replay.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. So we have something to work on.

VOICE: Yeah.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay. So real quick. Remember: If you did -- if you did not get scanned for your attendance just real quick -- just if you did not get scanned, just raise your hands so that -- that Tamara can kind of eyeball who she's got to be looking for.

MS. SHUMATE: Did everyone --

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Just as you walk out --

MS. SHUMATE: Did everyone who put their hands up sign that notepad that was going around?

VOICE: It's on the list.

MS. SHUMATE: Yes?

VOICE: Nobody up here did, no.

MS. SHUMATE: Oh, I've got y'all. You're okay.

VOICE: No. Down here in front, Tamara.

MS. SHUMATE: They didn't get it?

VOICE: No. They didn't get it, Tamara.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Okay.

VOICE: Oh, just (unintelligible).

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Well, just -- okay, so just remember. If you did not get scanned to make sure that Tamara does that before you leave.

Also, if you did not attend the NEC 101 Orientation Meeting -- who did not?

VOICES: (Unintelligible.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Oh boy, are you in trouble.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You will have -- you will have to see some of us after this over.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Actually, please see Lauren.

Lauren, would you stand and raise your hand?

Please see Lauren in the back of the room. She has your packet.

If you did not attend the meeting, you do have to read everything in there and I will be calling you and asking you to recite it to me from memory.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Also, the packet does contain -- it does -- seriously, now. The packet does contain documents that you have sign today.

I'm just looking at one person.

Was there another person who --

VOICE: No (unintelligible).

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Just -- oh boy, not that I would single you out or anything but --

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So if you have not -- so the conflict of interest and confidentiality -- conflict of interest and the disclosure form, there's three pieces of paper there that need to be signed.

Most of you did it in the NEC 101 Orientation.

If you did not, do that and then -- and then, Lauren, when you will collect them at the back of the room.

We're good on that. Okay.

I want to take a moment to thank the National Headquarters staff.

In the room now --

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Well, first I want to thank -- I want to thank Marta.

Marta stays relatively quiet during these things. I can assure you that's not how she is back in the office.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I like to think we're a pretty good -- we make a pretty good team and she is wonderful and I just want to say that in front of all of you.

(Applause.)

VOICES: Aww.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And I also want to thank -- so stand up because you know, this is (unintelligible).

So stand up so I can see you.

VOICE: Staff.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: This is also par for the course.

Would the National Headquarters staff please stand?

Thank you.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So Tim Bresnahan.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Tamara Shumate.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Laura Casey. She was Baim. I had to stop and think what her new married name was.

And Lauren Woeste.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And Stephanie Abisi who just came in. And Stephanie, do you have a voice back a little bit today?

MS. ABISI: It's better.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: A little bit of a voice.

MS. ABISI: It's better.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It's been pleasant while she didn't have one. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: They know that is all in jest. She's actually been the one who's enjoyed not having the voice. The rest of have been just -- would you just say it? And several who have had to leave.

I just want to say -- I said it a little bit the other day. But I want to just say with -- they really -- they don't just work there. They live there. They live and breathe this mission and we have hired some people that they don't live and breathe the missing and they don't live and breathe in the building if they breathe the mission.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: It takes a certain kind of person to work in this organization and to work at your National Headquarters staff and I'm -- and I am being serious.

Now I didn't mean my other comment to -- to be, in any way, disrespectful.

You either really love this enough to do this or you love it but not enough to -- to commit your heart and soul to it.

So we're committed heart and soul, and I won't start singing "Heart and Soul" to you.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Also I want to let you know -- Marta would you like to hold one.

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Patricia, stand up.

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Yes. Yes. Vanna 1. Vanna 2.

VOICE: Got it.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: If our National President were here -- now you all -- I know you all realize that she goes over and brings greetings right after the election of the commander and -- and of course the most important thing is can we get this picture where they're all standing there with their hands up together.

It really all is about the photo op.

VOICE: You're right.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So we had to get her over there.

Well, this is a gift from your National President Janet Jefford.

It is an insulated cooler bag and it has -- and it does say American Legion Auxiliary on it.

There is one for -- did somebody say they're cute?

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: Oh.

(LAUGHTER.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: They are a cute little cooler bag for adult beverages or your lunch or whatever else you might want to put in them.

Anyway, as you leave the -- as you leave the room there's one for each member of the NEC, for the Past National Presidents and the national chairs.

So as you're going out, please make sure that you -- and remember --

VOICE: I don't (unintelligible).

VOICE: (Unintelligible) officers.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: I'm sorry. And the officers. I'm sorry.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You know how this goes. If it's not written down, it just -- yes. Yes, and the officers.

So I just want to remind you of goal two.

Goal two is foster --

VOICES: A culture of goodwill.

SECRETARY BUCKLER: So don't fight over which color.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: And finally, I would like to -- now I did -- I was going to get this right.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for being here, all of you who are going to be serving as the National Executive Committee.

We at National Headquarters are looking forward to working with you.

Thank again our Past National Presidents.

Thank you to our newest Past National President.

VOICE: (Unintelligible.)

SECRETARY BUCKLER: You all know who has just joined the fold.

I want to thank our new National officers. See, I didn't really have that part down.

And I want to thank our Vice President who stepped up ably.

And my final announcement is thank you all. Safe journeys as you travel home and may we all operate to fulfill the goals, the five goals of the Centennial Plan.

We have a lot of work over the next five years and we are all here to help you get it done.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: I know I'm not supposed to ad-lib what's on here but I just want to say thank you to the staff. And I know if Janet were here, she would want to say that also.

As she said from the podium this morning, over the last few years once you're up in the leadership and you're -- there's a lot of questions and the staff is always there to answer them and they don't even growl at you when you ask the same question more than once.

So thank you to the staff. I think we're very, very lucky to have the staff we have, ladies.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: As we close the first meeting of the 2014-2015 National Executive Committee meeting, I leave you with these words.

Let us never forget that our obligation to our country can only be fulfilled by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship.

Let service in the community, state and nation be ever our main objective of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members.

Let us ever be watchful of our organization and ourselves that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice and freedom, loyalty and democracy.

Please stand as our National Chaplain Karen Boehler offers the benediction.

CHAPLAIN BOEHLER: And one quick announcement, pleading announcement before I do that. And that is that we have, in about one month, a National Chaplains training coming up in Indianapolis.

I would ask you, NEC, if you would please just contact me. Information is in the Red Book or at the National site.

I'd love to very quickly get the names of your department chaplains and try to interact with them about the convention.

Also, please go back and talk with your Finance Committee and if they haven't done so, see if they couldn't just encumber a little bit of money so the chaplains can get together.

Thank you for that.

And now, would you please bow your heads and pray with me.

Lord, we ask you now dismiss us with your blessing.

We thank you for bringing us together for this convention, for the opportunity to greet old friends and the opportunity to make new ones.

We ask you, Lord, now as we start this new year to give us one heart and mind this year so that as we put our energies towards your goals, we work towards accomplishing the Centennial Strategic Plan.

Engender in us creative minds, willing hearts and kind spirits, as well as energy to passionately pursue new members to help us do your work.

We beg now for safe travel as we head our ways.

Dismiss us again, Father God, with your blessing and all God's people said

--

VOICES: Amen.

CHAPLAIN BOEHLER: Amen. Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT CONATSER: With colors in place, hand salute.

This concludes the first meeting of the 2014-15 National Executive Committee.

This meeting is now adjourned.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, at 11:22 a.m., the above-entitled Convention was concluded.)

Appendix A



**SUMMARY OF MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS
ADOPTED**

BY

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL
GOVERNING BOARDS FOR 2013-2014 AND 2014-2015
AND 2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION DELEGATES
CONVENED AUGUST 22-28, 2014,
IN CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA**

2013-2014 NEC MEETING AUGUST 23, 2014

**2014 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
NATIONAL CONVENTION AUGUST 25-28, 2014**

2014-2015 NEC MEETING AUGUST 28, 2014

###

**American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee 2013-2014
Final 2013-2014 NEC Meeting Held Pre-National Convention
in Charlotte, North Carolina
August 23, 2014**

Summary of Motions/Resolutions Adopted

M/S/C = Moved/Seconded/Carried

- M/S/C to approve the items on the Consent Agenda as circulated in advance.
- to grant the American Legion Auxiliary Unit Charter Cancellations for the period March – August 2014 (as listed in the published 8/23/14 NEC Agenda/Meeting Packet)
 - to request The American Legion retain as one of its renewed legislative priorities for the 114th Congress the proposal to obtain an ALA federal charter
 - to gratefully acknowledge the hospitality afforded to the American Legion Auxiliary annually by the D-Day Memorial Events Committee in France
 - to adopt the updated National Travel Reimbursement Policy (as recommended by the ALA National Finance Committee and included in the 8/23/14 NEC Agenda/Meeting Packet and published at www.ALAforVeterans.org)
- M/S/C to ratify and recognize the publication *American Legion Auxiliary Department Operations Guide* as the best practices standard for the governance and management of Auxiliary departments, units, subsidiaries, and intermediate bodies bearing the name and trademarks of the American Legion Auxiliary
- M/S/C to acknowledge and ratify The American Legion 2014 revised Poppy Fund Program Rules, which supersede all previous others
- M/S/C to request the American Legion Auxiliary National Education Committee support adding a “Disabled Students Category” to the Americanism Essay Contest

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**American Legion Auxiliary National Convention 2014
Charlotte, North Carolina
August 25-28, 2014**

Summary of Motions/Resolutions Adopted

M/S/C = Moved/Seconded/Carried

- M/S/C to adopt the 2014 National Convention Credentials Report (see p. 41 in this publication)
- M/S/C to adopt the rules for the 2014 National Convention (see pgs. 41-44 in this publication)
- M/S/C to adopt changes to the 2014 National Convention program as published in the 2014 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention Guide and Annual Report (see pgs. 44-46 in this publication)
- M/S/C to amend the ALA National Standing Rules by adding a five-member executive committee to the National Executive Committee (see pgs. 109-110 in this publication)
- M/S/C to amend the ALA National Standing Rules to increase by two the number comprising the National Constitution & Bylaws Committee (see p. 110 in this publication)
- M/S/C to amend the ALA National Standing Rules to increase by five National Division representatives the number comprising the National Leadership Committee (see pgs. 113-114 in this publication)
- M/S/C to amend the ALA National Standing Rules to grant voting privilege to the two liaison members of the National Audit Committee and prohibit either from chairing the committee (see p. 115 of this publication)
- M/S/C to elect the 2014-2015 national officers: National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, National Historian, National Central Division Vice President, National Eastern Division Vice President, National Northwestern Division Vice President, National Southern Division Vice President, and National Western Division Vice President (see pgs. 126-142 in this publication; officers listed at www.ALAforVeterans.org)
- M/S/C that the national organization and departments commit to implementing the American Legion Auxiliary 5-Year Strategic Centennial Plan and that the 2014-2015 National Executive Committee appropriate funds to resource the

needs identified to be accomplished in Phase 1 of the Centennial Plan (see pgs. 169-172 in this publication)

Courtesy Resolutions Adopted

The following courtesy resolutions were adopted (see pgs. 186-188 in this publication):

- M/S/C that the Convention Body extend its appreciation for a successful 2014 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention to the host city, Department of North Carolina and the Department National Convention Committee and Chair, and National Secretary and National Headquarters staff
- M/S/C that the Convention Body express its appreciation to the honored guests contributing to the success of the convention
- M/S/C that the Convention Body, by standing ovation, show its appreciation for outgoing American Legion Auxiliary National President Nancy Brown-Park

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**American Legion Auxiliary National Executive Committee 2014-2015
First 2014-2015 NEC Meeting held Post-National Convention
In Charlotte, North Carolina
August 28, 2014**

Summary of Motions/Resolutions Adopted

M/S/C = Moved/Seconded/Carried

- M/S/C to confirm Mary “Dubbie” Buckler as American Legion Auxiliary National Secretary for the 2014-2015 ALA administrative year
- M/S/C to confirm Marta Hedding as American Legion Auxiliary National Treasurer for the 2014-2015 ALA administrative year
- M/S/C to confirm the National Standing, Special Committee, and Foundation Board appointments for the 2014-2015 ALA administrative year (as listed in the roster circulated onsite and published in the national leadership directory provided to each department)
- M/S/C to appropriate funds to resource the American Legion Auxiliary Five-Year Centennial Plan, Phase 1, not to exceed \$1,000,000 from reserve funds, and require annual reporting on implementation of the Centennial Plan to the 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 National Conventions.
- M/S/C to adopt the proposed 2015 ALA Fiscal Year budget (as circulated in advance)
- M/S/C to adopt the proposed 2015 ALA Foundation Fiscal Year budget (as circulated in advance)

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Appendix B



AWARDS PRESENTED DURING NATIONAL CONVENTION AUGUST 25-28, 2014

(Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org to see a full listing of 2013-2014 awards.)

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2014

LIAISON TO CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION COMMITTEE AWARDS:

Excellence Award - Department of Wyoming

Meritorious Achievement Award - Department of Connecticut

U.S. Udie Grant Award - Department of Florida

Garland M. Murphy Jr. Award – Department of Florida

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2014

PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY COMMITTEE AWARDS:

Salute to Active-Duty Servicewomen Award

United States Army: Col. Lisa Harbach

United States Marine Corps: Sgt. Jessica Paz Swaim

United States Air Force: TSgt. Cassandra Freer

United States Navy: Lt. Rebecca A. Bennett

United States Coast Guard: Auxiliary members did not submit a Coast Guard servicewoman to be considered for this award.

Unit Member of the Year

Judy Daughtry, Nolan-Smith-Kirkland Unit 152 (Alabama)

Zona Gregg, Merlin Elmer Palmer Unit 6 (Alaska)

Sherrie Grey, William Bloys Unit 2 (Arizona)

Judy Sellers, Sheridan Unit 30 (Arkansas)

Carolyn “Carrie” Taylor, Los Alamitos Unit 716 (California)

Sherri Valentin, Kiltonic Unit 72 (Connecticut)

Patricia May, Oak Orchard/Riverdale Unit 28 (Delaware)

Keri Adams, Rood Williams Unit 271 (Florida)

Lory Mullen, Elmore Unit 26 (Idaho)

Bonnie Klingler, Zionsville Unit 79 (Indiana)

Linda Zahnley, Correctionville Mumford-Moon Unit 79 (Iowa)

Clara Marie Felts, Frank Stull Unit 152 (Kansas)

Ann Ripy, Anderson Unit 34 (Kentucky)

Marlene Foreman, LeJeune-Boudreaux Unit 271 (Louisiana)

Jane Pearson, Amaral-Bailey Unit 113 (Massachusetts)

Mary Ann Robertson, Daniel W. Bird Unit 26 (Mississippi)

Helen Wiltz Ingham-Morgan Unit 371 (Missouri)

Karen Brink, Millard Unit 374 (Nebraska)

Peggy Culverwell, Claude R. Batchelder Unit 72 (New Hampshire)

Olive Gibbs, Lyle B. Rich Unit 112 (North Dakota)

Rita Adkins, Amherst Unit 118 (Ohio)

Cheryl Kowalczyk, Carl B. Fenton Unit 20 (Oregon)

Ginger Childers, Spearfish Unit 164 (South Dakota)

Harriet Wright, Harold L. Gregory Memorial Unit 626 (Texas)

Louise Fegley, Cashmere Unit 64 (Washington)
Lynn Keen, Montgomery-Plant Unit 10 (Wisconsin)
Donna J. Bindl, Fort Bridger Unit 36 (Wyoming)
Note: Not all states submitted names to be considered for this award.

Woman of the Year:

Presented to Lt. Gen. Michelle D. Johnson

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2014

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE AWARDS:

Leading Departments in Each Division with Highest Percentage of New Member Renewals

Central Division: Department of Wisconsin
Eastern Division: Department of Rhode Island
Northwestern Division: Department of Nebraska
Southern Division: Department of Louisiana
Western Division: Department of Hawaii

Leading Departments in Each Division with Most Senior Renewals

Central Division: Department of Iowa
Southern Division: Department of Louisiana
Northwestern Division: Department of Nebraska
Eastern Division: Department of Vermont
Western Division: Department of Hawaii

Top Five Departments with Highest Renewal Percentage

First: Department of Hawaii
Second: Department of Vermont
Third: Department of New Jersey
Fourth: Department of Nebraska
Fifth: Department of Minnesota

Top Two Departments with Highest Numeric Goal Percentages as of 30 Days Prior to National Convention

First: Department of Mississippi, 101.13 percent
Second: Department of Hawaii, 100.5 percent

Extra Step Award

Nevada, Washington, Maine, Missouri, Virginia, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, North Dakota, Colorado, Delaware, Oklahoma, Alaska, New Jersey, Oregon, Alabama, California, and Kentucky

Golden Step Award

Department of Mississippi

Silver Brigade Extra Award

Kathy Falk, Department of Arizona

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE:

Spearfish Unit 164 in Spearfish, South Dakota

Dupont-Holmes Unit 82 in Gorham, New Hampshire

Peter Wollner Unit 288 in Cedarburg, Wisconsin

Lake Stevens Memorial Unit 181 in Lake Stevens, Washington

J.W. Mathers Jr. Unit 163 in Melbourne, Florida

Department of Kansas