



**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**  
**Department of California**  
**The Roarin' 20th District**

# CHATTERBOX

**Volume 64, #4**

**December 2024**



## **Mission Statement**

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

## **Our Impact**

We are one of the nation's most prominent supporters of veterans, military and their families. We help to advance the mission of The American Legion. From helping to draft the GI Bill in 1944 to advocating for veterans on Capitol Hill, the nonpartisan American Legion Family is instrumental in advancing legislation that improves the quality of the life for our nation's veterans and Service members.



## 2024—2025 DISTRICT OFFICERS

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## 2024—2025 DISTRICT CHAIRMEN

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## 2024—2025 UNIT PRESIDENTS

<b>San Fernando 176</b>	Hila Estrada	<a href="mailto:hila.estrada7@gmail.com">hila.estrada7@gmail.com</a>
<b>Antelope Valley 311</b>	Pat Frisan	<a href="mailto:frizgang47@netzero.com">frizgang47@netzero.com</a>
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# OFFICER REPORTS

## DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT

*Linda Hayes*



## Questions

### WHO DO YOU ASK?

Aux Member - You ask your President

Unit President - You ask your District Chairperson  
or District President

Dist President - You ask the Department Chair or  
Department President

Dept Chairperson - You ask your Western Division  
Chairperson

West Div Chair - Will contact National

**Attention Unit Members -**

**Please do not contact National direct**

*National does not handle unit and district problems. They will return the complaint to the Department, expecting each of us to take care of our own business. Remember, we are the American Legion Family, and families work together to find resolution.*

*The Unit Guide Book from Emblem Sales is a helpful resource for conflict resolution. It can be downloaded from the National website at <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/guides/unit-guide-book>, see "Chapter 8: Resolving Conflict".*

*Another source to check out is the ALA Academy which offers self training courses on several topics. "Introduction to Conflict Resolution" is a very helpful resource. Once you sign on to the National website, you will find the course at <https://alaacademy.alaforveterans.org/topclass/login.do>.*



## DISTRICT PRESIDENT

*Liz Tungate*



The District 20 monthly meeting on December 11 will be the official visit by Department President Linda Hayes. Please join us for dinner with Linda at Post 817 in Panorama City with social hour at 5:30pm and dinner to follow. The flyer with details are posted on the Department website. We look forward to seeing you there. Please remember to RSVP by December 7 and include any food allergies.

District 20 had a good attendance of five members at the recent leadership workshop. Those members now hold Leadership Instructor Certificates. Congratulations! Remember, the ALA Academy offers ALA 101. I would highly recommend all members to attend.

November was membership month. How is your Unit doing towards the goal? As of this writing Unit 176 is at three (3) members over goal with 105% - Congratulations!!

December is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation month. What is your Unit doing in December to work that program?

Greetings from the desk of your president! Thanksgiving was a time to be thankful for family, friends and our veterans. I hope all of you had a blessed day.

Mid-year program reports are due to District Chairs by December 1. If your Unit reports are not in when you read this, **please get them in!** If you need assistance, let me know. It's extremely important that District 20 shows 100% reporting on these reports. The Mid-year the Department Executive Committee (DEC) in January will focus on these program reports as does the June convention. It's very important that District 20 has complete mid-year reporting to the Department. Remember, this accomplishment makes Linda Hayes, our Department President *Proud!*

With Christmas on the road ahead, remember William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home. Thanks to those Units and members that made donations, Marcy Velador (representative for the Department) has been able to put together a variety of gifts to help ring in a happy Christmas for those veterans. It's almost time for that Christmas Party! All members are welcome to join us at the District 20 Pete Knight Christmas Party on December 7 at 11:30am at 45221 30th Street West Lancaster, CA 93536.

Please remember to share your event dates with Nancy so your events are included on the District 20 Monthly Calendar. Please note that photo releases are required for photos of minors in the *Chatterbox*. Also share your flyers with me or send them to the ALA Department California Webmaster. The more exposure our Units get for our Posts, the better we serve our veterans to keep our Posts open.

As a reminder – we are the American Legion Auxiliary, District 20, Unit #XXX. We are NOT the Ladies Auxiliary, the Ladies Auxiliary of the American Legion, the Auxiliary Women, or the Auxiliary of the American Legion. We are a separately chartered organization. Also, your name badge or any pins with the ALA emblem are to be worn on the left side over your heart. All other embellishments are to be placed below.

It has been brought to my attention that the District 20 sound system is missing from the Post 507 closet. If you saw someone remove it, know whose possession it is in, or saw it somewhere, please let me know.

Don't forget - we are the American Legion Auxiliary and we make a difference! We are united by our faith in God and country.

## CHAPLAIN

*Carol McChesney*

My thoughts this month are reflecting on the tragic loss of Rebecca Valdivia's son Isaiah. During the November meeting a donation from Ways and Means and a collection from District 20 along with a sympathy card were delivered by our 1st Vice President Sam to Rebecca that afternoon. Another sympathy card was mailed by the Chaplain on the 15.

A reminder, especially Chaplains within the Units please send me messages of surgeries or illnesses or deaths within your Unit. Someone within your Unit may know of a member going to have surgery or needs a get well card sent to them and I only can know that if you contact me with the information. Announcing it during a District 20 meeting has slipped by in the past because the announcement was made to the general assembly. Not being notified directly I cannot fulfill my position. My direct contact numbers are email: [cmcchesney1@msn.com](mailto:cmcchesney1@msn.com), in Subject Line please make note: Chaplain. Telephone number (818) 317-7362.

I am asking everyone to contribute towards a Prayer Book for Department President Linda Hayes. Prayer Books are actually a Unit and District project. The Chaplain doesn't make the Prayer Book alone. I am asking for any member to contribute prayers, inspirational, devotional phases or even poems that are meaningful to the Unit or District for the Prayer Book. Remember Linda's theme, "America the Beautiful" and her motto, "Crown the Good with Brotherhood."

*May December be Bright and Merry.*

*God Bless Us All.*




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## PARLIAMENTARIAN

*Rebecca Valdivia*

*Here are a few tidbits to use if needed:*

What you want to do	When you might use it	What to say	Second needed?
<i>Enforce the agenda</i>	When someone is going on a tangent or talking about things unrelated to the main motion at hand	"I call for the orders of the Day"	No
<i>Enforce the rules</i>	When someone is disobeying the rules — speaking out of turn, speaking over the length of time, resorting to personal insults or another breach of rules	"Point of order"	No



## HISTORIAN

*Krista Young*



A Veterans Day service was held at Joshua Memorial Cemetery in Lancaster CA on November 11th. Many Auxiliary members from unit 311 were in attendance. Following was a potluck at Post 311. Also, Auxiliary members from Unit 176 attended a community parade in San Fernando honoring those who served.

If your Unit participates in any community events or puts on any activities, please send pictures and flyers to [kristayoung82@yahoo.com](mailto:kristayoung82@yahoo.com) or text to (661)916-5126.

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## CHAIRMEN REPORTS

### AEF

*Bonnie Christner*

Not sure how much more I can say about the Auxiliary Emergency Fund program, except to repeat what I've already said. Please try to have a fundraiser to raise funds to send to the National Organization for this very worthwhile program. This program is there to help members in a time of need. The whole country is suffering right now from flooding and fires. These members need our help, and you can donate right on the National website. Can you imagine, losing everything, especially right before the holidays? It has to be devastating no matter what time of year it is. I'm sure a lot of these families have children, so it makes this time of year even more devastating. So put on a fundraiser and let's help these members in need!

*From my family to yours Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Safe New Year.*

## AMERICANISM

*Laura Kellgreen*

Our Americanism program includes all activities tending to perpetuate American ideals and to uphold the principles of American democracy. The security of America lies in a citizenry in whose minds and hearts is ingrained a true understanding of and love for those ideals and principles upon which the nation was founded; a citizenry aware of the duties of citizenship and a willingness to perform those duties even at the cost of great personal sacrifice.

The American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Program is educationally based divided into three phases: work with the youth, the adult, and work with the community. All matters pertaining to the flag or patriotic education are rightly classified as Americanism activities.

Every citizen should have a knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States. Therefore, the Auxiliary has a very definite objective in emphasizing through its Americanism program the teachings of good citizenship.

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## CHILDREN AND YOUTH

*Marlena Tungate*

The Children and Youth Program continues to provide opportunities to support and celebrate the next generation while fostering our mission of service. One of the ways we can do this is by recognizing outstanding young individuals in our communities through the Youth Hero and Good Deed Awards. These awards honor children and teens who demonstrate exceptional courage in helping others or perform selfless acts of kindness that make a positive impact. If you know a young person who embodies these values, consider submitting a nomination to celebrate their extraordinary efforts. For more information or to submit a nomination, please visit the American Legion Auxiliary website.

Additionally, we are answering the National challenge to collect \$1 from every member for the Child Well-Being Foundation. These contributions directly support the American Legion's grants for children, providing vital assistance to those in need. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of countless young individuals and their families.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Bonnie Christner*

In the November bulletin our department Community Service Chairman Rebecca Glenny spoke about the California Disaster Fund. This fund was created in 1989 to assist the members of California who are affected by severe damage to their homes or personal loss. This is another fund that is helping our members right here in California. Please remember when doing your budget for the year to add a line for this program. We have all seen the devastation that the fires have caused in California. Let's help them by sending in our donations.

I would like to pass on some Workshop Highlights that was also in her bulletin for November. During our recent workshops, we created a total of 64 cards for veterans receiving services from the Veteran Peer Access Network and 11 cards thanking VPAN workers. The Northern Workshop had 41 attendees, creating 23 cards for the Monterey County Veteran Transition Center and 12 cards for Mr. Hayes, Madam President Linda's husband, when he returned from his Honor Flight. If your Unit attended either of these workshops, please include it in your End of Year reports since our Mid-year reports are already done.

*Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Safe new Year.*



## CONSTITUTION

*Ann Philcox*

Constitution and Bylaws are the governing documents for the District and Units. Current copies should be available to all members when completed. Standing Rules are the policies and should be shared with all members on a regular basis, and whenever changes are made.

## EDITOR

*Nancy Heinisch*

**Flyers** are an effective and inexpensive marketing method to promote an event and provide information that a business card alone cannot do. Adobe InDesign flyer templates are available for your graphic designer to edit and create ALA branded flyers. Fillable, branded PDFs are also available for use to create custom flyers.

### **Auxiliary-branded flyer designs should include:**

- + ALA emblem, contact information, and ALA mission statement placed along the left column
- + Flyer message located on the larger, right side
- + Photos, stacked along the right side
- + Solid or line version of the blue ALA wave along the bottom
- + Date the file was last revised

### Recommendations for creating flyers:

- \* Use attention-grabbing headlines that are short and to the point
- \* Write easy-to-read sentences to promote an event and get your message across
- \* Use bullet points, as readers often pay them extra attention
- \* Include positive pictures to complement the message
- \* Be sure to end with a call to action. Should they call you, visit your website, or go somewhere else for additional information? Encourage the reader to take action now
- \* Remember to always have a second set of eyes to proofread before printing
- \* Print in color as often as possible

*ALA Branding Guide*

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## GIRLS STATE

*Chandra Young*

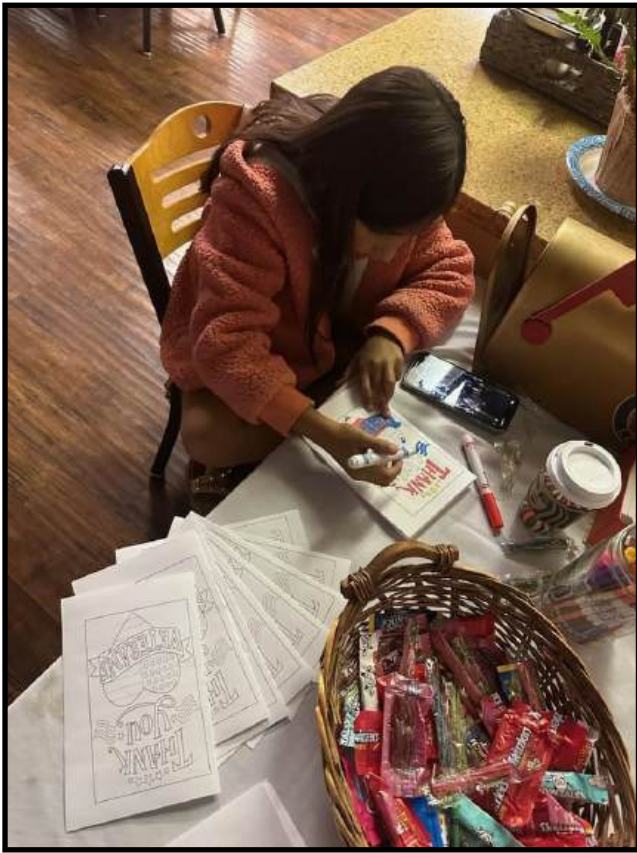
Are you struggling to engage with local schools to recruit participants for programs like ALA Girls State? You're not alone! Many units share the frustration of reaching out to schools only to feel like they're hitting a brick wall. As someone who's been in that position, I understand how challenging it can be to build those important connections. But perhaps it's time we rethink how we approach these partnerships.

Instead of simply asking for support, consider how you can offer value to the schools and their students. It's all about building a relationship, not just a one-time request. For ideas on how to make meaningful connections and engage with your local schools, check out the ALA blog for helpful tips on the *Give 10 to Education* initiative. These strategies can help you foster lasting relationships that benefit both your programs and the students in your community. Together, let's strengthen our ties with local schools and ensure that programs like ALA Girls State continue to thrive.



## JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Chandra Young



Did you know Junior Auxiliary is open to girls from infancy through age 17? The Junior Activities program helps prepare girls to become active members by offering meaningful volunteer opportunities that promote service, compassion, and leadership.

A special thank you to Unit 377 for their volunteer efforts this past Veteran's Day. The girls visited local nursing homes, spent time with veterans, sang "God Bless America", and delivered homemade cards to show appreciation for their service.

We also want to thank Our Ladies of Lourdes School for their generous donation of cards and partnership in our community. These efforts highlight the spirit of service within Junior Auxiliary, and we're grateful to all who participated in making this Veteran's Day extra special for our veterans.

## LEGISLATIVE

Kathy Faulconer

The 119 Congress will be sworn in on Jan 3, 2025 at noon. President-elect Donald Trump has nominated one of his previous attorney's and former GOP House Member, Doug Collins, to lead the Department of V.A. At this writing it is unknown if he has been approved. Veterans' groups and advocates may have some luck in getting their priorities passed in the next congress, as the incoming class will include at least 78 Veterans in the House and a minimum of 18 in the Senate.

Priorities to lobby the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress will be from expanding health care access to reducing suicide rates. Also, health care for incarcerated veterans, and a host of issues affecting retired service members. In the meantime, two bills are priorities in the Lame Duck Session. The Elizabeth Dole 21<sup>st</sup> Century Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act and the Major Richard Star Act. If you are signed up for alerts from Grassroots you will probably see alerts soon.

Department Legislative Chairman Glenda Schultz has emailed a duplicate of "The ALA Legislative Newsletter." This is an interesting read which comes from National; if anyone wants a copy please let me know, it is 5 pages long. The purpose of the letter is to inform members that the National Legislative Committee has presented a challenge to all. The challenge can be found on the second page of the report. Also, please see page 3, which was published in the November 2024 issue of the American Legion magazine **to use QR Code to sign up for Alerts from Grassroots.**

***Some facts on the challenge: it will run from November 10, 2024, through July 2025. The challenge's aim is to increase members' use of the Action Alert to send correspondence to their representatives. The challenge - each department and division to have the highest percentage of correspondence numbers based on 2025 paid membership each quarter in response to the Legion's Action Alert. ALA will receive a quarterly report from the Legion providing data to determine the numbers required to choose winners for each quarter. The department winner will receive \$20 donation in their name to the National Presidents project from the national chair each quarter, with the division receiving bragging rights. The year-end overall department and division winners will be announced at the pre-convention meeting, each will receive a \$50 donation to the National President's project.***

**If you have not signed up in Grassroots for Legislative Alerts please do so now and let the 20<sup>th</sup> District lead the way in this challenge!**

## LEADERSHIP

Ann Philcox

"Creativity is thinking up new things. Innovation is doing new things."

Theodore Levitt



## MUSIC

*Rebecca Valdivia*

Ever wonder where the phrase "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men" originated?

"**I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day**" is based on the 1863 poem "Christmas Bells" by [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#). He tells of hearing Christmas bells during the [American Civil War](#) when it was in full swing. The battle of Gettysburg wasn't more than six months past. Longfellow wondered how the last phrase of the song's stanzas could be true in a war-torn country, where brother was fighting against brother and father against son. After much anguish and despondency, he concluded the carol with the bells ringing out in a resolution that "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep," and that there will ultimately be "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men."

The poem Longfellow wrote on that day was later set to music by Englishman John Calkin and became one of our most popular Christmas carols.

During this season, please remember to keep our military and their families in your hearts and prayers for their continual sacrifice. We all should try to ensure that the values embodied by Christmas – love, generosity, compassion, and peace are integrated into our daily lives. Hold your children tight, and love them dearly.



## NATIONAL SECURITY

*Mahala Beery*

The Holidays are upon us. I hope everyone has done their Unit Mid-year reports. It is a busy time of year with family time and celebrating. Please remember our veterans and our active-duty troops as your bustle about. Are you sending care packages and holiday gifts this season? Use Shipthrift.com especially if you have anyone in the military. They have streamlined the process and have good rates.

Remember the holidays are very hard for some. Don't forget to check on them, especially the veterans in your life. Do what you can to make them feel appreciated. Invite them to participate at your American Legion Post, have coffee with you or lunch, if they are willing include them in your family celebrations. Don't forget about the military family members who may be missing someone from their celebrations due to deployment. Is there anything you can do to help? Prepare a meal, run errands, babysit, help decorate to name just a few. Let there be peace this season and keep our military safe. Happy holidays to all of you and your families. Enjoy the season!

## POPPY

*Wendy Freeman*

As Poppy Chair, try to arrange to attend a City Council meeting prior to poppy month to ask for a proclamation for poppy month. How many Units already have a poppy month proclamation?

Lois and her veterans have been working hard making poppies. We will be receiving all poppy orders at District 20. An email will be sent to Unit presidents upon receipt of the poppies. Please send a copy of your poppy order to our District president. That way we can distribute poppies accordingly.

Remember, all members are welcome to Mid-Year DEC! Especially to enter the poppy hat competition! One entry per member.

### Please follow these guidelines:

- # Name, District #, Unit #, address, phone number and email address need to be printed on a piece of paper placed on the inside of the the hat band.
- # No identifying information is to be placed on the outside of the hat.
- # There will be three categories:
  - President's Theme
  - Most creative use of poppies
  - President's Choice
- # Entries need to be in the main meeting hall by 12: noon on Saturday, January 18, 2025. Deliver them to the Department Poppy Chairman, Gabriella Ramos
- # Voting will be conducted by Department President Linda Hayes and a panel (3 members) appointed by the Department Poppy Chairman Gabriella.
- # All decisions are final.

Members may pick up their entries after the announcement of the winners.

In closing, remember that you offer poppies – you do not ask for donations or sell them for a price.



Photo Judy Evridge

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

*Carol McChesney*

Some quotes are from the Auxiliary Magazine August 2024 issue.

The essence of the publication is to make new and/or potentially interested members feel welcome when first attending or joining an American Legion Auxiliary meeting. I know of one previous member who attended a few meetings, participated in events at the lodge, but soon quit. She told me personally that no one was friendly with her. That was so sad to hear.

Getting back to the points in the article. In Florida, Unit 273 in Maderira Beach emphasize the importance of outreach, Cheryl Yoder, Unit President and Past Unit President say, "every member is an ambassador." Another Unit from Indiana Unit 500 in Speedway has a strong record of attracting and retaining members. Here were their 5 top tips to respond to potential members who visit.

### **BE EDUCATED.**

Build awareness among members about what the unit does.

### **BE AVAILABLE.**

Have someone at the Post to respond to visitors' inquiries.

### **BE ENGAGING.**

When a new person arrives, greet them and offer to help.

**BE THOROUGH.** Give an explanation of the value the ALA brings to the community and its veterans.

**BE EASY GOING.** Treat everyone with kindness as everyone is not looking to become members. Treating everyone the same is the right thing to do.

Have Super Duper Christmas. Happy Birthdays to all December babes.



*Merry Christmas*

Deadline for the February issue of the *Chatterbox* is January 25.

Please email articles as a word attachment and photos to

Editor Nancy Heinisch  
nancyheinisch@att.net

## MEMBER NEWS

*Regina Clark*



### **American Legion Post 377 and Auxiliary Unit 377 Participate in National Wreaths Across America**

*We will ensure all veterans buried at  
Verdugo Hills Cemetery  
are remembered and honored this December.*

*You are cordially invited to attend — Please join us!*

This ceremony, held simultaneously at over 4,200 cemeteries across the country, will take place on **Saturday, December 14, 2024**. Our patriotic and moving ceremony will begin at **9 AM**. Verdugo Hills Cemetery is located at **7000 Parsons Trail, Tujunga, California**. Carpooling is suggested as parking at the cemetery is limited.

Verdugo Hills Cemetery has a long and storied history. Established in 1922, the cemetery is the resting place for over 2,500 souls. Verdugo Hills Cemetery is Los Angeles City Historic Cultural Monument #946.

Recent research done by cemetery volunteers has discovered over 200 veterans interred at this old cemetery. Nearly all have long since been forgotten but we will make sure they are remembered.

We will place a live, evergreen wreath on their graves to ensure our veterans are never forgotten. This event is open to everyone, so feel free to bring your family, friends and neighbors. Please join us on December 14.

**Contact:**  
**Regina Clark**  
**1-818-640-0547**  
**hrh.regina@earthlink.net**

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**VA&R**  
*Barbara Garrison*

December is "Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Month". Begin now to decide how your Unit and District can honor veterans during December. Host a holiday meal at your Post home, seek out veterans in assisted living facilities and do something special for them, remember the patients in VA medical facilities, and Cal Vet homes with a small gift and holiday card. Your kindness will touch their hearts!