



SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

**American Legion Auxiliary
One-Hundredth National Convention**

**August 27, 2021 – September 2, 2021
Phoenix, Arizona**

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
NATIONAL OFFICERS
2019-2021**

National President

Nicole Clapp, Department of Iowa

National Vice President

Kathy Daudistel, Department of Kentucky

Division National Vice Presidents

Central: Ruth Gott, Department of Michigan

Eastern: Carolyn Baranowski, Department of Massachusetts

Northwestern: Rhonda Larkowski, Department of Colorado

Southern: Noemi Burgos de Paneto, Department of Puerto Rico

Western: Cheryl Park, Department of Oregon

National Chaplain

Mary Anne Casadei, Department of New York

National Historian

Peggy Monroe, Department of Tennessee

National Secretary

Linda Boone, Department of Oregon

National Treasurer

Marybeth Revoir, Department of Illinois

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**PRE-CONVENTION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 2021**

MEMBERS PRESENT

National Officers

National President Nicole Clapp
National Vice President Kathy Daudistel
Central Division National Vice President Ruth Gott
Eastern Division National Vice President Carolyn Baranowski
Northwestern Division National Vice President Rhonda Larkowski
Southern Division National Vice President Noemi Burgos de Paneto
Western Division National Vice President Cheryl Park
National Chaplain *Absent*
National Historian Peggy Monroe
National Secretary Linda Boone
National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir

Guest: Executive Director Kelly Circle

Past National Presidents

Carlene Ashworth
Nancy Brown-Park
Sharon Conatser
Mary E. Davis
Diane Duscheck
Virginia Hobbs
Janet Jefford
Rita Navarreté
Linda Newsome
Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan
Desireé Stoy
Peggy Thomas
Kristine West

National Executive Committee members

Alabama..... Judy Daughtry
Alaska *Absent*
Arizona Cynthia Queen
Arkansas Patricia Murray
California..... Linda Workman
Colorado Ann Ritacco
Connecticut..... Debra Knickerbocker
Delaware *Absent*
District of Columbia Lauren Lloyd
Florida Michele DeGennaro

Georgia	Valerie Brown-Debro
Hawaii	<i>Absent</i>
Idaho	<i>Absent</i>
Illinois	Debra Lewis
Indiana	Betty Slagle
Iowa	Ann Crawford
Kansas	Debra J. Haas
Kentucky	Jerilynn Kabel
Louisiana	ALT Ethel Theriot
Maine	Veronica Gurney
Maryland	Patti Lach
Massachusetts	Donna Blattenberger
Michigan	Deborah Williamson
Minnesota	Raleen Tolzmann
Mississippi	<i>Absent</i>
Missouri	Marsha Mooney
Montana	Kathryn Long
Nebraska	Kathleen Mazur
Nevada	Glynis Seeley
New Hampshire	Carol Maynard
New Jersey	<i>Absent</i>
New Mexico	Cecilia Martinez
New York	Deborah Morris
North Carolina	Janice MacLeod
North Dakota	Tammy Ryberg
Ohio	ALT Kristen McLaughlin
Oklahoma	Nancy O’Leary
Oregon	Pam Seelye
Pennsylvania	<i>Absent</i>
Puerto Rico	Noemi Burgos de Paneto
Rhode Island	ALT Cathleen Camire
South Carolina	Patricia Jarvis
South Dakota	Laura “Susie” Clyde
Tennessee	Sue Cantrell
Texas	Christine Trahan
Utah	<i>Absent</i>
Vermont.....	<i>Absent</i>
Virginia	Sallie Rossman
Washington	Eva Wallace
West Virginia	ALT Sharon Kauffman
Wisconsin	Laura Calteux
Wyoming	Vicki Paddock

**PRE-CONVENTION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 2021**

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right, everyone. The National Executive Committee meeting will now come to order.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Please place your electronic devices in the silent mode. And now, please stand for our opening ceremonies.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Our National Chaplain, Mary Anne Casadei, is unable to be with us this week, so Past National Chaplain, Rosemarie Hauck from the Department of Missouri, will lead us in our invocation and a moment of silence for our fallen heroes and those serving our nation today for the protection of our freedom.

Following the prayer, Americanism Chairman Denise Conrad, will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by Constitution and Bylaws Chairman Trish Ward, leading us in the Preamble to the Constitution.

Rosemarie, will you please lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: Let us pray, please. We thank you, oh God, that we are privileged to come together for this National Executive Committee meeting. We ask that your blessings may rest upon President Nicole, as she leads us and the members in attendance. Please guide and direct our thoughts and our deliberations, so that we may exhibit fair judgment and understanding of the matters at hand. Ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary's principal services are for God and country. We ask you to surround all of us with your loving care and we ask this in your name. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

(Ring of the bell.)

CHAIRMAN CONRAD: Please recite with me. 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.

CHAIRMAN WARD: 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 one hundred percent Americanism; To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during great wars; To inculcate a sense of individual obligations 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 prosperity 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.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, ladies. We are compelled to never forget that while we enjoy our daily pleasures, there are others who have

endured and may still be enduring the agonies of pain, deprivation, and imprisonment. Before we begin our activities this morning, let's pause to remember our POWs and MIAs. I would also ask that when you put your head down tonight, please pray for our soldiers in Kabul. The national meeting of the Executive Committee is convened. We made it!

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We made it. We're here. Cornelius is here. The most popular national president companion of all times. Hard to believe, but we are here, we are here together. As we were reciting the preamble, we almost got it perfect. Kathy, by next year, "all wars" will just roll off the tongue, but most importantly, we are here together. You are serving the NEC as a very important board for us. You have a great responsibility, and I couldn't have asked you to serve for two years, had I had a crystal ball, but you did it gallantly. I have never had anyone say no. National Officers, National Chairmen, Committee members, if there was a no, it was because of health, or work, or life issues. It wasn't because of the no wanting -- to no longer wanting to serve our cause. So, I definitely appreciate your commitment to this great organization. Now, today, we have some business to conduct and it's my hope that as I've always said to you, you ask your questions, you do your due diligence, you make informed decisions on each issue that's being presented. I personally value each one of your inputs, you are sitting in these chairs for a reason. Please remember to make your way to the microphones. We have a couple of microphones, three of them in the crowd. If you'd like to speak, the center one, so everyone could see you probably is the best if you can get there, but I know it's kind of tight, but it's nice to have a packed house. So please make sure that that is the way our remarks can be heard by Chris, who will be with us this week as our Court Reporter for the meeting. Now, due to the COVID restrictions, attendance will not be taken as you walked in. It's being done -- well, it says -- my note says will not be taken electronically. Is that correct, staff? Okay. I just want to make sure I've got that right. Okay.

There is a white index card on each of your NEC chairs. Okay. Please write your first and last name and your department, and you will turn it in at the end of the meeting. And there's a basket in the middle of the room at the back. NECs, you also have a gift from me on your chair as a thank you, a portrait and a gift pack from the year of service. So, you will have something to remember celebrating a century of service together, so thank you. Now, it is my pleasure to introduce the head table. Our National Vice President, who I cannot say has been more patient and understanding than Kathy Daudistel from Kentucky.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: One of our Central Division Vice President is a trooper, Ruthie is here, Ruthie Gott.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Eastern Division. Where is Carolyn? I see a chair. I don't see Carolyn Baranowski. I'm sure she's on her way. It was a little hike from the hotel this morning. Okay. We've got Rhonda Larkowski, Northwest

Division from Colorado. We've got Noemi, everybody knows Noemi from the Southern Division from Puerto Rico. And we have Cheryl sitting right beside her, apart from the Western Division from Oregon. Now, I'm sure this person would have thought twice if I said, "Oh, you'll get to do this for two years. The National Historian Peggy Monroe from Tennessee.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Our National Secretary Linda Boone. Our National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir from Illinois. Our Executive Director Kelly Circle from headquarters. And our right hand, no doubt when it comes to business, Chris Dickey, our convention parliamentarian. And a note of personal privilege, I'd like to introduce you to my National President pages. We have the Chairman Ann Rehbein. We have the longest standing NEC for seven years, Ann Crawford. We have Mary Sebben, who is our alternate NEC, and Michele Long.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Her grandmother was Central Division Vice President Florence Long. Some of you may remember working with Florence many years ago. Now, I should have done it in reverse order, I usually do, because Ann Rehbein, to me, is my chairman of everything not just the chairman of pages, so thank you, everyone. Past National Presidents, we had a nice time last evening, please stand to be recognized.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Now, as we get into business, as you have saw -- probably on your agenda. First of all, there were two agendas in your packet is my understanding. It is the first one that we will use. All right.

As you saw on the agenda, this is our very first sponsored NEC meeting. And we couldn't be happier that our sponsor, Shipthriftly, shares our passion for veterans, military, and our families. When the co-founders, Rob and Michelle, they're over here who you'll meet in a few minutes, Williamson, their friend was deployed. And they learned just how complicated it can be, and stressful, for military shipping, and there had to be an easier way. And so, they decided to do something about that, to make it better for service members and their families. The team learned the ins and outs of military shipping and created tools built to make shipping easier and the process simpler. Today, Shipthriftly happily serves military families, making it possible for them to ship with ease, which, I think in today's world is a feat. So let's give a warm welcome for Rob and Michelle from Shipthriftly, our today's sponsor for our meeting. Please come forward.

MS. WILLIAMSON: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for having us. We're honored to be here. Before we get started, I'd like to ask a couple of questions. How many of you booked travel online? Raise of hands. It's kind of convenient, isn't it? How many of you sent care packages to deployed service members? How many of you do that process right now at the post office and do the customs forms online? That really stinks. So, we, as mentioned, we put shipping online just like you do travel. And so, in that -- this is the first time Rob and I have talked together. We usually talk separate, so it might be kind of interesting. So, in that, we put the tools online, so that

you can do that process easier and you don't even have to leave your own house. It helps groups do that process simpler as well. So, we started in 2017 and the mission was to help people like us, small businesses and individuals. And from there, well, I'm going to let you hop in.

MR. WILLIAMSON: And from there, we just began to learn. Coming from large technology backgrounds with corporate banking, litigation, government compliance, stuff that's not very fun. It was super fun for us to start learning about shipping because we didn't know any better, but we did know how to make software.

MS. WILLIAMSON: And so, going back to the story, this is Captain O'Brien. He's with the Minnesota National Guard. And he came to us saying, "You guys have this shipping stuff? Why don't you do something to help military families?" He said, "It's terrifying." He said, "My wife doesn't have a clue what any of this stuff means. It's my first deployment. Help us."

MR. WILLIAMSON: It's kind of wonky a little bit there. I think we may have to manually move that. The clicker is not clicking right.

MS. WILLIAMSON: Oh. I don't -- it's not up on the screen.

MR. WILLIAMSON: All right. We're going to maybe wing it. She might know what to do. All right. I'm going to ad lib while we got -- no. And so, what you'll see is once that kind of corrects itself, so we were really inspired as we learned what Kevin had told us was absolutely true. It was confusing. It was really convoluted. It was downright scary because if you send a \$50 box and that comes back, you're out \$50, right? And so, we set out to make that process better. If you want to scroll down, Michelle.

MS. WILLIAMSON: It's not tracking. The track pad isn't scrolling.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Let's try that. There we go. I'm going to make it work. And so, we built these custom tools. We took our software background, and we took -- and we learned about military shipping and we kind of put them together. And so as of today, we shipped about 700 tons of packages with about 99.9 percent success. We do have a package come back on occasion. It does happen. Sometimes, things will, you know, have something they shouldn't in them -- you know, things happen. But by in large, I would say we've almost tamed to this process. We always kind of joke, if you use our software one time, you kind of become a shipping ninja on time two, because it's just fill in the blanks. It's doing it again.

MS. WILLIAMSON: That's okay. Just go.

MR. WILLIAMSON: But as we went through this process, we learned that most people out there were like us. They think that when you're in the military, you get everything you need. Of course, you do. But guess what? Well, the chuckles tell you, right? Deodorant, toothpaste, baby powder, socks, books. The list goes on and on. And we were blown away, frankly. We were blown away. We're like, how can that be? So, it became super personal for us because we all know what these men and women do for our country. And if you're not getting, you know, toothpaste, we wanted to play at least a little bit of role in helping that, right?

MS. WILLIAMSON: Not only that but the moral support that comes from that. So, we've heard stories of people saying, "The smell of the box,

when I opened it." We've talked to chaplains. We actually had the opportunity to go to the Pentagon two years ago, and we talked to the Joint Chief Chaplain. And he said, "I would use some of those packages when people were on the far end of things to bring them back and say, you know what, there are people who do care about you. Hang tight. You're going to get through this." And so as we continued our journey, the Minnesota National Guard folks that we started with, started introducing us to people who sent care packages. We didn't know people sent care packages and groups, the non-profits. And we started volunteering with them, and we started seeing how complicated their processes were. Rob and I both did process improvement. We're like, oh, my gosh.

MR. WILLIAMSON: It was a field day.

MS. WILLIAMSON: And so we said, "All right. Let's look at what's happening here." So we did a tool set that actually works to make it easier for you to add packages, take them off. You can set it up ahead of time, you can save it. And so we still volunteer with groups. We really love that part. And we are very passionate about supporting those who serve. So not only do we still volunteer, we teach at pre-deployments to help family members learn how to save on shipping. We actually go out to schools who are doing packing events to help them to raise awareness so that we continue the education and involvement with children as well. And we just love what we do.

MR. WILLIAMSON: While I'm talking, will you see if you can manually play with that just a little bit.

MS. WILLIAMSON: It just not.

MR. WILLIAMSON: And so, you know, we stand here in front of you. We have the best jobs on the planet. We kind of joke. The first halves of our career were not -- they were great. We're appreciative of them, but they weren't a lot of fun. Now, we get to do fun stuff. We get to support service members, their families, and the groups such as yours that support that, as well as the Blue Star Mothers, the local Yellow Ribbons. Groups that are just -- nobody even knows about them, we work with all over the country. And we are just flat out honored to be able to do that, and some of the best people on the planet to work with. So kudos to you all because it's just so refreshing for us and it's so much fun. And so along the way, I would say, we've earned the privilege to serve hundreds of pretty large organizations, the USO, the Blue Star Mothers that I mentioned, Legions. We'll touch on one of the Legions quickly at the end. We even managed to become very close and serve a former Navy chief, and that's not always an easy thing. But Chandler (phonetic) is an awesome lady, and we help her with this process as well.

MS. WILLIAMSON: So we are all about building strong trusted bonds. The people who work with us consider us our friends, we do the same. It is an honor to be able to see people when we meet them. But we go above and beyond. We have been vetted by JAG, we're vetted by Military OneSource. We are an official USPS partner. And on top of all of the care package groups that we help, we now have corporations coming to us, even though they have fulfillment areas, because our tools make it so much easier. So we help

Medtronic, Medica, BestBuy, Eastman --

MR. WILLIAMSON: Starbucks.

MS. WILLIAMSON: Starbucks, and various other companies get care packages to service members.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you.

MS. WILLIAMSON: And we'd like to be able to serve you guys too. Our tools make that process so much easier. They make your life a lot more fun because you're able to enjoy the events a lot more. But more importantly, it stretches donation dollars. And the more that we can make the process easier and stretch dollars, the more support that goes to those who are serving.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. And two things I would add. One piece is around the savings. Many people know this, many people don't. Depending on where you're shipping from, the price can change dramatically. Sometimes, those branded boxes are the best deals; sometimes, it's big brown boxes with lots of packages. Part of what we do every single day is work with, again, spouses or groups. And we'll help you do that analysis to say, hey, this is per inch or per package. This is the best way we can find to do it. Some cases, we've saved groups thousands, and we can tell you all about that. You know, we'd love to tell you about that. But just -- I mentioned I would speak real quick about the Legion. If you scroll up. One of the Legion groups that we work with. This is Craig. He's in Cannon Falls, Minnesota, the big metropolis of -- which, in truth, I think is about 1,200. But Craig, when we first met Craig, he, and this fantastic community of Cannon Falls, would come together and put together 200 boxes. And to put them together and ship them would take two, three days, and they did it. And the first year we went, we were just learning. So we just helped, we just volunteered. But now, the last time they did this even with COVID, it was over 650 packages that they sent out. And it took probably -- you know, with COVID, it was a little weird measuring the type, but probably five hours, start to finish. And that again, allows Craig to go around and have fun with it. And he's not pulling his hair out, and the post office isn't going, oh, my goodness, right. It's just the process is just so much simpler.

MS. WILLIAMSON: So we are actually also in the exhibit hall. We're at booth 1016. So we'd love to have you stop by, tell us your story, what you guys do, about your family members who have served, and we'd love to meet you. So thank you for your time.

(Applause.)

MR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you. Thank you very much. Appreciate it. Technology is always great. (Indiscernible). Thank you so much.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Rob and Michelle. Typically, the next item in our agenda would be the consent agenda. But there is an item on the consent agenda that requires some background information. So today, I'd like to share my report first so then we can move into the consent agenda. The Chair is pleased to report that the Minutes Approval Committee met and approved the minutes of the NEC meeting from February 2021. The Committee was comprised of the NECs from the Department of Mississippi, Kentucky, and Florida, so thank you, ladies. We have done a wonderful job

and again, it was a job that I learned this year that the calendar is 24 months in a year. All right.

So to continue on, the Executive Committee of the NEC includes myself, the National Vice President, the National Secretary, the National Treasurer, and NECs that were appointed and you ratified from Texas and from New Hampshire. So thank you, Christine and Carol, for joining us on that Committee.

We were called to action three times since February at our mid-year NEC. During those meetings, we completed the Executive Director's review and formed a special committee. So on the consent agenda, you will notice the second item says "Human Resources Committee" on your consent agenda. If everybody wants to flip to the consent agenda.

On your agenda, it says "cancellation, charter cancellations, and human resource committee." Okay. So I want to make sure we're all on the same page where we are. All right. So the Executive Committee to the NEC, this spring, approved the formation of a special committee entitled Human Resources. The HR Committee was comprised of the National Treasurer, the Director of Human Resources at National Headquarters, and Coral May Grout. Myself and Vice President Kathy serve as ex officio members.

The purpose of this Committee was to review the national staff's compensation, benefits, and HR policies. So now that you have background information, I would like to move to the consent agenda.

Are there any questions regarding the information I just shared? Thank you.

Information about the consent agenda and how it works was circulated in advance, along with the following items for the consent agenda: the charter cancellations as of February 2021. And I have been notified this morning for the Department of Washington, there are two additions: Unit 4 Toppenish and Unit 62 Sequim, so Unit 4 Toppenish and Unit 62 Sequim.

For the consent agenda, we would be ratifying the unit cancellations as well as the human resource members of the committee.

Does anyone wish to remove either item from the consent agenda? Mary. Sorry, I didn't see you.

MS. DAVIS: Madam President, Past National President, Mary Davis. Could we have the member from -- NEC member from Washington double check the unit numbers and the unit name? We think there's a discrepancy.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Staff, can someone get online to ALAMIS and determine Unit 2 -- Unit 4 and Unit 62, please, if that's Toppenish and Sequim.

MS. DAVIS: We believe 4 is the one in Eastern Washington.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Can we come back to that, as the staff are looking that up for us? Absolutely, we don't want to approve a cancellation. I already have an asterisk by my name for two years. I don't need that too. I'll be very honest. Thank you, Past National President, Mary.

Okay. We're going to move on. We'll come back to that. So as we're waiting, the staff are working. So let's move on to the Executive Director's report regarding the staff.

Kelly Circle, please present your information.

MS. CIRCLE: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you all for serving for two years as NEC members. While we haven't had the opportunity to meet as often in person, I've treasured the opportunity that I've had to get to know many of you over time through phone calls, emails, weekly responses to weekly briefings, and all sorts of other things. I feel like the relationships that we have formed is the strong foundation for staff and volunteer leadership to work together for our future and I really appreciate everything that you do for us. So let me give you an update on our strategic plan progress. We have spent much time putting together a dashboard, which is going to be a snapshot of the project on each of our strategic plan goals. We have five of them and I'll go through that. With nine divisions and five goals, it's a challenge to consolidate that down. That's a lot of data to bring to a manageable level so that it's easily digestible. And for most of our mission, delivery narratives tell the true story of the impact that we have on veterans, military, and their families. So for this report, I'm going to focus on giving you a snapshot of the narrative with the dashboard coming soon.

So Goal Number One is to cultivate a variety of mission engagement opportunities. We developed a webinar to expand member understanding of how poppy funds can be used to help alleviate the elevated food and security among enlisted military personnel. We posted a new record number of participants for that virtual training with almost 300 members signing up, so that was incredible. That's really great. For the longest time, our units have been trying to gain access to military bases to reach military spouses and their families who could use our help. The Armed Services, YMCA, is the oldest military service organization in the United States, currently serving 87 military installations nationwide. ASYMCA is only -- one of only three charities that have an MOU with the Department of Defense to operate on military bases. We are now working on an MOU with the Armed Services YMCA, which will give the ALA members many opportunities to help active-duty military service members and their families. Due to frequent moves, these military families need community, and this is a gap that the ALA is well-suited to fill. And through the ASYMCA, we can connect with families on base to provide support that they need, whether it's youth programs, food assistance, childcare, or something else. So there's going to be more information on this soon. It's a very exciting opportunity for us and a great partnership.

Goal Number Two is enhance organizational effectiveness of department and units. Since our last meeting, virtual training has continued. And to date, over 3,000 people have registered for live Virtual Training Course, 3,000 people.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: That's awesome. Courses have ranged from junior leader training to unit fundraising and many more. More than 1,000 members continue to access the traditional ALA Academy, which now also includes the recording to all of the ALA live courses. So we're elated that we can reach so many more people than ever before.

I'm very excited to announce that we are working on two professionally developed courses on diversity and inclusion, a self-paced course and a webinar that will be available later this calendar year. So look for that in October or November, and we need your help in helping promote that and get that out to the -- the word out to our members.

We're in the final testing phase of the new ALAMIS functionality to allow units to pay membership dues. We have a number of units that were recommended by their departments to be a part of the pilot process, and we thank the department leadership for working with us on this. If successful, this will provide better service to our members and allow department secretaries and leadership to focus on something other than administrative paperwork, at least on the national level. So stay tuned for more information on our progress.

Goal Number Three: recruit and retain members through mission engagement. Now this -- I'm going to throw a whole bunch of numbers at you, okay, so get ready. The membership division and communications division sent online renewal notices to current, former, and expired members. A January 2021 online renewal e-blast was sent to 54,720 former member contacts with an open rate of 13 percent and to 13,450 expired member contacts with an open rate of 14 percent. That's right about average. That's where we should be.

The 300 former members who received a "we miss you" email in the fall of 2020 have rejoined with -- along with 450 expired members, who renewed their membership after they received a "we miss you" email. These efforts have resulted in a total of 1,140 paid members for the 2021 membership year. Due to the delays in time it can take for a member to rejoin a unit, this number will continue to be tracked for the next year. So one important message that we've seen coming from these responses in an attempt -- is that an attempt to contact and connect is sometimes all it takes to keep a member engaged. So to quote an old commercial, "Reach out and touch someone," just give -- yeah, I'm dating myself. I know.

So Goal Number Four, ensure financial stewardship of resources to maximize mission delivery. So based on the staff recommendation, the change in the renewal notice days in the -- date in the first quarter saved the American Legion Auxiliary \$12,500 just by changing a date.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: During Quarter 3, our monthly donors continued to grow, with 147 donors donating \$45,744 annually.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: This is a great time to sign up to be a monthly donor. All it takes is \$10. So giving Tuesday 2020 raised a record-breaking \$56,000 from 595 donations, surpassing the 2019's total by more than \$11,000 and 100 donors. Yeah.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Thank you so much. We kick off our 2021 Giving Tuesday Campaign here at convention. Our convention three-day total is \$20,000, our largest goal ever, so please help us reach and exceed this goal by

donating outside Exhibit 4 and 5, or via the convention app. Once you make your donation, make the visit to the Wall of Heroes, please.

And finally, Goal Number Five, enhance and foster the family relationship with The American Legion. The ALA worked with the Communications and Marketing division of The American Legion to add the poppy emblem and the poppy day USA org website to the race car livery for the May races. Did everybody see that? I was so excited. We're collaborating with the Legion's healthcare policy coordinator in Washington, D.C. to strengthen and support the Legion family caregiving efforts, so more on that to come. We're also working with The American Legion to gain financial advantages. We started with improving the annual convention while cutting costs. That's down the road a ways, joint marketing efforts, and other opportunities that can lead to more joint ventures. This summer, the ALA directors briefed The American Legion Washington, D.C. directors in their upcoming leadership on the inner workings of National Headquarters. Because of this and the attendance of our incoming leadership at the leadership orientation provided by the Legion, Legion staff, directors, and managers have reached out to us to schedule post-convention meetings to discuss more collaboration and information sharing. That's a huge win.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: They're reaching out to us now, so yay. Once again, I want to thank Linda Boone, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the staff directors for their efforts to craft a streamlined, relevant, and manageable plan to guide our efforts as an organization to make sure we stay focused and on track. We have a solid foundation for a continuous quality improvement plan that will guide us well into the future, so thank you so much.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Now, for some of you, this may be your last meeting as an NEC member. How many people -- how many this is your last? So you might be out of this Committee, but you are not forgotten. We need your help now more than ever. I need your help more than ever. We need you to help be the communication between the national department and unit levels. If you remember the bracelets that I gave out the first time we met so long ago it feels like, be the change you wish to see in the world. Be the mentor maybe that you didn't have, but you wish you did. Help the upcoming leaders avoid potential pitfalls, help educate them. And even if they don't follow your advice and they make mistakes, help them recover from those mistakes, please. If there is a problem in your department with unit, with members: bullying, ignoring government -- governing documents, exhibiting behavior that's harmful to our organization, it's up to each of us to take action. Only a unit can discipline a member, so remember that.

Do you know your unit's governing documents? How would your unit handle an issue such as this? What is the process your unit would follow to ensure that all sides are heard and every member receives due process? What is due process? So that's adequate notice and opportunity to present their side, by the way. If you don't know the answers to these questions, start the discussion at your next unit meeting before you have an issue. Seek advice

from a professional parliamentarian, Chris Dickey. Make sure -- we'll just keep -- we'll keep her busy. If you need to implement a process as hard as it is, do it. And if that's the unit leadership that's the problem, make sure your process allows for someone else to preside over the meeting -- the proceeding. What a concept. But that's the worst-case scenario. Hopefully, it doesn't get to that. Let's try to prevent that scenario. If there is a concern over a member's behavior, have a plan to discuss problematic behavior with a member. Find that unit member that's really good at talking to people and let them use their skills. It might be just as simple as pulling them aside after a meeting or scheduling a one-on-one with them to tell them your concerns and how their behavior is being perceived. They may not realize it.

So the national leadership and staff need you to be the ambassadors for change to lead us effectively into our next century of service. In a few minutes, you'll be hearing reports from the two special committees appointed to help us in specific areas of need, the code of ethical conduct and inclusion and diversity.

We need your help in ensuring members know of the work that is being done. And we need your help in educating members who are not in the room today as to why this work is important. Madam President, thank you for your leadership and guidance these past two years to set our organization up for success in the next century of service. It's been an honor to work with you. And I look forward to your continued guidance in your future role as Past National President.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you.

MS. CIRCLE: This concludes my report. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: That's the title that never goes away. All right. I have heard from staff and those two charters will have to be enacted upon at the February NEC meeting. All right. So with that, can we go back to the consent agenda for approval?

Do I have -- I'll entertain a motion to approve the consent agenda as printed.

MS. SEELEY: Glynis Seeley, Department of Nevada. I move that we accept the consent agenda.

VOICES: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Second.

Any discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor say "aye".

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed. Same sign. Motion is carried. Thank you very much. Now, as we have transitioned in these two years, you recall we separated the roles. So you've heard from our Executive Director. Now, you're going to hear from our National Treasurer, who is also an appointed position of a volunteer. Marybeth Revoir from the Department of Illinois, would you please give your report this morning.

TREASURER REVOIR: Yes, ma'am.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Marybeth.

TREASURER REVOIR: Madam National President, as our many months of unprecedented challenges continues, I'd like to share a couple of items that our national organization financially experienced during the past 18 months. Contributions, grants, and sponsorships to the American Legion Auxiliary programs have increased just under 10 percent since 2018. With the difficulties experienced on all levels of our organization, this is truly a wonder when you consider how hard our units and members, as we all have been impacted with the challenges of these months. Contributions topped a million dollars for 2020 and are on track to do it again in 2021. How truly remarkable.

(Applause.)

TREASURER REVOIR: I'm certain that this is indicative of how important our mission is to our members. An area we have realized certain benefits is in our investment portfolio. We have unrealized gains that bring our balances up in the area of double digits. Ever watchful though of the volatility that surrounds the markets and in the investing overall will help us ensure we can count on those additional funds that are being generated now for years to come. A benefit from the 18 months of pandemic protocols we have endured is that overall spending was depressed. Well, this has given us a boost and available cash, we must view this only as a one-time opportunity and plan for our future using realistic expectations. Our future projections must be based on income generated from membership, which, at the present, only covers 60 percent of our annual budget. Recently you received the comparative statement of financial position for June 2021 as the NECs received those regularly and an actual to-budget report for the quarter ending June 30th. Both of those for your review. Also, financial statements for both the American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation covering Fiscal Year 2020 will be included in your Commemorative Centennial report. I'd like to assure all of you something that I learned in the last several months that there was a very dedicated group of volunteers being your finance committee and your leadership along with the finance division of the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters, who work very, very diligently to be fiscally responsible with our funds. Thank you, Madam President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Marybeth. Now, as part of the tag team of that financial report, our Chairman of the National Finance Committee, Past National President, Sharon Conatser. Good morning, Sharon.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: Madam President, Nicole. Good morning, everyone.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. CONATSER: Your National Finance Committee is comprised of the following Auxiliary members, would you please stand if you're in the room, because I couldn't do it without you. Vice Chairman Jenny Hobbs. Committee members: Peggy Thomas, Paula Rainey, and Nancy Brown-Park, and myself.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: All of us say thank you to you, Madam President

Nicole, for your service for the last two years. Doing a budget meeting by Zoom was very, very different and very difficult at times.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Very time consuming.

MS. CONATSER: And very time consuming, but we all made it, and thank you for that leadership. The direct mail campaigns, when we looked at them, 81 percent of our donations come from American Legion Auxiliary members and 19 percent come from those outside the organization, who believe in our mission and believe what we're doing is good. Thank you. We appreciate your generosity and your support. Please continue to share our mission and help us increase our donations both within our organization and from outside our organization. As you heard from Marybeth, and it bears repeating, our membership dues only cover 60 percent of our operating budget. With COVID, our overall spending was down. And thanks to Sarah and Gary and other members of our staff, they worked diligently and we received a PPP loan, which is in the progress of being forgiven. Thank you, staff, for your hard work to support our organization. Looking at other streams of income will be needed in the future. If you have ideas, please share them with this chairman. As your Finance Committee, we also believe in the value of knowledge gained through the members attending mission trainings. And this year, even though training looked different, we are confident that returning to in-person trainings will be valuable to our unit members.

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

VOICE: Hello.

MS. CONATSER: Are there? Hello.

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay, ladies. We've had one, two, and now three, mute the phones or please turn them off. Okay.

MS. CONATSER: Are there any questions regarding any of the financial information you received? Okay. Hearing none. In conclusion, I wish to thank the NEC for your financial due diligence this year and your support of our committee. Please let it be known that our continued goal is to make the best decisions for our organization and our mission. And we appreciate the efforts to maintain our organization's financial viability.

Madam President, this concludes the financial report.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Sharon.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Moving on in the agenda. At our midwinter NEC, if you recall, we established the two committees that Kelly mentioned in her remarks; the Inclusion and Diversity Committee and the Code of Ethical Conduct Committee.

This morning, as we had promised, you will hear reports of their first six months. Now, it's my understanding that the Chair of the Inclusion and Diversity Committee, Dr. Teresa Nuñez, cannot be with us this morning. So Leslie Rist will please come to the podium to give the report. Good morning, Lisa. Leslie sorry.

MS. RIST: That's all right. I've been called other things.

(Laughter.)

MS. RIST: Good morning, ladies.

VOICE: Good morning.

MS. RIST: Madam President, fellow Officers, Committee members, and lovely ladies of the ALA. What a delight to be here today. As Madam President announced, Dr. Nunez left -- lost her father yesterday, so condolences to the family. I have a quick question for Kelly to clarify since.

(Asides.)

MS. RIST: Great. I wanted a bit of clarification. My name is Dr. Leslie Rist. It's been a privilege to work with these ladies here over the last few months. And we're really excited about what we plan to do to help to support our entire organization and the veteran family. The Inclusion and Diversity Committee was created to do these things:

One, to establish goals and strategies for inclusion and diversity for the ALA.

Two, to provide opportunities for our members to participate in discussions in inclusion and diversity topics.

Three, to address policies or practices affecting inclusion and diversity; To establish mechanisms or for measuring our success.

Five, to identify areas of concern and to improve inclusion and diversity efforts.

We drafted the vision statement and we apologize, we had technical difficulties. We did have a PowerPoint presentation for you this morning that did not arrive. We have drafted a vision statement to make our commitment clear. For those of you who can't see that, it says honoring tradition and valuing every voice. That is our mission.

(Applause.)

MS. RIST: This speaks to the American Legion Auxiliary's history and our commitment to the veteran community today and for our future. We will be creating a landing page for diversity and inclusion with a statement for collateral use in social media and other communications and marketing methods. Over the past five months, our nine-person committee has been meeting bi-weekly to review the 2015 member survey, and to identify areas of concern, to share knowledge of best practices, and in the area of diversity and inclusion, to draft our vision statement and develop recommendations, to fulfill the objectives our Committee was charged with.

Working with the National Headquarter staff, we have developed a contract with Qualtrics, a cloud-based platform for creating and distributing web-based surveys. To develop a basic assessment survey, to establish our demographics.

And in addition, the National Headquarters has contracted to develop a self-paced, diversity and inclusion training and webinar. This will be introduced to our committee and to the body as a foundation from which training can be created. A survey of the ALA Girls States Legion -- Girls State Legion Boys State Alumni has been created and we are pursuing methods to distribute. This will allow us to hear feedback regarding the

program and work with engaging efforts to attract members to the program.

Our first recommendation to change is the name of our committee. We're going to change it to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

(Applause.)

MS. RIST: Thank you. Initially, we wanted to emphasize the importance of inclusion, but have found that it causes some confusion because people are more familiar with the DEI acronym. We feel equity needs to be stated because it is a fairness statement for access, for fair treatment, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while identify and eliminating potential barriers that may prevent participation of our membership. DEI is the diversity of people and ideas, practices and policies, and this includes inclusion all throughout our organization.

Our next recommendation is to have either the National President or the Executive Director sign the CEO Action for diversity and inclusion. The pledge outlines a specific set of actions that can be taken to cultivate a trusting environment, where all ideas are welcome. And people feel comfortable and empowered to have discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Nearly 2,000 CEOs across the country have taken this pledge, which includes many non-profits.

Utilizing surveys will help us track our progress and show how our commitment towards continuous improvement exists. National Headquarter staff are working with Qualtrics to learn and to create valid surveys so that we can further benchmark focus areas to develop strategies and initiatives. This tool will be very useful in gathering necessary information to hear your voices.

Staff are working with Brilljent, the company we use for ALA academy course development, to create both an online, DEI training module and webinar. The Committee will review the training and we will anticipate distributing this coming fall.

Lastly, we are creating a communication and marketing plan to increase DEI awareness, as we wish to make our website and trainings fully acceptable to all members to --

VOICE: Accessible.

MS. RIST: -- accessible. Thank you. Maybe time to see the eye doctor, huh. Create membership, reporting procedure to address concerns, and reviewing organizational processes to ensure fairness that align with our goals. It has been an honor and privilege to serve on this Committee to improve our organization for the next hundred years of service.

As we implement our DEI plans and gather data and listen to the voices and experiences of our members, we will continue to review our strategies and tactics to make improvements and deliver recommendations. We respectfully respect this Committee be reappointed for the coming year, so that we can continue our efforts and all recommendations considered for approval.

Madam President, this concludes my report but before other actions, we have some of our committee members with us today. Ladies, would you stand and introduce yourself?

MS. RIST: Lorraine.

MS. BOUCHER: Lorraine Boucher, Long Island.

MS. RIST: Thank you, Lorraine.

MS. OLIVER: Yvonne Oliver, Maryland.

MS. RIST: Yvonne. Any of our ladies, other ladies here today?

MS. WASHINGTON: Karla.

MS. RIST: Karla. That's Karla back there, right? Okay. And Karla is back. Thank you very, very much.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Leslie. We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Committee.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: There has been a recommendation from the Inclusion and Diversity Committee that the name be changed as you heard to acronym DEI, which is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as the NEC you approve the original name. So I would ask is there a motion to change the name to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion? Is there a motion?

MS. MORRIS: Deborah Morris, Department of New York. I move to agree that --

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Is there a second?

VOICES: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All those in favor say "aye".

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed? Motion is carried. The new Committee name Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, known as DEI. Thank you. Thank you for your hard work.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. I should have done something at the beginning of the meeting. I should have put a bounty out on the cell phones. I think I could have made at least \$40. I know that's cheap, because I know in some states, I was visiting it was 20, 25. We could be at three digits by now. Please, everyone, respect for your presenters. Turn the phones to silent. If you don't know how to silent your phone, I bet somebody sitting next to you does. Please. Thank you. Okay. We now -- we'll move on to our second committee and that is the Code of Ethical Conduct and the Chair of that Committee is Trish Ward, our Constitution and Bylaws Chairman. Trish, please come to the podium. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WARD: Madam President Nicole, NEC members, good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN WARD: The Code of Ethical Conduct Special Committee was specifically tasked to evaluate, review, and revise the Code of Ethical Conduct as outlined in the Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary's national governing documents. The Committee is comprised of nine members, who retain various legal, compliance, ethics, and investigative process expertise along with three members who have core institutional knowledge about the American Legion Auxiliary and its structure. The Committee has met regularly, generally, weekly via a virtual platform with three

subcommittees formed to address and review the following areas: Indiana Non-profit Code 23-17; ethics inquiry, complaint, and process; outcomes, to include possible penalties, censure, suspension, and removal from the Board.

Additionally, the work has focused on understanding the composition, gaps, and structure of the existing code; identifying to whom the code should apply; developing a process for intake of complaints, investigation of violations, and suitable outcomes, which may require a formulation of additional standing committees to address complaints; communication structure and notification guidelines; recommendations for any consideration to mitigate organizational risk; align the American Legion Auxiliary to current and applicable non-profit ethics and behavior standards.

The Committee has determined that there are gaps present in the existing code that will likely require governing document revisions and possibly revisions to the Articles of Incorporation. Upon review, it was discovered that the American Legion Auxiliary's Articles of Incorporation have not been revised since 1934. Current law and various items relating to standard business and operating practices and procedures have determined that, at minimum, a review of the articles for possible amendment is warranted.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I think that's an understatement.

CHAIRMAN WARD: Other recommendations include, but are not limited to: consideration of the ALA to retain outside legal counsel for a full review of the Articles of Incorporation and to potentially serve as an independent investigative source when certain named individuals are involved in a complaint or investigation; ALA National Whistleblower Policy expansion, to include complaints other than fraud; consideration of establishment of a continuously serving Ethics Committee comprised of seven members, who potentially serve on two subcommittees: Inquiry Investigation, three members; and Outcomes, three members with a Chairman, who would serve in an ex officio capacity.

These Committees would be responsible for receiving, reviewing, and investigating complaints along with determining appropriate outcomes and disciplinary action, if necessary; work that has been completed, research on other non-profit ethics codes and process; research on Indiana Non-profit Code; draft version of flowchart and step process for complaint receipt, review, investigation, trial, and penalty phases.

Next steps: create a formal proposal to leadership and finance to outline the rationale and secure funding for retaining outside legal counsel in the fall of 2021; prepare a formal proposal to the NEC for consideration of recommendations, February 2022; review governing documents and prepare formal amendments as required in the 2021-2022 administrative year.

The expectation is the Committee will proceed with formal recommendations in the 2021-2022 administration to the NEC. The proposal will include a comprehensive outline of required items to formalize the new code of ethical conduct, articulating its scope and process, along with appropriate integration into the ALA's governing documents.

Madam President, this concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Trish. I think those two Committees deserve a round of applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: There's a lot of steps, there's a lot of processes but it gives us a path and a course so that we know we will have a true north as I think as we go forward. And I think a unanimous consent that we need the Constitution and Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation reviewed, please.

(Applause.)

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. That will be on the agenda, Madam President Kathy. Okay. Before we close out, we would like to hear from our Foundation Board President Dory Hammeke for some upcoming fundraising updates. Oh, yes. I'm sorry.

MS. MARTIN: Madam President, Penny Martin (phonetic), (indiscernible). I was just wondering if we could get copies of those two reports. But I think it will come fast and then --

PRESIDENT CLAPP: There's a lot of information, big words and a lot of numbers. I think that could be sent out after the convention. Would -- staff, can we put that on the agenda list, please? Thank you and I think that's a great idea. As we know information, dissension is important, so cascading that information down is what we will ask of all of you. Thank you. The floor is yours, Dory.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: All right. Thanks. Good morning, friends.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. HAMMEKE: The Foundation has been pretty busy creating some new opportunities and revenue streams to help fund the programs that support our veterans, military, and their families. And we're excited to share a few of those with you that will be here at the national convention. So this year, we have partnered with Kendra Scott, which is a beautiful jewelry line for a Kendra Scott Gives Back event. This is a virtual shopping event and with Kendra Scott, where 20 percent of your purchase on Monday and Tuesday only will be donated to the Foundation when you use the code GIVEBACK-1FDI. I know you all remember that right. You'll see it. You don't have to be a member to shop, so be sure to share this with your family and friends back home.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Dorie, would you please repeat the code?

MS. HAMMEKE: Sure.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I think they're wanting to write it down. I see him scribbling quickly.

MS. HAMMEKE: Okay. It's Give Back, G-I-V-E-B-A-C-K dash 1, F as in Frank, D as in Dorie. 1.

VOICE: Is it the number one?

MS. HAMMEKE: The number one.

VOICE: Thank you, ma'am.

MS. HAMMEKE: Thank you for asking for that repetition. It tells me

we're going to raise a lot of money on this.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: One more time, Dorie. One more time.

MS. HAMMEKE: Okay.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: One more time.

MS. HAMMEKE: Ready? GIVEBACK, G-I-V-E-B-A-C-K dash the number one, the letter F-D-I.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All caps?

MS. HAMMEKE: Yes, all caps.

Okay. I'm glad that you guys asked for us to repeat that, because it tells me we're going to have a lot of jewelry shoppers here. All right. It's never too early to get a jump start on that Christmas list, so be ready for that. We're also going to be hosting our first ever silent auction, which is sponsored by Lands' End Business. Bidding starts Monday morning and will end Wednesday evening. The entire auction will take place online so anybody can participate from Phoenix or home, but we will have all of the items available to look at at the state's dinner on Wednesday starting at 6:00 p.m. So be sure to stick around till the end, where the winners will be announced. And don't worry, we will ship, so bid on those things that you really want.

And lastly, one of our fan favorites, Kelly has already mentioned this earlier, is Giving Tuesday. We're going to have our Giving Tuesday booth set up Monday through Wednesday before and after each general session. I want you to be sure and stop by and make a donation. I knew this year is our Wall of Honor or, I'm sorry, our Wall of Heroes.

After you make a donation, you can add your hero to the wall to honor a veteran or service member. We have this huge goal of raising \$20,000 over the next three days, and I know we can do it. I've been in sales my whole life. I know that if you don't ask, you don't get. So I'm asking, help me out here. Okay. I know you probably feel like I just tossed out a bunch of information all at once but don't worry. It will be found on your convention app and the Kendra Scott code, that silent auction website, the Giving Tuesday donation form, all of that will be on there. Okay. So be sure to check it out. Join in on all the fun. Without you, we wouldn't be able to do what we do, so we're so grateful and I thank you for that.

(Applause.)

MS. SEELEY: Can I ask a question?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes.

MS. SEELEY: Can you please give me the location of where the Giving Tuesday booth is going to be? Again, I missed that.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It's outside of our convention hall 4 and 5.

MS. SEELEY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes, Betty.

MS. SLAGLE: Betty Slagle, Department of Indiana. You said the Kendra Scott --

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Kendra Scott.

MS. SLAGLE: -- is going to be on Monday and Tuesday --

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes.

MS. SLAGLE: -- this week?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes.

MS. SLAGLE: We need to get that out on Facebook right --

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It has been and it's everywhere, bullet point blasted everywhere, and it has been for about a month.

MS. SLAGLE: This is first I had seen it.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes. For about a month, yep. So now, we've got curiosity up. So Kendra Scott, and you will see some of it on Monday. Just a little teaser. All right. Is there any new business to come before the NEC today? All right. I've got some announcements for us. First of all, we are 20 minutes ahead of schedule.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So that will give you time to wander to your pre-con meetings that start at 10:00. I know the building is a bit confusing. My pages have our maps, so we're walking as you are too to just keep looking at signage. All right. So check your agenda for the room that you want to attend. There will be the typical placards outside the room for those meetings, and realize that Constitution and Bylaws is this afternoon at 1 o'clock, and that is in our large meeting room. So where we have our convention Grand Hall, the exhibit hall, 4 and 5. So when you asked about where the Giving Tuesday booth will be, you will see the backdrop. Okay, Glynis. Then your division caucuses will start at 3 o'clock. Again, check your agendas for your specific locations. The division vice presidents are ready, we have prepared for them a standard agenda as well as their own twist to it how they would like to have it make it personal, but our goal is that we try to keep it as consistent on time as possible. Through the years, I've seen some that run 20 minutes, I've seen some that run two hours and being respectful of everyone's time. So we will make sure that the VPs, are you set? You're all set. Okay. We'll make sure that we have a copy for Ruth. We'll make sure we have a copy for you, Ruth, of the agenda. Not a problem. And Kathy is asking that the incoming national division VP, so 21-22 candidates to, her quote is "hang out here for a few minutes to meet with me." Okay. Then I promised you, we were going to celebrate. Everywhere I went, I said how many people get to celebrate their hundredth birthday for two whole years straight. Well, we're celebrating this week, because the candle's going to burn out pretty quick. We're down the days here, folks. So Monday, how many of you have signed up for a breakout session? How many are going to a painting party? How many would like to go to a painting party? We have seven slots still available as of last night. So if you're interested in painting, learning how to paint a poppy picture. These are the things that I dreamt about for about four years. I wanted us to do the business, the work we needed to do, and party and celebrate all the other time. So we will have a painting party, and I need to thank Marge Christianson and the unit here in Phoenix. They do painting for her as a healing project for female veterans, so they'll be helping us. All right.

So that's a painting party option on Monday afternoon, and there's a second session for painting at 5 o'clock that evening, because we've had such interest. There is also in the afternoon -- those of you recall when I've said I read those 13 inches of hardbound books to learn our history. Well, we're

putting your trivia knowledge to work. There are trivia games and prizes. That is a breakout session of our ALA 100 years of trivia.

And the third breakout is near and dear to my heart. I cannot thank the Departments enough who had me ski down a mountain, learn to kayak, learn to golf, learn -- oh, my goodness, everything we did with the adaptive sports, to learn without -- walk with that a prosthetic leg was the first one in Colorado, at Aurora at the new VA Medical Center. So Dawna Callahan, who you met at DLNC, which seems a long time ago back in May of '19. She will be on site. She will talk to us about veterans and activities. And oh, by the way, the Paralympics are going on in Tokyo, so you'll have a watch party. All right. Then I would be remiss, and I am saving the best for last. Tuesday afternoon, where is everyone going to be at 2:30 on Tuesday afternoon? The fashion show. The PNPs are ready. They have been working for two years on this. And now, they're going to look at me like I'm setting them up.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I still have to get voted in to be a PNP, so we'll see. So the ALA showcase of fashion will commence at 2:30 on Tuesday afternoon in the convention hall, so there is no reason you need to register, there is plenty of space. Please tell all your friends, your spouses, everyone to come and see, especially her and Hobbs.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Those are the two I had to kind of put a little guilt trip on. Look at her -- she's about as red as her hair.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So as I said, we laugh, we fun, we have fun and fellowship and, you know, I smiled from the beginning and I'm going to smile to the very end, and that's what this is all about. So as we close out this morning, I want to make sure that on your chairs also there was a manila envelope for the 2021-22 NECs members. If you are that person, keep that packet. If you are not that individual, because I think it looked like about half of you raised your hand that we will be switching, I would appreciate you giving that to your successor. So they are prepared for Kathy's post-NEC meeting next Thursday. All right. I think that is all we have. Are there any other questions before we have our closing benediction? Yes. Deb?

MS. KNICKERBOCKER: Knickerbocker from Department of Connecticut. I want to commend your technology equipment on the national app is absolutely awesome.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Good. Does everybody know how to get to their app? Have they signed up for the app? Okay. So staff, we've got a couple minutes. Can we tell them how to get to the app? I have it on my phone. I don't know how I got there, but it was a couple of weeks ago. Sam? Sam's going to tell you how to get there.

MS. CAUDILL: Okay. So there was a QR code that was in the -- whoever picked up your packet that had all the information on how to download the app. And you literally just scan that QR code and it'll download straight to your phone. So probably your convention secretary probably has that information.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So in your bag that you got when you registered with your department.

MS. CAUDILL: Yeah. So the convention secretary who picked up, there's one copy of that, or you can head down to the office and we can help you there too.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So that's how I knew we were 20 minutes ahead. All right. If there's no other business to come before the meeting, we will ask Past National Chaplain Rosemarie Hauck to offer our benediction this morning.

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, with heads bowed, we bring this National Executive Committee meeting to a close. We thank you, Lord, that you have been with us throughout this meeting and that you are with us right now. Please inspire us as we leave this place to love and serve you, veterans, active military, and their families always. Please bless each of us as we go forth in our various meetings today, remembering our aims and purposes. We ask this in your mighty wonderful name. Amen

VOICES: Amen.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Amen. I now announce that the NEC for 2021 has come to a close. I want to thank you, again, for your dedication and hard work all of your loving supports. It has been a pleasure to lead the NEC for the past two years. It is adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 9:15 a.m., the above-entitled meeting concluded.)

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021

VOICEOVER: Good morning and welcome to celebrating our 100th National Convention focused on our future the 2021 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. Please rise as the Department Colors are advanced, followed by the National Colors.

(Music.)

VOICEOVER: Please welcome your National President from the Department of Iowa, Nicole Clapp.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Welcome to Phoenix.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And the American Legion Auxiliary's 100th National Convention, finally.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It is so great to be with you in person. And those of you that couldn't be with us, I'm waving to you on the live stream of our convention. We have all been through a lot, but that hasn't stopped us from fulfilling our mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. And for that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I want to say -- I want to introduce you,

that was my cousin. He is a Rear Admiral in the United States Coast Guard, Todd Wiemers.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: What a day for us to remember. You recall as I said on my travels, how many people get to celebrate their 100th birthday for two whole years straight? Here's our birthday party. Now this morning -- you can be seated. We have a very, very, very special treat for you. Voices of Service is the singing quartet which includes retired Master Sergeant Caleb Green, retired Staff Sergeant Ron Henry, Sergeant Major Christal Rheams, and retired Sergeant First Class Jason Hannah.

Voices of Service uses their platform to increase awareness of what music can do for servicemen and women who are coping with post-traumatic stress and other invisible and visible wounds. They are under the umbrella, CAMMO, a nonprofit that focuses on music and wellness. Voices of Service has been singing together for eight years, and their journey and purpose has now reached a new dimension. After their successful competition in Season 14 of America's Got Talent, placing fifth. Yes, they have been able to create national awareness about the struggles our veterans, military, and their family's face as they go through and dealing with those visible and invisible injuries. Let's take a look.

(Video played.)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Oh. The Voices of Service.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Oh. They blew me away last time.

MR. COWELL: Welcome back, guys.

MS. RHEAMS: Thank you.

MR. COWELL: Okay. Well, let's start because we have a new audience. Please introduce yourselves.

MR. GREEN: Good evening. Master Sergeant Caleb Green, United States Army retired.

(Applause.)

MR. HANNA: I am Jason Leon Hannah. Sergeant First Class United States Army active duty.

MS. RHEAMS: I'm Sergeant Major Christal Rheams, United States Army active duty.

(Applause.)

MR. HENRY: I'm Staff Sergeant retired Ron Henry, United States Army, and we are Voices of Service.

MR. COWELL: Fantastic.

MS. RHEAMS: We go into hospitals using music to inspire those veterans on a recovery journey. But personally, we all have suffered our share of traumatic experiences.

MR. HENRY: I got back from Iraq in 2004. It took me 10 years to realize that I had PTSD. And in my mind, I'm still not right.

MS. RHEAMS: You can't do it alone, and music can help all of us heal. We're here to spread that message to everybody.

MR. HENRY: It's so gratifying to be with my voice, to help other people

get through what they've been through.

MS. RHEAMS: Getting to the Dolby Theatre would be wonderful, so we need to get there, we need to be there.

ALL: Yes.

MR. HENRY: We are ready. I know that we've helped people. And that to me, that's what I live for every day.

(Video ends.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: They represent the excellence that exists within our military and veteran communities and are an inspiring example for our nation that they continue to serve after and during, through their music. Please give a warm Auxiliary welcome to Voices of Service.

MS. RHEAMS: Thank you, American Legion Auxiliary family. It's so wonderful to be here with you today.

VOICES: (Singing.) I won't just survive. Oh, you will see me thrive. Can't write my story. I'm beyond the archetype. I won't just conform. No matter how you shake my core. My roots, they run deep. Oh, ye of so little faith. Don't doubt it, don't doubt it. Victory is in my veins. I know it, I know it. And I will not negotiate. I'll fight it, I'll fight it. I will transform. And when, when the fire's at my feet again, and the vultures all start circling, whispering, you're out of time. But still I rise. This is no mistake, no accident. When you think the final nail is in, think again. Don't be surprised, I will still rise. I must stay conscious through the madness and chaos. I call on my angels. Oh, ye of so little faith. Don't doubt it, don't doubt it. Victory is in my veins. I know it, I know it. And I will not negotiate. I'll fight it, I'll fight it. I will transform. Oh, ye of so little faith. Don't doubt it, don't doubt it. Victory is in my veins. I know it, I know it. And I will not negotiate. I'll fight it, I'll fight it. I will transform. And when, when the fire's at my feet again, and the vultures all start circling and whispering, you're out of time but still, I rise. This is no mistake, no accident. When you think the final nail is in, think again. Don't be surprised. I will still rise. Rise. Rise. Rise. You're out of time but still, I rise.

(Applause.)

MS. RHEAMS: Thank you. So that was a song that took us into the finals and we're so happy, again, to be here with you for your 101st year; am I correct?

VOICE: Yes.

MS. RHEAMS: It's your 100th Convention but your 101st year; is that correct?

VOICES: Yes.

MS. RHEAMS: Happy 101. You look great.

VOICES: (Singing.) You walk with me, footprints in the sand and help me understand where I'm going. You walk with me when I was all alone with so much unknown along the way. Then I heard you say, I promise you. I'm always there when your heart is filled with sorrow and despair. And I'll carry you when you need a friend, you'll find my footprints in the sand. I see my life flash across the sky, so many times that I've been so afraid, so afraid. And just when I, I thought I lost my way. You gave me strength to carry on. I

promise you, I'm always there when your heart is filled with sorrow and despair. And I'll carry you when you need a friend, you'll find my footprints in the sand. When I'm weary, I know you hear me, and I can feel you when you say, I promise you. I promise you. I'm always there when your heart is filled with sadness and despair. And despair. I'll carry you when you need a friend, you'll find my footprints in the sand. When your heart is filled with sadness and despair. I'll carry you when you need a friend, you'll find my footprints in the sand.

(Applause.)

MR. HENRY: Thank you so much. Let's have some fun. Let's go with it.

MS. RHEAMS: All right now. It might be early in the morning but we want to get you all moving a little bit. How about that?

VOICES: Yeah.

MS. RHEAMS: Oh yeah. Come on. This is supposed to be a birthday party, right? Come on.

VOICES: (Singing.) Yeah.

Na-na-na-na. Na-na-na-na. Hey. Come on. Na-na-na-na. Oh, yeah.

MR. HENRY: Turn up a little bit of music.

VOICES: (Singing.) Come on, come on. Put your hands together. Everybody sing. Put your hands together. Come on, y'all now. Put your hands together. Hey. And let us pray. Na-na-na-na. Yeah. We've got to pray for all the brothers under thine hand. Pray for all the sisters doing the best that they can. We got to pray that tomorrow will be brighter day to come, yeah. We got to put our forces together. Together. Sing a song so loud, so fair like the birds in the trees hum along with me. Sweet, sweet harmony. Let it thunder. Let it lightning, let it rain. Let it rain. 'Cause we're gonna sing glory hallelujah so the whole wide world can hear. Come on, y'all, now. Put your hands together. (Indiscernible) to y'all. Put your hands together. Come on. What we do. Put your hands together. Hey, hey. And let us pray. We got to pray for all the people who are sleeping in the street. Pray for all the people who don't have enough to eat. We gotta pray that tomorrow will be a brighter day to come. Yeah, yeah. We got to put our voices together. Well, well, well. Sing a song so loud, so fair like the birds in the trees hum along with me. Sweet, sweet harmony. Let it thunder. Let it lightning, let it rain. Let it rain. 'Cause we're gonna sing glory hallelujah so the whole wide world can hear. Yeah. Come on, come on. Put your hands together (indiscernible) to y'all. Put your hands together. Come on. What we do. Put your hands together and let us pray. 'Cause we're gonna sing, you're gonna sing right now. Glory hallelujah. Hallelujah. Yeah.

MR. HENRY: American Legion Auxiliary. Can I hear somebody scream?

(Applause.)

VOICES: Come on. We're gonna sing. We're gonna sing. Yeah. Hallelujah. Yeah. Gonna tell like it is.

MR. HENRY: So American Legion Auxiliary.

MR. GREEN: Come on, Ron.

MR. HENRY: I want you to always stand in courage. I want you to always keep doing what you're doing. And I want you to --

VOICES: (Singing.) Come on, come on. Come on, come on. Come on, come on. Come on, come on. Come on, come on. Come on, hey, come on. Come on, come on. Come on, come on. Come on. Put your hands together. (Indiscernible) to y'all. Put your hands together. Come on. What we do. Put your hands together. Hey, hey. And let us pray. Tell the world. Tell the whole world right now (indiscernible). Put your hands together. Come on. Let me hear you. Put your hands together. Everybody sing. Put your hands together. Hey. And let us pray. In the back over there. Put your hands. Put your hands together. Let me sing y'all. (Indiscernible) to y'all. Put your hands together. Come on. What we do. Put your hands together. Hey, hey and let us pray. (Indiscernible). Come on now. Put your hands together. Come on in the middle. Let me hear now. Put your hands together. Puerto Rico, let me hear you sing. Put your hands together. Come on, hey, and let us pray. Delaware. Put your hands together. Tennessee. Florida. Put your hands together. (Indiscernible). Come on y'all. Put your hands together. Indiana. And let us pray. Come on now. Come on, Indiana. Let me hear you. Put your hands together. Everyone (indiscernible), let me hear you scream. Put your hands together. Ohio. Put your hands together. New Jersey. And let us pray. What about the (indiscernible). Put your hands, put your hands together. (Indiscernible). Everybody sing. Put your hands together. Come on, come on sing. Put your hands together. (Indiscernible), you gotta. Everyone, I want to hear you. Let us pray. One more time. Put your hands together. Everybody sing. Put your hands together. One more time sing. Put your hands together. Everybody. And let us pray.

(Applause.)

MR. HENRY: American Legion Auxiliary, we love you. Thank you.

MR. HANNAH: Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

MS. RHEAMS: Thank you. So it's such a pleasure to be here. Thank you for welcoming us with open arms. We're so happy to be here, and so now, we'd like to end our program with something special to all of us. And we'd also like to invite Nicole Clapp up to the stage, please.

(Applause.)

MS. RHEAMS: There she is. And so we'd like to close, and we'd like to invite everybody to stand and sing with us, this wonderful version of God Bless America. Happy 101 to all the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

VOICES: (Singing.) God bless America, land that I love. Stand beside her and guide her through the night with the light from above. From the mountains to the prairies, to the oceans white with foam. God bless America, my home sweet home. God bless America, my home sweet home.

(Applause.)

MR. HENRY: American Legion Auxiliary, we love you.

MR. HANNAH: Thank you so much.

MR. HENRY: Let me hear you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Everybody, how about those clap. That was Voices of Service. Get your clappers out.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

VOICEOVER: Decades of making a difference.

(Music.)

VOICE: (Singing.) We've been to both Carolinas. Seen a big Montana sky. Driven up and down the coast a few times.

(Music.)

VOICEOVER: Ladies and gentlemen, the 100th American Legion Auxiliary National Convention will resume shortly as we reset the stage and prepare for our business meeting.

(Music.)

VOICEOVER: For 100 years, we've been working together with The American Legion to serve veterans, military and their families, were truly a fascinating story. Looking back, the clothes, the hairstyles, the cars we drove may look different, but there is one thing that has never changed. It's within the hearts of millions of members who have belonged to the American Legion Auxiliary since our founding in 1919. The legacy of our bond is our steadfast commitment to helping veterans, military and their families, and communities through unwavering service. Let's take a look.

(Video played.)

VOICEOVER: The roaring 20s brought us talking movies and Charles Lindbergh's first solo flight across the Atlantic. During this decade, membership in the American Legion Auxiliary was also taking off. In 1921, the ALA held its first National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Delegates elected Edith Hobart of Ohio as the Auxiliary's first National President. She wasted no time setting the groundwork for a national hospital system for veterans. Her leadership was relentless and she met the challenge with an eye to the future.

MS. HOBART: The hope I have is that this past year may be but a stepping stone over which a great edifice may be built. I leave with you my earnest prayer to carry on.

VOICEOVER: And to carry on, we did. The Poppy Program became a national program in 1924. And in 1925, the National Headquarters was moved to the War Memorial Plaza in Indianapolis. In the 1930s, the roar of the 20s was silenced by the beginning of the Great Depression. Though the stock market collapsed, the Auxiliary grew stronger. In 1935, a national radio program, the American Legion Auxiliary On the Air began. Junior Membership was established in 1934 and the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program launched in 1937. The 40s will forever be remembered for World War II and the important roles women served as the war reached on, the American Legion Auxiliary fought for veterans and their families. In 1944, the Auxiliary created a program for the rehabilitation of disabled veterans. Just three years later, in 1947, ALA members launched the first American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation held in Washington, D.C., and we

have continued every year since. The delayed dreams of the warriors were followed by the boom years of the 1950s. The greatest generation settled into new suburbs and gave rise to baby boomers. The need for our health continued as 6.8 million active-duty men and women served our nation during the Korean War years. The turbulent 60s tested America's character as the Vietnam War divided the nation. A young President John F. Kennedy urged us to ask what you can do for your country, and we did. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund was established in 1969. The same year, man first walked on the moon. Since then, it has provided more than \$6 million in critical relief to over 6,500 American Legion Auxiliary members. In the 70s, the Vietnam War ended and reopened our own museum at National Headquarters, the cavalcade of memories to preserve our history. The 1980s and 90s, saw women advance like never before with the nation seeing its first female Supreme Court Justice, first female U.S. Secretary of State and the first woman in space. The Auxiliary advanced to we stepped up our presence in Washington, D.C. to advocate for veteran's rights with The American Legion. During the years that followed, the horror of terrorism shattered our feelings of security. In 1995, hundreds were injured and killed during the Oklahoma City bombing, and on September 11th, 2001, as Legion and Auxiliary National Leaders were meeting with members of Congress in the U.S. Capitol, the deadliest attacks ever against the USA killed over 3,000 people in New York City and Washington, D.C. Yet those events also brought out the best in many Americans, inspiring a new rise in patriotism and service, and the American Legion Auxiliary was there, donating money and time to various 9/11 relief efforts. And we were there for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and established a scholarship endowment fund for the children of military personnel. In 2000, the Auxiliary became involved with the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, helping veterans heal through the therapeutic benefits of organ music. We now co-present the event with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. We formed our own foundation in 2007 to help ensure our financial future and support our mission of service. Since the foundation was established, hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants have been awarded to ALA entities and programs, and more than a million dollars has been donated to our mission endowment funds. The 2010s, leading to our 100th anniversary, will be remembered for adopting long-term plans to secure our organization's mission outreach. Our use of technology led to a vastly improved website with useful resources from members and the public, mobile device newsletters, and online membership renewals. We ramped up communication through social media and won awards for our revamped Auxiliary magazine. We also purchased our own building, a distinct all-brick facility, located on the northwest side of Indianapolis. A level of everything ALA is found throughout the building, showcasing our organization's rich history and strong mission that's ready to take on the next century. We may have changed addresses, but our focus on the mission is steadfast now and for years to come. Our ALA Foundation and its Board of Directors began assisting departments and units, awarding much needed grants for grassroots mission-related projects, while our Poppy Program continued to generate

more than \$2 million per year to assist veterans and active-duty military. We also stepped up our efforts, helping with The American Legion junior shooting sports, oratorical contest, and Legion baseball. Closing out the decade was a major change in American Legion Auxiliary membership. We voted to change the wording in our membership requirements to be reactive to any changes made by The American Legion affecting the ALA. The word "wife" was replaced with "spouse" in the Legion's Constitution and Bylaws section regarding the American Legion Auxiliary's membership eligibility. Opening up the doors for ALA membership to spouses of our female veterans, men are now allowed to join the ALA. This change in eligibility has much promise for growth, leading to new resources, increased funding opportunities, and additional diversity and talent among American Legion Auxiliary membership to serve more mission activities for veterans, military, and their families.

Yes. As times have changed, the American Legion Auxiliary has become more relevant now than ever. We're constantly evolving and improving because what we do matters. It's an exciting time to be a part of the American Legion Auxiliary. Join us. Donate your time, talent, and treasure, become part of our century of service not self, where the phrase is so much more than a tagline. It's our story. It's who we are, and it's the reason we've made a difference in the lives of those we proudly served for 100 years and counting.

(Music.)

VOICE: (Singing.) My love must be a kind of blind love. I can't see anyone but you. Are the stars out tonight? I don't know if it's cloudy or bright? I only have eyes for you, dear. The moon may be high, but I can't see a thing in the sky 'cause I only have eyes for you. I don't know if we're in a garden.

(Music.)

VOICEOVER: Welcome back to celebrating our 100th National Convention focused on our future. The 2021 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. Here to begin our business meeting is your National President Nicole Clapp.

(Applause.)

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The 100th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will now come to order.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Before we begin our opening ceremonies, I would like everyone to please make sure your electronic devices have been placed on the silent mode. Thank you. Our National Chaplain Mary Anne Casadei is unable to be with us. Past National Chaplain Rosemarie Hauck will lead us in prayer.

(Ringing of the bell.)

CHAPLAIN HAUCK: Let us pray. Oh God, as we start this day, we thank you. We thank you as President Nicole opens our 100th National Convention. We thank you for giving us the blessing of being able to come together again. Guide us, lead us, help us to be here with our friends and our

fellow members. Bless our President as she leads us in conducting the business of the American Legion Auxiliary. We are here for the greater good of our organization and ourselves. We thank you, oh God, for the many blessings You have bestowed upon us. Please continue to look on us with favor and let us use that energy or strength for God and country. Amen.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Rosemarie. Please remain standing as Denise Conrad, National Americanism Chairman, leads us in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the singing of our National Anthem led by Voices of Service, and finally, the reciting of the Preamble to the Constitution, led by the National Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, Trish Ward. Denise, please lead us.

MS. CONRAD: Please raise your right hand.

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. WARD: 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 all 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 CLAPP: Voices of Service, please.

VOICES: (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.)

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It is now my honor this morning to present the 2019-2021 National Officers of the American Legion Auxiliary. National Historian Peggy Monroe, Tennessee. Central Division National Vice President Ruth Gott from Michigan. Eastern Division National Vice President Carolyn Baranowski from Massachusetts. Northwest Division National Vice President Rhonda Larkowski from Colorado. Southern Division National Vice President Noemi Burgos de Paneto from Puerto Rico. Western Division National Vice President Cheryl Park from Oregon. National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir from Illinois. National Secretary Linda Boone from Oregon. National Vice President Kathy Daudistel from Kentucky. And I'm also pleased to welcome our special guests, National Headquarters

Executive Director, we have Kelly Circle and our Professional Registered Parliamentarian Chris Dickey.

Well, good morning. As I said earlier, we finally made it. Welcome to Phoenix. I almost said Welcome to Louisville. I am so excited that we are all together to finally celebrate our very special 100th and yes, as Voices of Service reminds us of our 101st, birthday. It's hard to believe that it's been two years since I stood on this stage just like this one to be installed as your 100th National President. For those of you that follow me on social media, you know those last 24 months have been a bit of a rollercoaster at times. I've experienced amazing opportunities, unforgettable experiences, and some unexpected challenges I'd have to say. But look at us now, we have overcome. The light at the end of the tunnel is as bright as that Phoenix sun.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes, you have your clappers. That was an idea from Iowa. I wonder where they got the idea. Nicole Clapp. We're all here together and we're ready to celebrate. I can feel the energy coming from all of you this morning. As I have worked with my team on planning our national convention, we focused on making sure every piece of this event had an element of celebration. So get ready because we have packed so much into the next few days with the events you won't want to miss. Be sure to join us for the public Spirit Award luncheon today, where we will be celebrating the Verardo family, and the wonderful book you've seen me been promoting for two years: Hero at Home. And tomorrow, we will have our ALA showcase of fashion, where we will visit the past by showcasing the fashion of the decades. And if we're talking about fashion, we need to talk about jewelry, of course. I am getting quite a few compliments on the Kendra Scott necklace and earrings that I have been wearing today as a teaser for all of you, as a commercial, to remember to go online and 20 percent of the proceeds from the Kendra Scott purchases will be donated back to the ALA Foundation. So jump online or visit her in the Scottsdale store and make your purchases today. Make sure you use the special code, as you see on the screen, GIVEBACK-1FDI. Now this afternoon, we took a page out of our Iowa book. We have a diva and dude's day of events, featuring a poppy painting party, an ALA trivia game event, and something I'm super excited about, the veterans adaptive sports watch party for the Paralympians, who are competing right now in Tokyo. We've got a lot of celebrating to do. So nothing else, let's get started.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Please join me in welcoming this year's National Convention appointees. My National Presidents pages: Ann Crawford.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Mary Sebben.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Michele Long.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And Chairman Ann Rehbein.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And now for greetings from some very special people, please welcome the Arizona Department President Patricia, or I know her as Patsy, Lugo.

(Applause.)

VOICE: (Singing.) I love you, Arizona. Desert dust on the wind.

MS. LUGO: Good morning, Madam National President Nicole, National Officers, delegates, alternates, and guests. On behalf of the 14,000 Auxiliary members of the Department of Arizona, welcome to the beautiful Grand Canyon state.

(Applause.)

MS. LUGO: The state of Arizona last hosted National Convention in 2008. It's so nice to see many familiar faces, and we look forward to meeting many new friends during your stay. If this is your first time here, I hope you take a little time to visit Arizona, as there are many interesting and educational landmarks to explore. There is the Grand Canyon, one of the biggest attractions in America. Standing on the ruin, peering over the endless ridges of colorful cliff walls and deep ravines. There is beautiful Sedona, known for its stunning red rocks. Old Tucson, where John Wayne filmed quite a few films in Old Tucson Studios. And Lake Havasu, known for its world-famous London Bridge, just to name a few. The members of our department and the Arizona community would like to extend our friendly hospitality to everyone. Thank you for coming, be safe, and enjoy your convention. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Please welcome our National Convention Chairman, Penny Maklary.

VOICE: (Singing.) By the time I get to Phoenix, she'll be rising. She'll find the note I left hanging on her door.

CHAIRMAN MAKLARY: Madam National President Nicole, dignitaries, guests, and all Auxiliary members assembled. Arizona and Phoenix extends to each of you a very warm welcome with no pun intended and the blessings are it could be hotter and it's a dry heat. So from the forest and the Grand Canyon to the north, the Petrified Forest and Rim Country to the east, the deserts of the West, and the national border to the south. We are so thrilled and excited to be hosting the Celebratory National Convention. Arizona has become the second fastest growing state with dramatic landscapes, unique vegetation, and fantastic weather. It's notably called the "Grand Canyon State" and it has transformed from wagon wheel ruts to become a melting pot of ideals, mixed with traditions of Old West values as people make Arizona their new home. Added to this, we have an annual snowbird population for about six months, but yes, truly some of us are Arizonians. Arizona, one of the four corner states, has numerous national wonders. It has 21 Native American nations. It is the new home of the reconstructed London Bridge in Lake Havasu City. It has the world's largest solar telescope at Kitt Peak. And the Arizona Capitol Building roof is equal to the copper content of 4,800,000 pennies. Last but not the least, the first McDonald's franchise was sold to a local, Neil Fox. Desert charm combines

with the cosmopolitan city field to create Phoenix. It's Arizona's capital and the fifth most populous United States city. Phoenix is filled with, yes, golf course, spas, four major sports teams, the NBA Suns and Arizona Diamondbacks played just down the street from Convention Center, performing arts venues, music museums, parks, botanical gardens, a zoo, boutiques, renowned restaurants, and yes, Mexican food. There is plenty to do both indoors and outdoors. Phoenix really does have something for everyone, and we encourage you to explore Phoenix and the adjacent communities of Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe, and others. Each is a unique community that offers many diverse activities and attractions. Now, please remember to stay hydrated. Please remember to stay hydrated. We cannot say this enough. Now, it is my definite pleasure to introduce to you the dedicated Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the local committees, who reside throughout the state, and are more than eager and waiting to assist your needs whenever possible. Well, again, except with the heat, hopefully, they make your attendance special. Please hold your applause until all have been introduced.

First, we have Vice Chairman, a dual member, Air Force veteran and my extra hand and brain sometimes, Jerry Strandy (phonetic). Local page Chairman Maggie Montijo, Vice Chairman Jeanie Magoy (phonetic), Mailroom Chairman Dolores Chaves, Vice Chairman Phyllis Kennedy, flowers and corsage Chairman Paula Burgess, Vice Chairman Donna Aronoff, and the National President's driver Rebecca Ruiz, and the alternate driver Stephanie McMullan.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MAKLARY: Now, hopefully we are easy to locate with our Convention attire as you see, our fiesta scarves, our swirl pins, and our friendly nature to assist. Now, as you noticed, local pages are located throughout the Convention Center for answers to your questions and gentle guidance when needed. We encourage each of you to stop by the local committee office in rooms 104A and B and join our fiesta. We have surprises and gifts to share each day. We hold daily raffles for prizes, and we want to get acquainted with as many of you as possible. As you say, we will have the light on for you and we will be waiting. Now, as you can see, by the time we -- you got to Phoenix, we had been planning, not sleeping, and we were ready to move forward with the celebration. Madam National President Nicole, thank you so very much for accepting and trusting me to be the National Convention Chairman because of the COVID issue. I truly appreciate this opportunity. We thank you all for attending and wish each of you a successful, fun-filled national convention as we move into our 100th year as we focus on our future. This concludes my platform remarks.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Penny.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Finally, please welcome our 100th Anniversary Chairman, Past National President, who is better known as the "Queen of Diamonds", the 75th National President Linda Newsome.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. NEWSOME: Madam President. First things first. Madam President, may I first ask the Past National Presidents to please stand so you can recognize them. I can't see you, but somebody around you can. Thank you, Madam Presidents Past. Madam President, you have had a very unique term as National President, to say the least. You have had two years instead of one. You have not been able to travel outside the United States. You have had so many Zoom calls, you must feel as though you would never get to see a member in person. And yet, you have been innovative, cheerful, and able to perform as leader in this so uncommon year with the pandemic. And I certainly am not forgetting that your first year was supposed to be our 100th Anniversary celebration, but your spirits were not dashed. We just went into having two years of celebration instead of one, and this convention will certainly show that. Soon, you will officially be a Past President. However, the Past Presidents Association has not voted on you yet, so I don't know what's going to happen. I was going to suggest we vote today, but convention isn't over with. Just carry your checkbook with you. Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: As we have in the past, we, again, will be utilizing the electronic voting system. Your delegation chairmen should have already picked up your voting keypads before today's session began and each delegate should have a keypad. Remember, the Convention Standing Rule 16 states that voting keypads are not to be removed from the assembly hall and that each department's delegation chairman is responsible for all keypads issued to their department. It's pretty steep, Departments, you'll be charged a \$150 donation to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation endowment fund for each missing keypad. So be sure to count them before you turn them into the Elections Committee at the back of the room at the end of the day. We will be using the number one key for "yes" and the number two key for "no." If you choose to abstain from voting, simply do not push any key. If you press the wrong key on the keypad, wait a moment and press the correct number. The keypad will register only the last key pressed. Are we okay with the keypads? All right. We've done it a few years now.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, it's time to get down to business. Our first item of business this morning is the adoption of the reports which organize the convention. The credentials report will be presented by Credentials Chairman, Sandy Deacon from the Department of Iowa. Sandy.

CHAIRMAN DEACON: International President, the Credentials Committee met on Saturday, October 28th, 2021, and the following is our report.

Alabama 9, Alaska 8, Arizona 15, Arkansas 7, California 19, Colorado 10, Connecticut 9, Delaware 8, District of Columbia 6, Florida 32, Georgia 10, Hawaii 6, Idaho 7, Illinois 22, Indiana 33, Iowa 20, Kansas 13, Kentucky 11, Louisiana 9, Maine 10, Maryland 20, Massachusetts 10, Michigan 24, Minnesota 25, Mississippi 8, Missouri 12, Montana 8, Nebraska 18, Nevada 6, New Hampshire 12, New Jersey 12, New Mexico 9, New York 31.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DEACON: North Carolina 11, North Dakota 11, Ohio 31, Oklahoma 8, Oregon 11, Pennsylvania 44.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DEACON: Puerto Rico 7, Rhode Island 6, South Carolina 8, South Dakota 12, Tennessee 9, Texas 17.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DEACON: Utah 7.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DEACON: Vermont 10.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DEACON: Virginia 11, Washington 11, West Virginia 9, Wisconsin 21, Wyoming 8. For a total of 711.

Madam President, on behalf of the Credentials Committee, I move that the role of delegates hereby submitted be the official delegate allotment of this convention.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: 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 report of the Credentials Committee. All those in favor, press 1 on your voting keypad. Press 2, if you oppose, or do not press to abstain.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, and a streamer came right down at zero. There we go. So the results, please. The results, please. All right. The -- in the affirmative. Thank you very much. Thank you, Sandy. The convention credentials report is approved.

The Rules Chairman is Bev Copple, and she will present the proposed rules for the convention. Bev.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN COPPLE: The rules are printed on pages 24 and 25 of The American Legion Family Program. Madam National President, by direction of the Rules Committee, I move the adoption of the National Convention Rules for 2021, as printed.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of the National Convention Rules for 2021 as printed. Is there any discussion? All those in favor again, press 1 on your keypad. Those oppose, press 2.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Cornelius would like to have the results, please. In the affirmative. Thank you, Bev. The Convention Program is approved as printed.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: National Secretary Linda Boone will now give the program report. Linda.

SECRETARY BOONE: Good morning. Please refer to the agenda that was distributed to all of the delegation secretaries during registration. The delegation secretaries were charged with distributing this agenda to their delegates and alternates. I move the adoption of the agenda as printed with

changes -- any changes that are noted.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Is there a second?

VOICE: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Second is heard. The question is on the motion to adopt the program as printed with changes noted. Are you ready for the question? The question is on the motion to adopt the program with the printed or any changes noted. All those in favor press 1 on your keypad, 2 opposed.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Perfect timing with the music. The voting is now closed. Let's see the results. In the affirmative. And the Convention Program is adopted.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: By the adoption of these reports, the 100th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary is officially organized to conduct business.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And you probably think, this is pretty fitting for Nicole. Our first report, we will learn a lot about our juniors. After all, they are our future leaders. During this term, the ALA juniors were very, very busy. Here to tell us more is National Junior Activities Chairman Suzanne Knapp from Michigan.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: Madam President, good morning and what a morning it's been. The juniors have their sights set, the future is in sight, and their future is focused and very bright. Who could have known that a 4-year-old little girl who wanted to hand out a little red poppy would now be presiding over our National Convention as the 2019-2021 National President?

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: Our future is bright as we have a great group of young ladies ready, willing, and able to take this organization into the next 100 years. How many of you started out as a junior member? Look where you are today. Take the opportunity to mentor a junior member or mentor our junior group. This year, the ALA did a four-part webinar series for adult members on junior mentoring. The first one, getting started with juniors, the Junior Patch Program, Juniors and The American Legion Family, and Junior Meetings. The sessions were well received with good feedback on content. This has been a long time coming and the membership had great questions. We hope this stimulated more junior groups to become active and more senior members to embrace the youth of our organization, like these departments and units did. At the Department of New Mexico's Centennial Celebration, they paired their most senior member with the most years of service and their youngest junior member. Throughout New Mexico, many senior members offered to help at junior meetings. These senior members do a phenomenal job of mentoring the junior members. The juniors of New Mexico are flourishing as they endorsed the phrase, "The task ahead of you is never as great as the power behind you. Together united, we succeed."

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: One unit taught 18 youth, including four junior members, the history of the American Flag: when to fly it, where federal law mandates 24/7 display, and when and how to dispose of an American Flag. How to fold it, and the meaning behind each Flag, and the story behind the Betsy Ross star, and how to make one star with several folds of paper and just one snip of the scissors. They also got to practice folding the Flag themselves. All this was followed by food, games, and fellowship. One unit stated the following and I feel it is sound to repeat it. The American Legion family has an opportunity to teach our junior members about the Flag, instill in them an appreciation of Americanism, and develop in them a sense of patriotism. Perhaps some or most people might not understand what the Flag truly means to the active service member, the veteran, and the civilian, but there's no excuse for our own American Legion family youth not to understand. As proud members of the American Legion Auxiliary, it is our solemn responsibility to teach them. In 2019-2020, we held five National Junior meetings, one in each division. Juniors learned about adaptive sports and some even got to test out the equipment. This past year, we were not able to hold in-person National Junior meetings, so we had a virtual junior jamboree to bring our junior members together and have a little fun along with just letting friends see each other again. Although this was not the traditional meeting that we had all hoped to have, the juniors enjoyed the talk from Dawna Callahan, had fun with a virtual escape room, had a wiggle break, was singing coast to coast, and much, much more. This event gave the juniors the chance to again connect with other juniors across the country. We are hoping that junior meetings will be able to meet again in person soon.

And now, the moment that you have all been waiting for, the announcement of the 2021-2022 Honorary National Junior and Divisional Vice Presidents. The Central Division, unfortunately, had no candidate. The Eastern Division, and she doesn't know this yet, is Riley Meckley.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: The Northwestern Division is Emily Suess. Southern Division is Jasmine Harris.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: Western Division is Samantha Hook.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: Congratulations, ladies. We hope you enjoy serving. Madam President, this concludes my platform of remarks, but I would like to introduce our guests.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Go right ahead.

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: It is my privilege to introduce Riley Meckley, the 2019-2021 Junior Member of the Year from the Department of New York.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KNAPP: Riley has a longer resume of volunteer service and elected positions than many people I know. Just to name a few, she has been awarded the ALA Good Deed award, won The American Legion oratorical contest in her state, elected Honorary Junior Department President,

completed all junior mentor training sessions, sent over \$20,000 in coupons to military bases, attended Empire Girls State, and received the Presidential Volunteer Service Award, and many, many more accomplishments. She plans on continuing her involvement with the ALA throughout college and beyond. She also plans on serving in the Army Reserves. Please welcome the 2019-2021 Junior Member of the Year, Riley Meckley from the Department of New York.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MECKLEY: Thank you, Suzanne, for the kind welcome. The United States of America, it brings me great pride to say those words. More importantly, as a patriotic American, I am humbled by the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans, past and present, especially those in attendance today. I would personally like to say thank you for your service and sacrifice. I believe wholeheartedly in the mission of the ALA. It is in the spirit of service, not self, that I strive to honor veterans, the military, and their families. I do this through my actions, leadership, and volunteer activities. As a junior member of Unit 432 in Port Jefferson, New York, I am somewhat unique in that I was and I still am the first and the only junior member of my unit. Although --

(Applause.)

MS. MECKLEY: Thank you. Although, that has not stopped me from facing challenges with a unique perspective. Allow me to explain. During COVID, I collected and donated hundreds of books to veteran centers across the state, the nation, and abroad. This earned a National Good Deed award from the ALA. In addition, I cut, collected, and sent out over \$20,000 worth of coupons to U.S. military bases overseas. As a junior, there are many opportunities to show patriotism to our country. One way is through the oratorical contest about the U.S. Constitution. Through my participation these last two years, I have become quite proficient on the 27 Amendments and 7 Articles that make up our Constitution.

(Applause.)

MS. MECKLEY: I have advanced to the state finals each time. Juniors can also learn about government through Girls and Boys State. This summer at Girls State, I was elected to be the Girls Nation senator representing New York.

(Applause.)

MS. MECKLEY: Thank you. The first from my district and county to do so. While in D.C., I got to meet Nicole Clapp, and I would also like to recognize one of my counselors, Marge, who is here in the audience today.

(Applause.)

MS. MECKLEY: Marge is a dedicated member of the ALA and, in fact, she made me this poppy bracelet. Thank you, Marge, for making Girls Nation an amazing experience. It is certainly one I will never forget.

(Applause.)

MS. MECKLEY: No matter if your unit has one junior member or 50 junior members, there will always be opportunities to support the ALA. For

example, I am currently serving as the New York State Honorary Junior President. Today, I would like to acknowledge all the juniors from across this great nation who continue to serve the mission of the ALA through their own volunteer activities. I believe as juniors, we are the future of this organization.

(Applause.)

MS. MECKLEY: I sincerely hope that my path will inspire the next generation. In fact, just yesterday, I was inspired when I met the oldest living veteran in the U.S. We chatted for quite some time right in the room next door. I encourage you, if you get a chance today, to go see him. Lastly, I would like to thank Amy Riley, who is here today, and Kathy Nielsen, watching from home, for nominating me. My endeavors have always been met with support and enthusiasm from my unit and county. I stand here today knowing I have made a difference. It is an honor to be this year's National Junior Member of the Year. May God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We are going to make a little deviation on the program. We will now have Girls Nation. So the Girls State Program we know focuses on grassroots connections and forging relationships in the communities to increase our membership as well as awareness. I'd like to now welcome ALA National Girls State and Girls Nation Chairman, and one of my very good friends Wendy Riggle for more information.

(Music.)

CHAIRMAN RIGGLE: Madam National President, American Legion Auxiliary Girls State, one of the premier programs of the ALA, has had many challenging times these past two years. However, as we all know, the leaders of these Girls State Programs never shy away from a challenge. In 2020 due to the pandemic, ten ALA Girls State Programs decided to go virtual while all others canceled. With the pandemic still around and after many sleepless nights, the programs made the following decisions for their 2021 programs. 38 went virtual, 10 would be in person, and sadly two programs canceled. The leaders of the ALA Girls State Program should be commended for taking that leap of faith to make sure the programs continued. While Girls State programs were making decisions, the question continued to be asked, what about Girls Nation. We had already made the decision in the fall of 2020 that we would have a Girls Nation in whatever form we could. Despite several challenges, including the National 4-H Center being closed and put up for sale, managing COVID precautions, Washington, D.C. being shut down, including the Capitol, we were not deterred from our mission to provide a quality ALA Girls Nation Program in 2021. We were very fortunate to find a new Conference Center in late April that was available, and National President Nicole announced ALA Girls Nation would be live and in person at the William J. (sic) Bolger Center in Potomac, Maryland.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN RIGGLE: What a beautiful place, good housing, great meeting rooms, and fantastic food. The week finally arrived with 94

delegates eager to start their week at Girls Nation. Because the senators could not visit most of the sites around the D.C. area, we made an effort to bring some topnotch speakers to them on campus. Those included Katie Britt, Alabama U.S. Senate candidate, who challenged the girls not to be afraid to fail. National President Nicole, who spent the better part of a week with us and inspired the senators with her story of joining the ALA and finished by explaining the story behind the Hero at Home book. Each senator was then given a book to read to a child and donate to their local libraries. Prince Taylor with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs shared stories of inspiring women, including his very own grandmother. We traveled to Arlington National Cemetery on Sunday, and four of our own senators laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The wreath had been assembled at opening convocation with poppies made by women veterans from 49 states, which our ALA Girls Nation Poppy Chairman Marge Christianson coordinated for over two years. Senator Sasse from Nebraska answered questions from the senators on the steps across from the Capitol for over 30 minutes, despite his busy schedule. The Girls Nation senators were then allowed to do a walking tour of the National Mall and other sites in the Capitol area. The senators thanked us and told us that they appreciated us trusting them and was a much-needed break from their busy schedule. A fun new activity included chalk drawing wars with each community drawing one or more of the monuments they had seen the previous day. PR judged the contest and everyone received a special award because all were such creative drawings. ALA Girls Nation included lots of senate debate and the election of a president and vice president. After campaigning, party conventions, and whistle stops, the Federalist team of Annabelle Hill from Tennessee and Lia Stokes from North Carolina were elected as president and vice president.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN RIGGLE: Eleven bills were passed by the Senate and one resolution after volumes of debate. Thursday afternoon, the buses took us to Mount Vernon, the birthplace of George Washington. The senators held a press conference on the banks above the Potomac River, where President Hill and Vice President Stokes answered questions about Federal issues. ALA Girls Nation 2021 was definitely not the same as any other session held previously. COVID protocol, senators housed in single rooms, required mask-wearing, and social distancing were the norm for the 2021 session. Because of the diligence of our medical staff, counselors, and the senators themselves, we had no COVID-19 concerns, but we did get a strange influx of mite bites at Arlington, which kept everyone scratching. One short week later, the senators boarded the buses, starting at 3:30 a.m. Sleepy and tearful, but knowing they had just experienced a week that had changed their lives. All week long, we heard them say they had found their voices and they were not afraid to use them. Many of them thanked us and said we are so happy you did not forget us. Thank you so very much. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks, however, I'd like to introduce a very special guest.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Go right ahead.

CHAIRMAN RIGGLE: We are honored to have with us today the 2021 American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation President, Ms. Annabelle Hill from Volunteer Girls State. Ms. Hill attends Southeastern High School in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and is involved with her high school Model UN, where she's a two-time outstanding states person and outstanding bill winner. She is involved in mock trial and is a member of her school's Honor Society. Annabelle is interested in studying international relations and public policy. Please welcome the 2021 ALA Girls Nation President Annabelle Hill.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. HILL: Hello, everyone. I first learned about the Tennessee Girls State Program at the beginning of my ninth-grade year, and from that moment on, I knew I wanted to attend. As the end of my junior year approached, my school selected two delegates for ALA Volunteer Girls State and two alternates. I was chosen as an alternate for my state's Girls State program. I was saddened because I knew how much I would love the program. So I spoke to my guidance counselor and we reached out to the American Legion Auxiliary. Upon advocating for myself to attend, the amazing women of the Tennessee ALA elected to allow me to participate in Girls State as the third delegate from my school. Knowing that those women believed in me, empowered me to gain everything I could from the ALA VGS experience I almost didn't get to have. While at Girls State, I had so many amazing experiences. Being elected as a party delegate and helping to develop my party's platform, I got to hear from girls across my state on what they believed in. Later in the week, I was elected as a senator, and I was able to delve into my passion for policy in a virtual room of women unlike I had ever encountered before. I honestly came to the ALA VGS experience expecting an unwavering room, dominated by my state's majority political opinion. Instead, I found a group of women so devoted to making Tennessee better that they were consistently willing to work with one another and come to compromises. Seeing that level of respect and collaboration gave me tremendous hope for the future of my state, because I knew the ladies I was surrounded by are the ones I will cast my ballot for one day. At the end of Girls State, I was nominated and later selected to attend Girls Nation. Going through this selection process in and of itself was an absolute honor. I didn't expect to be selected, but once again, the women of the ALA saw something in me I didn't necessarily see in myself. A few weeks passed and I was on a plane for D.C., and from the moment I spoke to the Girls Nation senators from Nebraska in the Detroit airport, I knew I was experiencing something very special. Even just on the bus ride to the conference center, I learned things I never knew before about the states next door and across the country. For example, for those of you from the south, did you know that a lot of people outside of the south have never had grits or even heard of them before? Yeah, it was a big culture shock for me. But throughout the week, I was consistently and constantly enlightened by the amazing women around me. There is no doubt in my mind that in those first hours, I met future U.S. senators, Navy commanders, and U.N. ambassadors. Over the course of the

week, we traveled to so many beautiful places like Arlington and Mount Vernon, and heard from so many inspiring people, including Army Major Kathy Isaacson and Senate Candidate Katie Britt. One moment that particularly sticks out to me was sitting by the water at the World War II Memorial. Being surrounded by mountainous tributes to those who sacrificed their lives in service to this country was astounding. While reflecting from an oasis at the center of it all, I couldn't help but feel a sense of tranquility and gratitude sweep over me. That moment was so grounding and it allowed me a moment to appreciate the country I live in and the journey I was embarking on at Girls Nation, and what a journey it was. Deciding to run for president, I was instantly intimidated. I second-guessed myself a couple of times, but after receiving encouragement from the sisterhood I had built in my community of girls and internal reminders that I was at Girls Nation because other people believed in me. When the moment finally came, I put myself in the running to be my party's candidate for president. I spoke from the heart, and after several rounds of questions, I earned my party's nomination. Within the hour by luck, fate, or the grace of God, Lia Stokes of North Carolina was elected to be my party's vice-presidential candidate and run on the ballot with me.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT HILL: The way our personalities and strengths complimented each other within our ticket was a beautiful thing. As we entered the general election, I tried not to get my hopes up, because we were the minority party down by about four votes. And I knew that in order to win, we would have to get people from the other party to switch to our side. After a late night spent talking about policy and bipartisan politics with Lia, I came to our party rally on Election Day excited. Following well-received speeches on all fronts, we moved into whistle stopping in which the four candidates answered questions from the communities. And that, honestly, was my favorite part of the election process, because I was able to think and speak on my feet, which is one of my favorite things to do, while also learning even more about the priorities present in each state. Finally, after an election created by Girls Nation senators, complete with voter registration and online polls, the results were announced and Lia and I had won. Throughout the entire process, I was supported by so many friends from my community and Girls Nation as a whole. The moments I spent with those girls are ones I will never forget. From learning how to open crab via wikiHow, to splashing around in the rain, to crying at 3:00 a.m. because I just didn't want to let them go. I gained nearly a hundred sisters I never knew I needed so much. So thank you, American Legion Auxiliary for taking a chance on me. Thank you for taking a chance on thousands of girls every year through Girls State and Girls Nation. This program truly is life changing. I know, because my life changed. Thank you for the lessons you have taught me, the opportunities you have afforded me, the memories you have made me, and the future you have opened my eyes to. I will forever be grateful. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, we've had so much excitement this

morning. We need to take a five-minute break. So stand up and stretch, and we will adjust the stage, and then we'll return and we will have our poppy report next.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Take your seats. We'll resume.

(Pause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right, everyone. I have to say National Poppy Day gained serious momentum nationwide these last two years. Here to tell us about how the country embraced this day of awareness is Beth McGinn, National Poppy Chairman from Delaware. Beth.

(Applause.)

VOICE: (Singing.) -- flowers everywhere. I love the flower girl. Oh, I don't know just why. She simply --

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: Hi. Madam National President Nicole.

Dreamers see possibilities where others see roadblocks and obstacles. Knowing that poppy funds are crucial to continuing the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary, resourceful members started thinking outside the box to find unconventional ways to distribute poppies and collect funds. They step back and visualize options to work around restrictions that curtailed their daily lives in so many ways. Countless units, including Arizona Oro Valley 132, reached out to their members by sending poppies through snail mail and they encouraged them to donate to the poppy fund, which would enable their units to continue serving veterans and military. Virtual poppy drives were held in departments like Tennessee and Colorado. And members reported promoting the program using social media, making poppy mask, designing creative wearable poppies, and all sorts of fabrics and designs to increase their donations. Units describe how their donations increased over previous years' efforts using these non-traditional methods. Drive-thru distributions at post-homes and in hometowns were held and members participated in holiday parades. Poppy tribute cards were available to honor veterans, like those made by Unit 57 in Minnesota.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: To create awareness, Indiana Poppy Chairman, Sharon Regnier, promoted her theme "Poppy Fields Across Indiana" by handing out poppy seed packets and asking members to plant them. Beautiful fields of poppies were posted on Facebook almost daily as they started to bloom across the country, just as they did when Lieutenant McCrae saw them many years ago after a World War I battle in Belgium. It was not hard to see that the ALA has so many talented and creative members who organize these safe distinct contest featuring wreaths, hats, corsages, Christmas ornaments, Afghans, and quilts. They were all designed to raise awareness and money to continue the level of assistance with their community, veteran hospitals, clinics, and organizations who depended on them in the past. National Poppy Day in May saw a collaboration between the outlet resource group and the American Legion Auxiliary. Auxiliary units, happy to be together again, banded together to share the message and meaning of the red poppy with shoppers over Memorial weekend. Local general managers at designated

outlet centers were eager and excited about the event. They provided signage, discount shopping cards, special banners, all featuring the red poppy. As a special surprise, National Commander Bill Oxford was present at the Oklahoma City outlet mall to participate in the celebration. 100 percent of donations collected went to the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: Our youth are the legacy for the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. They dream without any preconceptions or prejudices. Les Brown said, "Sometimes I believe it is best to take the child's approach to life, which assumes no limitation at all. Children set out to do things without knowing that they are not supposed to be able to do them. They see possibilities as we older generations may not see." Can you imagine what magical things could be accomplished as we march on into the next 100 years of service if we all followed our dreams? Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: Oh, wait. But Madam President, I have one more thing. On behalf of your National Poppy Committee, we would like to present you with this map of the United States, consisting of a representative centennial poppy collected from all 52 departments to remind you of the 100th celebration of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: Madam National President that really concludes my remarks. However --

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: However, via video, I would like to introduce a special guest. Please welcome 2020-2021 Little Miss Poppy Evelyn DeRouin from the Department of Florida.

(Applause.)

MS. DEROUIN: Hello American Legion Auxiliary, guests and National President Nicole. I'm Evelyn DeRouin-Davidson from the Department of Florida. I am a proud ALA member from Unit 19 and I've been a member since birth. I am now 10 years old. During the past two years, it's been difficult with COVID shutting down events and activities, but I was out in the community helping as much as I could. And I was able to make ornaments and distribute poppies when it was allowed, as well as make popping for poppies. A gift with popcorn and poppies. So there's some popcorn in here and there's also some poppies, and I gave these to veterans in our posts. I am so happy to serve our veterans. Thank you for this honor for God and country.

(Applause.)

MS. DEROUIN: And this is my dad. He is in the Coast Guard, and I am proud to have him serve in the Coast Guard.

(Applause.)

MS. DEROUIN: Thank you. Bye.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: I'm not done yet.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: And now, I would like to introduce another special guest. Please welcome 2019-2020 Little Miss Poppy Ellianna Warren from the Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. WARREN: Thank you for allowing me to be here today. I'm truly honored and blessed to be chosen as the 2019 to 2020 National Little Miss Poppy. I would like to thank the American Legion Auxiliary for allowing me the opportunity to help raise money and awareness to help support and honor all the men and women who fought and served. Thank you to the state of Ohio, American Legion Auxiliary, the Great First District, and my home post Kerner-Slusser American Legion Auxiliary Unit 63, and my family for supporting me along this journey. God bless the USA.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN MCGINN: Now, I think I'm really done.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: She thinks she's really done.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Beth McGinn and what a beautiful map. As I was traveling some states, I could hear little whispers. Do we have our poppy done yet? What's our poppy look like? Well, we will have this on display. I think back towards the back of the room where the map is with all the different state pins so that you'll be able to look at this up close just like the map of the United States pins that you've all been donating, so thank you very much. Are you ready? We are now ready for a very special treat. The American Legion Youth Champions are a highlight of any convention and we are excited to have three of them join us today. We have Maya Cameron. She is the 2021 American Legion Junior Shooting Sports National Champion in the sporter discipline. She will be going into her third year as a rifle team captain and will be a future, let's see, commander for the battalion at National Ford High School's Junior ROTC Program and as a rising senior. She has a passion for animals, and I have to tell you, on her shooting stand, she has a little animal just like a Cornelius, she has her little friend, who travels with her, and she loves to play videogames in her free time. Her future plans include to perform on a collegiate rifle team and study business. So please join me in welcoming Maya to the stage.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. CAMERON: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Maya Cameron. I'm proud to stand before you representing Nation Ford High School's Marine Corps JROTC Program and their rifle team. Firstly, I would like to thank my team, my coach, and my family for always supporting me through thick and thin, putting up with my antics, and allowing me to start shooting in the first place. I would also like to thank The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, and Post 34 for giving me the opportunity to compete at the national level. Words cannot

express how much this opportunity has meant to me. The competition was a marathon, the likes of which I had never experienced before and something I'll be able to take with me for years to come. If you were to go back and show my younger middle school self where I would be today, I would not believe you, not in a million years. To paint a picture for you in middle school, I was a very shy, anxious kid, terrified to speak in front of my class, let alone a crowd of people, but that started to change at the beginning of high school. I joined my high school's Marine Corps JROTC program and saw myself slowly start to change for the better. Subsequently, I joined my school's rifle team and my personal transformation was immense. Everything from the way I stand and hold myself to the way I think of myself was shifted, nervous little me was no more. And this is why I'm so grateful for The American Legion for this opportunity and the opportunity to compete because it's through opportunities like this that young people my age are able to grow and become a more productive member of society. As I move through my senior year and the next chapter of my life, I'll always remember the experiences I've had through The American Legion fondly. As I plan to go to college to study business, I'll be able to use the generous scholarship granted to me to be able to afford my education. I really appreciate this golden opportunity and the lessons it has taught me, and I look forward to seeing where I'll take myself and my peers. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Natalie Perrin is the 2021 American Legion Junior Shooting Sports National Champion in the precision division. Natalie is a three-time Junior Olympian, gold state medalist, and a member of the United States National Junior Team. She is a freshman now at West Virginia University and a member of their rifle team. Future plans for her are working on her shooting sports to an organization to increase youth involvement and participation in shooting sports. I have to tell you, getting to know Natalie and Maya when we were at National Junior shooting sports competition in Colorado. Natalie told her dad that if I win, I want to win because I get to speak on the National Convention stage. Natalie, the floor is yours.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. PERRIN: Good morning, everyone. I'm Natalie Perrin, the 2021 Precision Air Rifle National Champion. Words simply cannot express how grateful I am to The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary for hosting this National Championship match and for providing a scholarship that will help me in the future. I have just started my freshman year at West Virginia University --

(Applause.)

MS. PERRIN: -- studying public relations and advertising while competing on the school's Division 1 rifle team. Because of all your generosity, the remaining cost of my education will be eased. I also wanted to express my gratitude for the match atmosphere that was provided. I have competed all over the country and even internationally. And the environment both on and off the range at the 30th National Championships was one that I

have never experienced before. From the kindness of the range officers and staff to the fun activities they provided, it was truly a match to remember. This was my first time competing in this Postal Championship. And at first, I was skeptical. The summer leading into the first year of college is a stressful time for anyone. But as an athlete, I have to use this time to mentally and physically prepare for the season ahead. However, I am so glad that I pushed myself to compete in this match. For those of you who don't know, three position air rifle events end once you start college. And I've been competing in this event since I first started shooting my freshman year of high school. And I could think of no better way than to round out my high school shooting experience then as the 2021 American Legion Three Position Air Rifle National Champion. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. PERRIN: Well, all I can say is thank you. I hope you all know how grateful I am to your amazing organization for giving me this experience. I want to also say a special thank you to Post 154 from back home in Grand Rapids, Michigan for supporting me every step of the way.

(Applause.)

MS. PERRIN: Thank you all for your service and dedication to this organization and our country. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Now, for West Virginians, you Mountaineers out there, as Natalie is now a freshman, they give one scholarship only for shooting in the nation and she received it, so congratulations, Natalie.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Now on to Ryan Jung is the 2021 Boys Nation President. Ryan is an Eagle Scout and a youth adviser to California Congressman Katie Porter. He serves Portola High School Student Body Treasurer, as well as his high school newspaper's co-managing editor. Ryan is a passionate advocate for advocacy, philosophy, education at the high school level. He is designing Portola's intro to philosophy course and competing and completing a research portfolio recognized by the Davidson Institute. Ryan hopes to study philosophy at Harvard University and pursue a career in law, teaching, and national politics. Please welcome Ryan to our stage.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT JUNG: You know with the two last National Champions being air rifle champions, I don't think I can mess with the last two, but here we go. On the campaign trail at Boys Nation, I asked my fellow senators to confront a fundamental question and that was which America will you choose? You ask that to 100 of the nation's most politically-minded young men and you're sure to get about 200 different answers, many of which are conflicting. Yet, we all agreed on an America which vows to better serve the men and women who put themselves in harm's way for us to enjoy our unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT JUNG: Through the Boys Nation program, The American Legion family affirms that our great nation is a land of opportunity. It gives a

platform to a kid like me, the starry-eyed son of South Korean immigrants whose parents, my grandparents, first heard of a faraway land called America from soldiers fighting in the Korean War. Serving as the president of the 75th Session of Boys Nation, where I had the utmost privilege to bear witness to energetic young men, steering the direction of our country, not left, not right, but forward is the least I can do to express my gratitude. Evoking the Book of Matthew Chapter 10 Verse 16, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. urged his congregation to face the world with a tough mind and a tender heart. That is precisely what The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, and American Legion Auxiliary calls upon us to do. Equipped with the tough mind to selflessly improve America, the fabled land my grandparents saw from the coast of Korea, and to love one another, united as Americans, guided by a tender heart. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I want to again express our appreciation for Ryan, Natalie, and Maya's appearance here today. It has been a pleasure to meet with all of you and see a couple of you again. I saw Ryan on the screen as we were doing virtual with Boys Nation and Girls Nation. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Now, we'll pop forward in the program to where we left off. Each year, the Child Welfare Foundation Board reviews hundreds of grant applications from worthy, nonprofit, youth-oriented organizations. Here, to tell us about their fantastic work, is the liaison to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Past National President Kris West from New Hampshire.

VOICE: (Singing.) Ooh child, things are gonna get easier. Ooh child, things'll get brighter. Someday, yeah, we'll put it together --

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: Madam National President Nicole and delegates to this convention, greetings from the Child Welfare Foundation Committee. What a journey we have been on for the past two years. The Child Welfare Foundation donated \$766,761 to 24 nonprofit organizations --

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: -- for the betterment of children across the country. And after final review of the request at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors in October for the year 2019, Father Flanagan's Boys Town of Nebraska received 35,000; Mercy Medical Angels of Virginia was awarded 51,000; National Autism Association of Rhode Island awarded \$58,408.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: Our Military Kids of Virginia was awarded \$53,905; and The Common Strand Foundation received \$28,500 also from Virginia. This is just a few of the many organizations that were awarded financial support. These donations are generous and that is why it is so important to donate to the Child Welfare Foundation in your department. Children are being assisted, nurtured, and helped with your generous donations across the country. Awards for the year 2019-2020 that were to be presented at the

Louisville Convention are as follows: Garland D. Murphy Jr. award went to the Department of Florida.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: U.S. Udie Grant Legacy Award, Department of Florida.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: Meritorious Achievement Award, Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: And Excellence Award, Department of Kentucky.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: These awards were mailed to the departments for distribution. Thank you to the Departments of Wisconsin, West Virginia, and Wyoming, who reported on their Children and Youth report, using the piggybanks to help raise funds. This year, the Child Welfare awarded \$811,282 to 22 nonprofit organizations at the Annual Board of Directors meeting in October. American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters received a total of \$122,343 for our Youth Scholarship Program.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: And the American Legion Auxiliary Juniors invisible project to purchase books to teach junior members about the American Flag. All the grants that were awarded can be found on the Child Welfare Foundation website, a very impressive list of recipients. Congratulations to the departments that exceeded the previous year's donations with their contribution to the Child Welfare Foundation.

(Applause.)

MS. WEST: Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Great job. My sincere thanks for your efforts. Overall donations were down from the previous year which is certainly understandable and I'm sure our members will mount up on the saddles and right away into meetings, conferences, conventions and the like, and raise the money and increase donations. Thank you, Madam President. But before I leave the stage, it is now my pleasure to welcome Don Suchy, a very dedicated Legionnaire, who has wrapped the children and youth program in his arms and in his heart. Don is currently in his 24th year serving as Department Children and Youth Chairman, a member of the National Committee on Children and Youth, presently serving as the Vice Chairman of that committee. Don also serves as a member of the Board of the Directors for The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Recently, he was elected Department Senior Vice Commander of Nebraska for the '21-'22 year. This true patriot and great Legionnaire served in Nebraska Air National Guard from 1968 to 1975 during the Vietnam War. You may recognize him as he traveled the world for the entire year 2014 and '15 as the aid to past National Commander, Mike Helm. Please give a warm American Legion Auxiliary to Don Suchy from the Department of Nebraska, and he is accompanied by Stacey Cope on the staff of The American Legion. Don.

VOICE: (Singing.) Thank you for being a friend. Traveled down a road and back again. Your heart is true, you're a pal and a confidant.

MR. SUCHY: Madam President. Good morning, all.

VOICES: Good morning.

MR. SUCHY: Good morning on behalf of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. It is my pleasure to be here with you today. Child Welfare Foundation would not be where it is today without the continued support from the American Legion Auxiliary and the entire Legion family. It is through our associations with Child Welfare Foundation has been able to award over \$18 million in child welfare grants since its inception in 1954 to nonprofit organizations contributing to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual welfare of the nation's children and youth that is something to celebrate. The American Legion Auxiliary has selected nonprofit youth serving organizations such as American Printing House for the Blind, our military kids, unity through reading, and many more to receive the child welfare grants. I would like to tell you about Nebraska's two recipients of the child welfare grants. The first went to Methodist Children's Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska through -- taught new patients -- parents the dangers of SIDS by teaching them how to wrap newborn infants in a blanket before laying them down. According to the CDC in 2019 SIDS accounted for 37 percent of the 34,000 infants' death in the United States, higher than any other cause of death in infants. The second child welfare grant recipient was awarded Father Flanagan's Boys Home, as known as Boys Town, in Omaha, Nebraska for their work on suicide prevention. Each year, Boys Town national hotline receives calls from all over the United States, calls ranging in age from 12 to 40. Sometimes, the only way to stop a suicide attempt is by having someone there to listen to their story. According to the Boys Town web page in 2020, Boys Town national hotline received 134,603 calls from which they were able to stop 579 suicides in progress.

(Applause.)

MR. SUCHY: Child Welfare Foundations continue to support grants such as these that continue to make a difference in the lives of our children and youth of their families. The 2020-2021 Child Welfare Program year began June 1, 2020, and ended May 31st, 2021. And during that time, the Legion family raised over \$435,312 in donations, of which the Auxiliary contributed over \$39,199. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. SUCHY: This year's awards are being awarded to the following American Legion Auxiliary departments. The Excellence Award is given out to the department with the highest per capita contribution averaged during The Child Welfare programs a year. The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Wyoming --

(Applause.)

MR. SUCHY: -- is the year's Excellent Award winner for having contributed an average of 50 cents per member of their department.

(Music.)

MR. SUCHY: Meritorious Award -- Achievement Award is given out to the department that experienced the highest increase in per capita given during the Child Welfare program in this year American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Nevada --

(Applause.)

MR. SUCHY: -- achieved the award highest increase per capita given with a 0.28 percent increase.

(Music.)

MR. SUCHY: Garland Murphy Jr. Award is awarded to the most active department in the nation based on the contributions received during The Child Welfare program year. This year the Garland Murphy Jr. Award goes to the American Legion [Auxiliary] Department of Florida --

(Applause.)

MR. SUCHY: -- for being the most active department and contributing \$9,145 to The Child Welfare Program of the 2020-2021 program year.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MR. SUCHY: The U.S. Udie Grant Legacy Award is presented to the top department nationally based on the total contributions from The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, and the 8 and 40. This year, Florida is being --

(Applause.)

MR. SUCHY: -- recognized for their contribution of over \$80,656 in contributions to the Child Welfare program.

(Music.)

MR. SUCHY: Madam President, The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Board of Directors would like to thank you for your unwavering support over the last two years. It is my honor to present to you two five diamond pins. The first pin is for 2019-2020 Child Welfare Foundation Program. Due to the pandemic, we have been unable to come together and celebrate until today. The second set of pins recognizes the 2020-2021 Child Welfare Program year. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Don. Every lady likes double bling, don't you think?

MR. SUCHY: Madam President and Auxiliary members, on behalf of the entire Child Welfare Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for your contributions and support and we're looking forward to having another great year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It is now my pleasure to introduce the 2021 Convention Corporation President, Past Commander, Ken Queen from the Department of Arizona.

(Music.)

MR. QUEEN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

VOICES: Good morning.

MR. QUEEN: Welcome to Phoenix, Arizona and the 102nd National Convention of The American Legion. I bring greetings from the Department of Arizona and the Arizona convention commission. It really is great to see so many American Legion Auxiliary members here, along with the distinguished guests. Pretty crowded. I am a staunch supporter of The American Legion

and I have been for many years. My wife, Cindy, who I believe is sitting over here stage left, my stage left. She's been a member for 25 years and that's one of the reasons I support the Auxiliary the way I do. The Auxiliary does an excellent job in carrying out its mission and by extension, supporting the mission of The American Legion. I believe strongly in The American Legion family; we are stronger working together. Arizona held its department convention at the end of June. During our pre-convention planning sessions, some members expressed concern that because of the COVID environment and its attendant restrictions, we would not have a good turnout. As it turned out, our attendance was excellent, and that's because, after 15 months of lockdown at various levels, various degrees, all of us were eager to get out, socialize, and work together face to face.

(Applause.)

MR. QUEEN: That's really what the human experience is all about. As with other departments, the COVID pandemic pose many challenges. We could not conduct business as usual, but through it all, we adapted, improvised, and overcame those challenges. We carried out our mission. Now, here in Phoenix for our 1002nd national convention, our work as delegates has begun and there is much to do. But remember, when each day is over and the work is done, don't forget to have some fun. As you know, a lot of planning and a lot of work goes in preparing and hosting a national convention, I would be remiss if I did not recognize some of those who helped this happen or make this happen. I want to thank the national office staff for their support. I want to thank Michael Walton, the Director of the National Convention Commission and his committee for all of their work. I want to thank Bridget Robinson, Director of Conventions & Meeting Planning and her staff for all of their planning, scheduling, and coordination efforts and for informing and training our Arizona Committee Chairman. Finally, I want to thank the Arizona Convention Commission Secretary, our Arizona Convention Committee Chairman, our drivers, and the dozens of legionnaires, Auxiliary members, and SAL members who volunteered their time and energy to help make this convention a success. We are excited to be here. We are excited to have you all here. Let's all have a productive, successful, and fun convention. Thank you all for all you do.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Ken, for being with us today. Joining me next is the leader of the nation's largest Veterans Organization, National Commander James, known better to me as Bill Oxford. He was elected National Commander of The American Legion in Indianapolis during the organization's 101st National Convention. He is a life member of Post 29 in Lenoir, North Carolina and has served at every level of The American Legion. Commander Oxford's theme "A foundation for the future" was a perfect way for the Legion to enter into its second-century of service. Please welcome our National Commander and my good friend, Bill Oxford.

(Music.)

MR. OXFORD: Thank you all. Please, please go ahead and take your seats. Nicole just said the magic word, we made it, but before I get too far

along, I'd like to take just a moment. And my wife is -- she's at the convention. She's tied up with another meeting. But my wife, Frances, and I know many of you know her but she's been a total supporter of me and my career and the things I've been able to do. And she's been an active member of the Auxiliary along with my daughter for several years. She's held every office from unit -- up through and including some department positions. But if you see her, just make sure you tell her I talked about her. But you got to cover all the bases, right? But as we have traveled this country, and I say we, Larry Cline, the Commander and I, have been across the country, and we have seen and done and been able to experience many miraculous things. Just a couple of those, we traveled to the Far East and had the opportunity to meet with the President of Taiwan. And when you think about the president of a country, that's a big deal. From Taiwan, we were able to visit Australia and meet with the Governor General of Australia. Now, when you think about the top political leaders of two countries that received us like long lost children, but the respect, the admiration, the way they treated us emphasizes the value, the importance, the relevance of The American Legion across the world, but those two things stick out. When I think about coming back to the States, there's a couple of things that stick out. One of them is Wyoming and has Devils Tower in Wyoming is this big mountain, and it was really totally impressive, and that's one of the things that stick out. But another one of those things that stick out in my mind was the Snake River Bridge where people jump off the bridge with parachutes. We watched those folks do that for maybe an hour, but that natural wonder of this country, it was amazing, and it just sticks out in my mind. But as we travel the world with the foreign countries, as we travel the states with the natural wonders, there's a couple of other things that stick out, The American Legion family activities. Last year, we faced so many things that we were not able to do, you can't do this, you can't do that. Cancellations, meetings, conferences, conventions, all of those things we couldn't do. But in spite of what COVID did to us, our American Legion family impressed the hound out of me. And I'm so proud of the things we continued to do, continue -- that we were able to accomplish, and the list goes on and on. I could probably talk for an hour about those things, but it's because of the success, the dedication, the commitment that members of our American Legion family has to our concept of veterans strengthening America. And I want to just say thank you, thank you, thank you for stepping up and make people make America realize, American Legion is still here. We're 102 and you all are 101 years old, but as we continue to move and serve, that's the value of The American Legion, but thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. OXFORD: But as we look at those things, that's basically history, and I've got to fall back to my theme for the year, a foundation for the future. And as I look at this group, I say, I, you, we, me, us. We are the future of our organization. We hold the future in the things we do or don't do. If we think about the future of our organization, we've got to make sure that we always consider membership, that's the lifeblood of who we are and what we do. Please, please, please continue to recruit, retain, and make sure members of

those families, of our family has the opportunity to renew. If you know somebody that's eligible, invite them. We need to be recruiters, retainers, and inviters. If you know somebody, invite them to become part of our family. But our organization is important, is critical, but the future of our country, in my opinion, is a little bit more important than that. But when I think about the future of our country, our children and youth programs are creating the future leaders of this country, of this past. Absolutely, I love it. Last year, we had to cancel all of those children and youth programs but this year, they've been back, more powerful, doing better work than ever. I had the opportunity to spend multiple days with several different Boys States across the country. I had time or I had a few days at Boys Nation in Washington, D.C., spent a week at our Baseball World Series over in Shelby. Those children and youth programs are creating the future leaders of this country and it's up to us to make sure that continues to happen. If you're not part of those programs, get involved. We need your help.

(Applause.)

MR. OXFORD: But with all of that said, we need your help. But as -- and I'm going to close right here, we need to remember the 12 Americans that just died in Afghanistan, 10 Marines, one Army soldier, and one Navy sailor. Those people, those 12 men died protecting this country, their service, their dedication, their commitment can never be understated and we've got to always remember it. And if there's anything that I can ask you to do for me is pray for those 12 guys and their families.

(Applause.)

MR. OXFORD: President Nicole, I wish my wife could be here but she's committed somewhere else. Larry, I don't know where you are, but thank you all for the opportunity. It's been an honor beyond what I can describe to be your National Commander. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Bill is opening a gift from me. He mentioned what we didn't get to do, what ups and downs, and all of that. Well, this is a token, because we had really hoped -- he sees me do that all the time. We're having a party, right? That we were hoping to be together at Pearl Harbor in 2020. For Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, obviously, December 7th. That didn't happen because of the pandemic. So Commander, you have a flag that was flown over the USS Arizona for December 7th.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The gift that keeps on giving. So he has the Certificate of the Flag presentation to National Commander James W. Bill Oxford in tribute of the more than 2,400 lives lost during the attack on Pearl Harbor, the national insignia and flies continuously over the flagpole mounted in the battleship USS Arizona. Inside that box is the actual flag that was flown, and it was marked for December 7th on 2020.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, Bill and Frances, are, you know, we're just going to have to wait for Larry. He's going to have to wait on his gift.

MR. OXFORD: Just a little something from the Legion.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. It's literally teamwork up here. We've been a family for this long. Waterford Crystal, Waterford Crystal glasses. There's two of them. They're beautiful.

MR. OXFORD: It says American Legion Auxiliary National President 2019-2021. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Let's give another applause for our National Commander, a two-year National Commander at that. Frances will be receiving one of those wooden poppy boxes that are handblown the poppies. And Larry, well, he came to my homecoming and he loved the Gladbrook mustard so, of course, there's a jar of Gladbrook mustard in there. But he also told me he wants to, in retirement, learn to go RVing. So there are books about RVing for dummies, etcetera. And I marked the spot where he wants to come back to Gladbrook to go to our matchstick Marvels Museum. And then his formal gift is an etched flag that says American Legion National Commander Aide Larry Cline 2019-2021. He's been an aide to me when we've been traveling. Now, a treat for all of us. As director of the defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Mr. Kelly McKeague is responsible for the policy, control, and oversight of all aspects of the department's programs to account for our nation's missing personnel from past conflicts. He leads DoD's worldwide enterprise of research, investigation, recovery, and identification operations in order to provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and to the nation. During my visit to Pearl Harbor in 2019, I met with Director Kelly and his staff, and immediately felt an emotional connection for the work they do. I am so pleased that he could be with us today. Please welcome the Director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Mr. Kelly McKeague.

(Music.)

MR. MCKEAGUE: Well, good morning distinguished members of the American Legion Auxiliary, both here and room, as well as online. Congratulations on your Centennial plus one birthday. What an accomplishment.

(Applause.)

MR. MCKEAGUE: You know as I look about the room, if I look half as good as you all do at 101, I will be set. Congratulations also to Nicole Clapp for a noteworthy but extended tour as your National President and also congratulations to Kathy Daudistel for fleeting up to be national president. I, first, had the privilege of meeting Nicole, as you all heard back in December of 2019 when she and National Commander Oxford and their delegation came out to Honolulu for their annual Pearl Harbor visit. And again, I met Kathy and Nicole last month at the Pentagon as we unveiled this year's POW/MIA recognition day poster. Searching for, finding, and identifying our missing service members from our nation's past wars is both a sacred mission and a moral imperative to them and their families, and this is not hyperbole. President Lincoln described it perfectly at Gettysburg when he said, "That the fallen gave their last full measure of devotion" on behalf of their nation and for that, we owe them in incredible debt. The scope of our mission is global,

essentially wherever Americans fell in combat, with 75 percent of the losses in the Indo-Pacific region. As you can see, there are still more than 81,000 unaccounted for Americans from World War II to the Persian Gulf War. Of those, we estimate 38,000 to be recoverable. When I first started this mission seven years ago, I was shocked to learn that there were that many. But although the numbers are daunting, they are so much more than just figures. Each has a unique story with memories that transcend generations, and time that leaves a loss both enduring in life and in heart, across generations. For these Gold Star families, they have been burdened by the grief. But more so their grief has been exacerbated by the uncertainty associated with their loss. This is exactly what makes our endeavors humanitarian, and the 46 partner nations we work with readily recognize this through their cooperation. Even Russia and China, despite the strains in the relationship, still help the United States in this mission. Here at home, this noble mission also generates a great deal of interest and support, and it also evokes visceral feelings. I'd like to share one such example with you. This is Navy Radioman 3rd Class Thomas Eddie Griffith of Dayton, Ohio, who at the age of 20, serving aboard the USS Oklahoma, was killed on that fateful December 7th day in 1941. When the ship was righted and the bodies recovered six months later, only 41 of the 429 casualties aboard the Oklahoma were able to be identified. Eddie and the other 387 casualties were buried as an unknown at the National cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, where they lay for close to 70 years. After disinterring them in 2015, last year we identified Eddie Griffith. In May, I attended his funeral at Arlington National Cemetery. His 86-year-old sister Betty Jo, who was seven at the time of her brother's loss, shared a letter, her mother wrote to the United States Navy, when they presented Eddie a purple Heart in 1943. One line in his mom's letter stood out, I quote, "As a young boy, Eddie always said, a Flag not worth fighting for wasn't worth living under." Here's a young man, teenager, much like the teenagers you all lead through your many programs. "A Flag not worth fighting for wasn't worth living under." You can imagine the sheer joy the Griffith family experienced when their prayers were finally answered 79 years later. In a thank you letter, Betty Jo wrote last month to the agency, she said, quote, "I remember Eddie through the eyes of a child. He was my hero, someone I looked up to. When he died, my parents struggled to find a way to tell me he would not be coming home. Soon after, two of my older brothers enlisted and left for the Army. I remember feeling like they would not come home either, but thankfully, they came back when the war was over." The passage of time did not fade the memory of radioman 3rd Class Eddie Griffith, nor his supreme sacrifice, but now his family has great solace in having him home. Like it has with your great organization and the rest of our nation, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted DoD and DPAA across all areas. At the outset, we immediately brought home multiple teams 20, to be exact, who were deployed somewhere in the world and we adapted whenever opportunities presented themselves. For almost a year, we were prevented entry into countries that we worked with. However, one example, the government of Vietnam agreed to deploy their three U.S. trained teams and have conducted 13 excavations so far. Two of those recovered

remains. In fact, one was recently identified Navy Commander Paul Charvet. Health conditions have improved in some countries allowing us entry after we fulfill all testing and quarantine requirements. This very day, there are DPAA teams operating in nine countries. Families of the missing, whom we dutifully serve, and it was regrettable to have to cancel six family member meetings last year. However, we needed to connect and communicate much like you all are doing with your members via live streaming. So we figured out how to do it virtually and next month, we will live stream our sixth family member meeting. One such virtual meeting in March had 1,000 viewers, who spent a total of almost 42,000 minutes viewing the family member update. One area showing great promise is our extensive research and fieldwork we conduct with talented partners. To date, we have 100 arrangements with U.S. and international universities and non-governmental organizations. They add expertise and technology to our important work. One such collaboration involved a World War II loss off the coast of Denmark that just completed last week. A team from the University of Delaware and project recover, along with the Royal Danish Navy, recently found the wreckage of that B-24, an incredibly valuable evidence. These private partners do add capabilities that expand our mission and allow us to do more of it and to do it faster. About 17 percent of the 38,000 that we estimate to be recoverable are buried as an unknown in a U.S. controlled cemetery somewhere in the world. As such, we have an extensive program to compile the historical and scientific research that allows us to petition to disinter them. The USS Oklahoma project, which I mentioned earlier, is one such of those projects where we disinterred 388 Sailors and Marines who were co-mingled in 61 different caskets. Eddie Griffith was one of those that were identified from that project, along with 346 others. Ladies and gentlemen, that's 347 families that now have answers that they've sought for 79 years. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. MCKEAGUE: Many of you will recall the June 2018 Summit in Singapore between President Trump and Chairman Kim of North Korea, were among the four commitments, commitment number four was about the remains that were still in North Korea. And this is no small commitment because of the 7,500 still missing from the Korean War 5,300 are still inside North Korea. Shortly after the Summit, North Korea turned over 55 boxes of remains. To date, we have identified 76 Americans so far, we've turned over 80 to the South Korean government. Unfortunately, we have not had communications with our North Korean partners that we thought the commitment was making. We have not had communications with them for over two years. Lastly, it's important to note that this noble mission generates strong interest and support from Congress, and families and veterans are the ones who tell them about how important this mission is. You all are part of that communication platform. This year Congress added 25 million to our budget, all of which increases our operations. I'd like to tell you about one such operation involving Air Force Colonel Roy Knight. Colonel Knight was from Millsap, Texas. He was one of seven siblings, all of whom serve their country. He joined the Air Force at the age of 17 and became an A-1 pilot.

Nineteen years later, he was shot down along the Ho Chi Minh trail in Laos in May 1967. Colonel Knight's son, Brian, himself an Air Force fighter pilot as well, said, quote, "From the moment we heard he was missing, our duty as a family was to have hope, no matter what we saw or heard. When he was declared deceased, we couldn't have had that hope anymore without those answers." After many interviews of witnesses and multiple field investigations and excavations, a joint DPAA and Laos team returned to the site and found a fragment of his helmet and inscribed on the helmet where the letters KNI. The team also found some teeth, which our laboratory later determined to be able to be associated with Colonel Roy Knight. Brian, now a captain with Southwest Airlines, asked his company to be able to fly the plane that was transporting his dad's remains from our laboratory. He brought his dad home to Dallas' Love Field, where Colonel Knight received a hero's welcome, as you can see in this picture. Incredibly moving was the fact that this was the very same airport where then five years old Brian said goodbye to his father for the last time when he left for Vietnam 52 years earlier. To this day, Brian remembers the sound of his mother Patricia sobbing as his father left for war. But found great comfort in returning with his father to the last place he saw him alive. Multiple generations of the Knight family now have solace to which Brian said, "If we are asking people to fight for us, if we are sending them into the unknown, then if the worst happens, we cannot forget about them. You can never completely accept what happened until you get those answers." It's because of this nation's commitment, national commitment, to its MIAs that the Knight family has that solace. Thank you for the opportunity to share this special mission with you, sacred mission. And more importantly, thank you for the support you provide for the missing and their families. In the back of the room, there are some small posters for this year's POW/MIA recognition day, which our nation will commemorate on September 17th. The poster is a collage of pictures, each one displaying the iconic black and white POW/MIA flag. And it's a silhouette of that flag with the words "You are not forgotten" that commemorates and celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Members of the American Legion Auxiliary, the fact that the United States of America, our country, vigorously pursues this sacred mission is the right thing to do and it's emblematic of our values. In doing so, we fulfill a promise made to those we send off to combat and who did not return. These unreturned veterans, as well as their families, are owed a debt none of us can repay. The national commitment to search for and find our missing also serves as a beacon to veterans, like many of you, whose comrades are still missing. And to those in uniform today, that should they go missing, this nation will not leave them behind. After the end of World War I, then Vice President Calvin Coolidge said, "A nation which forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten." Thank you for not forgetting, and God bless the American Legion Auxiliary, the tremendous work you do, the truly difference that you make in the lives of veterans, their families and Americans in general. And as always may his grace be upon our great nation. Thank you again.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I will share with you that Director Kelly, when I was leaving that day, he presented me with one of the folded flags that was on one of the transfer cases that came back from North Korea.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So now, do you see why I had an emotional connection on that visit? Very moving, isn't it? It puts things in perspective for all of us of why our passion and our mission, and our heart and our head are in the spots we are. And that's why we're here today, to celebrate our heritage and to celebrate where we need to go into the future. And as we are celebrating our heritage for a veteran coming home is the beginning of a new journey, a transition to find a new normal. Here to tell us how our members have comforted and cared for our veterans during this transition is National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chairman Vickie Koutz from the Department of Indiana. Vic.

VOICE: (Singing.) I'm an American soldier, an American. Beside my brothers and my sisters, I will proudly take a stand. When liberty's in jeopardy, I will always --

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: Madam National President. Our veterans accepted the responsibility to defend America and uphold our values when duty called Bill Shuster. Our members accepted the responsibility to support our veterans by sharing their love with all they do to make their lives matter. When the call went out that facial masks when needed, our members stepped up to do their part. Thousands of masks were donated across the nation. Ann Crawford, a member of the Department of Iowa --

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: -- personally made over 7,000 masks. Florida members prayed with their veterans on a weekly basis throughout the year. While prayer blankets were given to New Mexico veterans, who were ill or had been in the hospital. In Virginia, members made fidget blankets and sent to hospitals and nursing homes to assist with dementia patients. Several departments presented quilts of valor to their veterans. As there are more female veterans than ever, we have to be cognizant of their needs. And that is exactly what they did in Kentucky when they provided drive-by baby showers. Members from Unit 166 and 179 in Charleston, South Carolina, donated, assembled, and volunteered four days of their time to handout snack packs and hygiene kits to veterans for the new North Charleston VA clinic to help celebrate the grand opening. The American Legion Auxiliary was the only VSO at this grand opening. Quote, "If you would like to see the price paid for our freedom, visit a VA clinic or a VA hospital. It is humbling." Departments across the nation not only made wreaths but also participated in the Wreaths Across America program. Auxiliary members in Massachusetts helped Legion members clean 2,800 gravesites at a local veterans cemetery. And members in Montana placed crosses on their veteran's graves. During National President Nicole's visit to Vermont, they toured the Vermont Adaptive Sports Facility in Killington, and they made a donation to her president's project. A unit member from the Department of Illinois keeps gallon Ziploc bags in her car at all times. Each bag is filled with raisins,

Kleenex, BV cheese sticks, hand sanitizer, hand warmers, toiletries, a scripture track, trail mix, and a paper with the address and phone number of local hospitals, local shelters, local churches, food pantries, and local patriotic organizations. When she sees someone standing by a stop sign or an exit sign, holding a sign asking for assistance because they are out of work, homeless, or stranded, this member hands them one of the Ziploc bags. Tennessee members participated in a reverse parade, where floats, bands, and groups stood along the parade route and the cars full of onlookers drove past. In Texas, awards are given for units that sponsored the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. All sponsorships received a certificate and a ribbon for their unit banner and Platinum level has also received a plaque. A member in Ohio and her husband hosted a weekly radio show titled "They Sacrificed For Us". The show is veteran-based and is aired live every Tuesday night. The show highlights the stories of veterans, as well as other organizations that serve veterans. A unit in North Carolina partnered with Belk department store for a special event. And they received \$5,000 donation from the store. They donated half of that to the PTSD units in each of their VA hospitals, which their department president's project. As I read through all the department reports, one thing was very obvious. We have the most compassionate, kind, and caring volunteers in our organization.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN KOUTZ: Thank you. In closing, I would like to share a poem by Sydney Sweeney that tells our story. "Dear Veteran, those of us who have not served will never fully understand the sacrifices you've made both in times of peace and of war. We will never fully understand what you were required to do or how you were able to do it. We will never fully understand the depth of your scars, but we can offer you -- what we can offer you is this. We see you, we recognize your humanity, and we send you love that is gentle, patient, and healing with blessings and gratitude. We ask that you remember you are loved." Thank you. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Vickie. I just whispered to her it was beautiful and it brings back such beautiful memories of all of my visits that we were able to -- what we could accomplish during a pandemic, so thank you. Okay. This is one of my special moments. For the last two years, Dawna Callahan of All-In Sport Consulting has worked with the ALA to identify amazing opportunities that combine mission delivery efforts with my focus of health and wellbeing for our veterans, military, and their families. I want you to help me please welcome Dawna Callahan to our stage.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. CALLAHAN: Hi, everyone. I think I came out from the other side of the stage, so I surprised you all. I'm mixing it up today, right? That's right. I know it's been a long morning for you all and we're super excited to be here. And I just want to thank Nicole, and her team, and the members across the country that I've been able to connect with in the last couple of years to help

injured service members and military members engage in adaptive sport and understand a little bit more about health and wellness post-injury. It's been a phenomenal experience and I'm so glad to be here today. I don't get a podium, so you guys are going to see my notes, because if I go to the podium, you'll see my forehead. But I'm here today to share a little bit of information with you about how the adapted sport movement and sport for people with disabilities came to be. And I don't know if you know this, but we are gratefully indebted to military veterans for creating and building the adapted sports movement that we know of today. How many of you enjoy sports? Participating or watching? I know Nicole does. How many of you -- and I'm sure there's a lot here, I want to hear those little clapper things. How many of you know someone with a disability?

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: There's a lot. That's a lot. About 15 percent of the global population has a physical or intellectual, visible or invisible disability. Now, how many of you know someone with a disability that is also a huge sports fan?

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHN: That's right. How many of you know someone with a disability that also loves to participate and engage in sport?

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: That's right. That is right. So again -- next slide, please, JP. We want to talk today a little bit about the veterans and the role in the adapted sports movement. So how did we get here? So in World War II, Dr. Ludwig Guttmann had a vision and Dr. Guttmann was a neurologist in Nazi, Germany during World War II, and he was able to escape and landed in the U.K. at the Stoke Mandeville Rehabilitation Hospital. And at that Rehabilitation Hospital, so many veterans from World War II that had catastrophic injuries were placed at Stoke Mandeville. And Dr. Guttmann's vision for these veterans was that he wanted to see them get up and move, because the results and the research showed that if they continued to stay in bed, as spinal cord injuries or as amputees, that they would only have a life expectancy of about two years after a catastrophic injury. So he knew if they could get him -- get these veterans up out of bed, active, participating in sport, getting their blood pumping, getting their endorphins going again, and sweating, and the camaraderie that we all love and enjoy in the military world, that they would have a future in life that extended beyond the two years of expectancy. So Dr. Goodman had this vision of creating the Stoke Mandeville games in 1948 that hosted 16 veterans from one country, the U.K., and one sport, in archery. And his vision then led to the first official Paralympic Games in Rome in 1960. And I just want to make sure that you all understand and know that Paralympics the "para" is the Latin word for parallel. Paralympics has nothing to do with paraplegia or paralysis, but actually, parallel, Paralympics is parallel to the Olympic Games. And the Olympic games are always held -- or the Paralympic games, sorry, are always held two weeks after the Olympics and they use the same venues. So the basketball court, where we saw the women's basketball team in Tokyo a few weeks ago

win the gold medal, our women's wheelchair basketball team is also playing on that court.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: So if we go to the next slide. I'm super excited, and I know you all have been studying for a long time out here this morning. So hopefully, these videos will jazz you up. But there couldn't be a more perfect time for you guys to be hosting your national convention. Because you thought the Olympics were exciting, we've got the Paralympics going on right now, and we are psyched and we are excited. So let's go ahead and play that video, so you can see what's happening in Tokyo right now.

(Video played.)

VOICE: (Singing.) I'm a rising Phoenix. I'll rise above you. Indeed. For me, I must proceed and shine bright like the sun, even though I know the darkness will come. It's all temporary. I can be legendary 'cause I will never stop believing in me. It doesn't matter what you think I should be. See, I am what I am. I'm the truth. I'm disabled. I'm amazing, understand. Don't you ever underrate me 'cause I got a second chance, and I choose to be the greatest in whatever the plan is on my life, right, I ignite life. A kaboom when I step in the room, so please don't get distracted. Yes, my limbs are fractured, still I rise from the ashes. I'm a rising Phoenix. I'll rise above you. I'm a rising Phoenix. I'll rise above you.

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: So all those athletes are currently in Tokyo and we have 4,400 athletes from 160 countries competing in Tokyo right now in 22 sports. Compare that to what we started with in World War II in 1948 with 16 athletes, and what we started with 1960 in Rome with just 400 athletes. We just finished up our first week of competition yesterday. It's been amazing. There has been some nail biter competitions and we're so excited, but I want to share a little bit with you. Not about all those countries but we just want to know about Team USA, right?

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: Yeah. So let's go ahead and talk about Team USA. 240 athletes representing the stars and stripes, 18 veterans, three active-duty service members representing the stars and stripes, wearing a different type of uniform, but still displaying that flag that they are so proud of. So almost 10 percent of Team USA is from our military population and they are rocking it.

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: So let's show the world what Team USA is doing.

(Video played.)

VOICEOVER: Hey, everyone's got a screen in their hands but not everyone's watching us. So they are missing David Wagner serving up fire, Stone Cold Katie Holloway, and record smasher Sam Grewe. Love watching cake rise, watch Stutzman hit the cherry on top. Boom. After you share that speed run, share me run, share the high-speed collisions and long-distance nail biters. Let's make the Paralympics impossible to miss and together, we'll show the world.

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: So I was on a call last week with a retired Paralympian, a world record holder. And she said, "If no one can find the Paralympic games on TV or on a device this year, you're not looking hard enough." So this year, I'm so excited to share that there are so many opportunities and so much coverage to watch the Paralympic Games. NBC leadership and broadcast leadership finally figured it out that we want to see these athletes kick some ass, right? That's right. So in 2012, we had five hours of coverage for the London games. In 2016, here in the States Post games, we had about 60 hours of coverage. This year, 1,200 hours of coverage.

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: So that's between NBC, NBC Sports Network, the Olympic channel, and streaming opportunities. So can't tell me that, again, like my Paralympic friend told me, "If you can't find it, you're not looking hard enough." Now, we all know that we're not all destined to be a Paralympic athlete nor an Olympic athlete, but there are so many ways for our injured military to find ways to engage. And there are also hundreds of ways for all of you to find ways to engage in the movement as volunteers, and as leadership, and as support for all of these athletes. So we know that staying healthy and active with a disability is even more important for secondary health conditions. In addition to just like Dr. Guttman said, "Get that blood pumping. Get those endorphins going. Be a part of a team, have camaraderie." So there are hundreds of opportunities for all of you to engage. If you have a family member, a friend, who would benefit from participating in sport, know that there are programs, adapted sport programs out there that can help your loved one engage and get healthy. So we know that military athletes, many of them, post-injury, are missing that camaraderie, that teamwork, and they're not sure where to go. But I can tell you post-injury and I've seen that light bulb go off when they discover that they can participate in sport again, and compete, and have that sense of teamwork and camaraderie and a new focus, a new energy. So there's a couple of places that you can go to to find places where you or a loved one can engage and they're from Alaska to Miami, from San Diego to Maine. There is an opportunity in adaptive sport organization that you can plug in to. One of them is called Move United. Their website is moveunitedsports.com. You can go on their website. They'll have a map. You can plug in your ZIP code or click on your state and find an organization near you all across the country. Same with U.S. Paralympics. Their website is Team USA. And again, we know not everybody's going to be a Paralympian and that's okay. We just want you all to be healthy, and we want your loved ones to be healthy, and we want our community of people with disabilities to be healthy. So check out those websites and find a place where you can engage and volunteer. I know the Auxiliary and Nicole's leadership has been very supportive of finding new opportunities for all of you to engage to support the adapted sports movement that was founded by veterans. And I hope you all join me this afternoon at 2:30 for a breakout session. We're going to learn a little bit more about those 21 veterans that are

in Tokyo right now competing. Some of them have already won medals. I just learned that one just won another medal. That's her second level of the games yesterday.

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: So I just wanted to ask you to join me at 2:30. We're going to watch some really cool competition. Can you tell that I love Olympic and Paralympic years? It's the best. And I know my husband gets burned out on watching game after game after game and I'm like, bring it on. I'm all about it. And you know what? Because of the COVID delay, we've got the Winter Games coming up in six months, so how about that? So when we talk about community programs and adapted sport programs across the country, I want to introduce a video to you that is focused on Team River Runner. Have any of you heard of Team River Runner across the country?

(Applause.)

MS. CALLAHAN: Well, we need to do a better job at getting the word out. Team River Runner focuses on using paddling sports and kayaking as a healing and rehabilitative process for veterans with injuries, both visible and invisible, to help them through that rehabilitative process. And we talk about camaraderie, and teamwork, and engaging in the community. Team River Runners has chapters all across the country, so again, another place where you can engage. And I think Nicole, you even got in the pool with Team River Runner, and got in a kayak, and was able to engage in that way, and you had fun, yes?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes, I did. That's where I learned to kayak at Walter Reed Medical Center.

MS. CALLAHAN: Yeah. So Nicole got in the pool at Walter Reed and learned how to kayak. So I know she's a huge sports fan, is in support of all these initiatives engaging our injured military in sport. So let's go ahead and watch the Team River Runner and thank you all and join me today at 2:30. I would love to meet you all. Take care. Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Video played.)

VOICE: I was in the Marine Corps for nine years. Up until the point of finding paddling, I had definitely plateaued. My personal life outside had become very reclusive. There was nothing pushing me, nothing that gave me an incentive or motivation to put forth the effort and live a healthy life.

VOICE: When I was active duty in the Navy, that's what got me interested in law enforcement to begin with. During that time, I had a fall about 20 feet and I broke my back. When I got back home, that's what actually got me to snap out of my, I guess, major depression.

(Music.)

VOICE: I spent three weeks in a coma, where they put me there to recover. So I had a ruptured aorta, along with a plethora of other injuries. I escaped from the hospital with doctor's approval, and I went home with the parents to spend another six weeks recovering. I was stuck with denial. I didn't think about it. Just started focusing on what I could do. I sat on a kayak and paddled for about 10 minutes. I thought it was pretty neat, but I'd

like to go faster and they put me in contact with Chuck.

VOICE: So he got in touch with me right away. Typical Marine. Dear sir, I was given your number blah, blah, blah. Very respectfully. So all formal and everything. So, of course, anybody that wants to paddle, I'm all in for getting them in a boat, figuring it out. I know, we've helped lots of vets, you know, through paddle sports over the past few years.

VOICE: I think the most difficult adjustment for me when I got home was just learning how to navigate my new life. My new normal so to say. I had to learn how to shower differently. Driving is completely different. I have to drive with hand controls now. Being a single mom. If it wasn't for my son, I really don't think I would be here.

MR. CONLEY: I think any single mom has it tough. Being a single mom in a wheelchair is really tough and she's, you know, one tough athlete, as well, and she's made the National Sled Hockey Team. She's taken right to paddling as a natural. I'm confident that she's going to be the national Paralympic 200-meter female sprint champ next year.

MR. NICK: Training with Chuck started out chasing him down. I followed Chuck around the waterways, ocean, inland everywhere, constantly staring at the back of him, trying in vain to beat him.

MR. CONLEY: You're going to start hurting. Every muscle in your body is going to be burning.

MR. NICK: This was the challenge that I needed. It gave me purpose. It was my way of giving back to the people that had supported me.

MR. CONLEY: Nick did, you know, one of the things Team River Runner, you know, wants to do. Nick has made paddling a way of life. He's eating, he's breathing, he's thinking like a guy who wants to be a national champion. And the next thing you know, two years in a row, Nick is national champ in his division for Paralympic Sprint Kayaking for the U.S.

VOICE: Once a Marine always Marine, every training session would be the same as when I was active duty training my guys and myself in the aspect of everything I do has the attention to detail, the drive, the discipline, as if my life depends upon it.

VOICE: You know, it starts off rough. It is tough in the beginning but, you know, you get through it. You realize that life does go on, that you still can enjoy everything that you enjoyed before. You just have to go about it in a different way. It may take a little bit longer but, you know, you can do it. Just get out there and make yourself do it because you won't know what you can do until you try.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Amazing right? My time with Team River Runner is something I will never forget. Let's put our hands together for Joe Mornini. He is the Executive Director of Team River Runners and the gentleman who taught me to kayak. Joe.

(Music.)

MR. MORNINI: Hi, everyone. Wasn't Dawna awesome? Let's give another big hand for Dawna.

(Applause.)

MR. MORNINI: So I'm Joe. I'm with Team River Runner. The first thing I want to let you know is that it's a very short time to tell you about our program. We've been going for a long time. I'll give you some information. But the most important thing you need to know is contact me later through our website or through emails, info@teamriverrunner.org or just email me. And I'll do this with your state, with your department, and take longer, and talk about what we can offer the veterans and the families. Because we really are about veterans and their families, which is why I'm so excited and proud to be here, because we are an inclusive program. We are about not only helping the veterans, but you all, the families, that have to support and go through so much with what the veterans go through as well. So thank you, and give yourselves a big hand, families of the veterans. Seriously, come on.

(Applause.)

MR. MORNINI: So that's why I'm so happy to be here because we've been doing this for 17 years, so we're going to hopefully move on, maybe not. It's a really cool picture though, isn't it? So Team River Runner have started-- we started at Walter Reed back in 2004 with just a few kayaks for my friends and others that I knew. We wanted to try to get back. We live about a half hour from Walter Reed, so we started at Walter Reed. How many -- if you -- applaud if you have either kayaked, or stand-up paddleboard, or gone rafting. Anybody in your family has done that?

(Applause.)

MR. MORNINI: Have you kayaked, or gone paddleboarding, or gone rafting at any time in your life? All right. Well, that's good to hear. So here's the thing about water, water heals. Water is the great equalizer. It's something that we can all do together with our veterans and with our families. We can do this together.

(Asides.)

MR. MORNINI: So I want to get to pictures. So our program is based on four different values.

(Asides.)

MR. MORNINI: We started Walter Reed in 2004 and since 2004, we now have over 65 chapters in 34 states across the country. It's all volunteer and it's all free. So it's free for the veterans and for the family members to take part in. If you got a butt, we got a boat, and we want to put your butt into our boats, and the veteran in your family, we want to get you paddling with us. So we're in 34 states now. Each year, we probably work with about 2,000 or more, just the veterans, and who knows how many more are the family members. So we work with veterans, we work the found -- those are the states that we're in. If you see a state mentioned there, that's what we do. We have worked with -- in our 17 years with over 10,000 unique and individual veterans. We get a grant each year from the Veterans Administration to start new chapters. So we start new chapters based on leadership. Maybe right out here in this crowd or some folks that want to take on leadership, that wants to start volunteering for us, and help us do the hard work of getting more veterans into an adaptive sport, like paddle sports. We do some great things in

these kayaks and on these stand-up paddleboards and these rafts. We have so much fun and we really enjoyed trying to create and invent new things that we do. And you'll see some of that here if we can get this thing to just move along. If I say "next slide," they're going to do it. We have adaptations for everybody. Anybody that wants to try to be in a kayak, we can put in a kayak. This particular individual has some sort of mobility issues, maybe in a wheelchair, maybe has some kind of neurological issue and needs to have outriggers to be able to paddle. Next slide. And then we also -- Next slide. This is so much fun. There's so many of you. We also have paddling adaptations for the upper arms. This particular individual lost both of his arms in an IED blast in Iraq, and he's out paddling with us. Next slide. If someone needs a ride down to the river, we have a chariot to take them down to the river that we can transfer them. Go to the next slide. There's a transfer bench that puts them right out of their wheelchair and into the kayak. So if you know a veteran or even a family member that needs that kind of adaptation, we have that in most of our chapters or we can get them in our chapters. And again, we have that VA grant to help us buy the boats and the equipment to start or equip existing our new chapters throughout the country. Next slide. We have adaptations for people that need help with their -- they're missing an arm, so there's a forearm adaptation. Next slide. We do a program called -- we have a number of programs called out-of-sight programs. We do most of our programs in swimming pools, except for COVID. But when COVID is over, we're going to be back in swimming pools, and of our 65 chapters, probably 60 to 65 of them are in a swimming pool at some time during the year. We have a chapter in Green Bay, Wisconsin. They paddle year-round because they're in a pool during the wintertime. So we have out-of-sight paddles. These are blind veterans, or visually disabled veterans, that we guide in the boat. Something that you don't know if you go to our website, you can see some videos of it is that we trained and we had sighted veterans guide five totally blind veterans on the Grand Canyon. They ran the big water of the Grand Canyon in their own kayak, just like those kayaks.

(Applause.)

MR. MORNINI: We are the only -- thanks. I was there. It was really cool. Just up the road. It's -- we're the only program in the world who are willing to do that, and that's because veterans are tough. They don't give up; they never want to give up, and neither the families. And so we want to make sure that we give all the opportunities for you all and for them to push their way as high as they want to go into, again, the great equalizer, water. Water heals, water connects, and it gives us the opportunity to give veterans purpose, to be able to take on leadership in our chapters, to be able to do the lifestyle program they need to do in adaptive sports so they can stay healthy and stay connected. Next slide. That's a list of all of our out-of-sight programs, so we have a lot of programs. It's important to know that we work very, very closely with the Blind Veteran Association. And for each one of our blind veterans or visually disabled veterans that paddles with us, we have family members that are paddling with them as well, and we also have veterans that are guiding or volunteers. Next slide. This is our out-of-sight program down in Florida.

Next slide. And we play kayak football. My kayak football team has a number of blind veterans on it. We play kayak football all over the country. Kayak football is a great sport. It gives veterans and their family members and volunteers a chance to have fun, to be like kids again, to go out and play. Kayak football is basically football, kayaking, and hockey all put together and it's just great. We played it. We play in swimming pools year-round. It's so much fun. We have a tournament in the Olympic Training Center in their pool every Veterans Day. We also have a tournament at Walter Reed, which is where our program started back in 2004. Next slide. We do flatwater programs. You can see all these paddlers out there on a beautiful lake. It's beautiful. You have nature. You know, veterans joined because they want to be able to get outside and do something adventurous and so. For some of them -- for some of you all adventure is just to be out in a boat, out on a river or a lake or out in the ocean enjoying the breeze, and the birds, and nature. Next slide. And we do whitewater. A lot of veterans that have seen combat or have seen, you know, a lot of adrenaline raising types of service, they need to have that in whitewater. It's a great way to transition from the service into something that gives them that drive again, that pump. We do a lot of whitewater programs around the country. And again, you should go on our website and you should look at some of the videos of some of the things that we do. It's really pretty cool what veterans were able to do, no matter what their disability is. Next slide. And we raft. We raft all over the country where there's water to be rafting in. Some things I want to mention to you is what our four values are. We are inclusive. You can't be inclusive if you're exclusive. Anybody that wants to come paddle with us, we'll try to find a boat and put everybody paddling in them. We want the families to come paddle with their veteran. It's very important to us that people are working together. We are inclusive. We are a lifestyle program. We do a lot of events, but events, you know, they're great. You get a lot of people together and then you're done, but what's next? You've got to wait for that event to happen again the next year or the next month. Most of our chapters paddle every week or every other week since they're regularly seeing each other. It's a way for us to be able to see the veterans and make sure that they're being safe, see their families, and get them to be connected. And then to train them to take on the leadership to help other veterans or other individuals in their community to be able to help reach out to the community and support people that are disabled in their community and give back service to their community, which is very important to our veterans. We are generous. It's very important that we work with everyone. Being able to work with you all is --like this is the high point of my life right now. Just being here. Being able to be with an organization that's all over the country. I see all these states and I'm like, this is great. Look at you, you guys are awesome. We want you to be part of our volunteer leadership. We want you to help volunteer for us. We need you to come and help us take ownership of driving the trailers, helping us do fundraising, finding the veterans that have gone dark, and get them out of that dark place and bring them back into the community. You all can help us do that. And so being able to be in a national organization like

this, this is the first time I've talked to so many people in a national organization in 17 years. And I mean, this is amazing. Give yourself a big hand for letting me be here.

(Applause.)

MR. MORNINI: And I mentioned purpose. We give purpose to the veterans. Veterans that come out of the service and have had -- have some kind of a disabling condition or have lost that will to be able to serve others, we give them that opportunity to do that in our community programs. We want them to take on that leadership. Of our 65 chapters, I'm sure more than 40 of them have within that leadership, veterans that have served and are so proud and so honored to be -- inspired to be able to give back to the veterans that they served with and other veterans from other service organizations. So it's very important to us that you all know that we exist and I want to end with this. The most important thing that we do at Team River Runner, from day one at Walter Reed to just the Walter Reed paddlers I had just the other day out on the river, is our mission. Our mission is to bring health and healing and empowerment to veterans and to the families that support those veterans each and every day that we go out on the water. And we could use you to help us in your department and your support is going to help us continue to do that mission. So again, this was a short little thing. I know you're ready for lunch. So I need to leave because they only gave me eight minutes. But I want you to contact me, contact me and I will do a much longer and more in-depth thing and help you set up a paddling program in your community, in your department so that we can help more veterans and we can get more families tight with their veterans again. Thank you so much for having me here. I appreciate it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: He asked me if he was funny. I think he's funny and we think I have energy. Exactly. So when you look at the DPAA, you look at Dawna Callahan, All-In sports Consulting, you look at Team River Runners, that is health and well-being for veterans, military, and their families all wrapped into one with so many different avenues and opportunities to participate. So thank you, Joe. Thank you, Dawna. I know she's already behind us, and as we end this morning's session, I would like our Executive Director Kelly Circle, she has some very important announcements for us.

(Music.)

MS. CIRCLE: Thanks so much. So following today's session is the Public Spirit Award luncheon starting at 12:30 in the south building ballroom and halls F and G. Our diva and dudes breakout start at 2:30 p.m. here in the convention center. Make sure to join us for poppy painting, trivia games, and our Paralympics viewing party. If I can spit that out. Don't forget to swing by the Giving Tuesday booth and show your support for our nation's heroes in honor of our 100th National Convention. The booth is conveniently open before and after each session, so don't delay, donate today. Tuesday is also the ALA showcase of fashion and everyone is invited. No registration necessary. And finally, if you're looking to do some fun shopping while supporting veterans, military, and their families, it's time for you to place your

bids at the ALA Foundation's first ever silent auction. All items are online now and will be available to view at state's dinner. Bidding will close Wednesday, September 1st at 9:00 p.m. Arizona Time. Thanks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Kelly. Thank you, everyone. I hope you feel as I do that we had a tremendous first start to our celebration this morning.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And so let's continue celebrating and head to the Public Spirit Award luncheon. Thank you, everyone. We are adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 11:53 a.m. on Monday, August 30, 2021, the above-entitled meeting was concluded.)

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS TUESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2021

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes, get the clappers going this morning.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I hope as you have been congregating this morning, you have looked at the beautiful historical pictures on the walls. It kind of reminds me of a museum. And history is all about preserving our history, and so preserving our history starts with the National Convention and all the pageantry. What did you think of yesterday?

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Wonderful. So now the 100th National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary will come to order.

(Bell rings.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I would appreciate you each taking a moment to ensure that your electronic devices are in silent mode. And this morning, Dr. Deborah Blanch will lead us in the Invocation. Deborah?

(Bell rings.)

DR. BLANCH: Good morning, family.

ALL: Good morning.

DR. BLANCH: Let us all look to the heavens for our blessings as we pray this morning. Father God, we ask that your blessings are upon us today as we gather here for this meeting. Bless our leadership with your divine guidance. We stand here today to rededicate this organization, ourselves, as we pledge to continue to serve for God and country. Direct us so that we may perform our duties faithfully and effectively while you continue to provide us with blessings to provide services to our veterans, their families, and our communities. Amen.

ALL: Amen.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Past National Chaplain Deborah. We

appreciate your services this morning. Please be seated.

(Bell rings.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, once again, good morning. And welcome to day two of our 100th National Convention.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We spend a great deal of time developing leaders within our programs, training tools, and by personal mentorship. This morning we present a group of women who have spent a lifetime leading our organization in a variety of ways, culminating to their year as National President. Please welcome the attending Past National Presidents of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Linda Boone from the Department of Oregon.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Our 1992-1993 National President. Look at that beautiful jacket she has on today. Linda Newsome from the Department of Maryland, 1994-1995, known as the Diamond Jubilee, the 75th National President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Virginia Hobbs from the Department of Kentucky, our 1998-1999 National President, beautiful in red this morning.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Kristine West from the Department of New Hampshire, our 2000-2001 National President in her lovely yellow suit this morning.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan from Wisconsin, 2007-2008 National President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And Jan is behind stage as our distinguished guest chairman this week, so it's great to see her out front this morning. Desirée Stoy, better known as Desi, from the Department of Ohio, 2008-2009 National President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Good morning, Desi. Rita Navarreté from the Department of New Mexico, 2009-2010 National President. She is also behind stage as a distinguished guest committee member.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Carlene Ashworth from the Department of Texas, 2010-2011 National President. We will hear from Carlene later this morning on the stage.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Peggy Thomas from the Department of Virginia.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Peggy has got a wonderful green jacket and a

beautiful smile this morning, 2012-2013 National President.

(Applause.)

From the Department of California, Nancy Brown-Park, 2013-2014. And she is dancing her way. She is excited.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Department of Illinois, Sharon Conatser, 2015-2016.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All patriotic in her red, white, and blue. Mary Davis from the Department of Washington, our 2016-2017 National President. Lovely, lovely. Good morning, Mary.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And the last Past National President attending is Diane Duscheck from the Department of Wisconsin, 2017-2018.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Ladies, it is your moment in the sun, the valley of the sun. Good morning, Past National Presidents. Let's give them a round of applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, ladies. Their ongoing contributions to our organization are immeasurable and I think as we think what they have experienced in our 100 years of history is incredible. Pick their brains, ask them questions. As we have been preparing for this convention, they have been a wealth of knowledge and appreciate of where we have come and where we want to go. So thank you for your guidance, Past National Presidents. That's a way to start the morning. Yesterday it was fireworks, this morning it was pageantry. And to talk about Presidents, the term, the focus is Past Presidents Parley. When you think of membership and you think of camaraderie, showing the next generation what positive leadership can do. Here to share the Past Presidents Parley report is none other than Past National President Carlene Ashworth. Good morning, Carlene again.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: She's having to do the road race out back, I think. You go off one side and you come on the other side. Good morning, Carlene.

MS. ASHWORTH: Good morning. Let me take a breath here a second. Okay. Madam President, Nicole, as our 100th anniversary ends, I assure you that our members are focused on the future of the American Legion Auxiliary, and I am so excited to share with you some of the great activities members and units are doing across the country that will continue our legacy for the next 100 years and beyond. I received so many wonderful reports from 47 departments showcasing their outstanding nominees for member of the year, and I want to share some of them with you. Pennsylvania's nominee is 97-year-young Esther Wagner.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Yes, you heard me correctly, 97 years young. Esther is a 74-year member of the Auxiliary, having joined on May 6, 1946. She has been unit treasurer for 46 years, with impeccable attention to the detail of unit funds and it is believed that she has never missed a unit meeting in all these years. Esther sells raffle tickets for fundraisers, organizes bus trips to various places for the unit, helps organize the unit's two annual yard sales, serves the food at these events, handwrites Christmas cards with personal notes to all the veterans in the local nursing home every year. She participates in the annual Memorial and Veterans Day parades and many other unit activities. I think you can see why her unit calls her the Energizer Bunny. To quote her unit president, "We should all try to emulate Esther. Our community, states, and county would be a better place filled with gratitude, generosity, and love." Another great example of our amazing members comes from the Department of Kansas and the small town of Natoma, population 300. Eleven years ago, Laah Tucker and her husband returned to her small hometown and shortly thereafter she joined the Auxiliary. Her unit states she has become the driving force in spearheading activities in her community. Her passion for veterans, military, and their families inspired her to get totally involved in the annual Veterans Day activities, where this entire community participates. She is serving her eighth term of unit president. Many news articles written by Laah have been published in area newspapers and across Kansas, extolling the virtues of this community and the leading efforts of this unit to promote their activities. Her unit's nomination states, "Laah is a true example of a frontline leader in our organization." I received many great narratives from our department chairmen sharing how their members continue to mentor, support, and encourage one another, even if they could not hold regular meetings or activities. A pandemic did not keep our members from continuing their work and moving forward into the next century of service. Their reports were all very inspiring and certainly showed how creative and talented our members are. Almost every department raised funds in various ways to sponsor medical scholarships for deserving applicants. The Department of Illinois Past Presidents Parley awarded \$51,000 in medical scholarships.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. ASHWORTH: And the Department of Texas awarded \$22,000.

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Almost every department reported they would continue the Past Presidents Parley Committee within their departments.

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: In celebration of the 100th anniversary, this committee asked departments to request former unit member of the year nominees to share what the award meant to them and if it had made a difference in their Auxiliary and personal life. And here are just a couple of those stories. Peg Sullivan from the Department of Wyoming was eligible to belong from birth, as her parents were actively involved. But it was not until 1990 that the Department Service Officer convinced her to join. In 2004, she transferred her membership to another unit. However, when she attended her

first meeting, no one spoke to her or even asked her name. She told her husband she was not going back. But the unit chaplain came to her two weeks later with an apology, and the rest of history. She became totally involved and was awarded the unit member of the year in 2008. She is now in our ninth year as their department secretary/treasurer. Lynn Tomlinson from North Dakota was surprised to be honored as the unit member of the year in 2011 because she never felt that the volunteer work she did was any more important than that of any other member should do towards advancing the mission of the Auxiliary. Her involvement in the unit education and scholarship program enabled her to express her love for working with children. New York's former member of the year, Deborah Klemann, was honored in 2019. Having been raised by parents who were members of The American Legion Family, it was only natural that she would become actively involved. She stated, "Working to benefit our veterans is a rewarding experience," and honoring them at their annual Veterans Night dinner is near and dear to her heart. Her recognition as unit member of the year was her motivation to continue doing what she loves. I think you will agree after hearing these inspiring stories that our organization is in good hands and it's not hard to see our future is intact as we begin a new century of service. Madam President, this concludes this portion of my platform remarks.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay.

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: But this committee would now like to recognize some more special women who have made a difference in the lives of many. But first, I'm pleased to recognize the other members of this committee. Vice Chairman and Past National President Kathy Dungan, whose work with the departments ensured we had nominees from each branch of the service for our Servicewoman of the Year, and committee member and Past National President Rita Navarreté, who was involved with the mentoring of leaders from the grassroots to the department level. These ladies were invaluable throughout this year in making this committee's work successful. We are happy to tell you we received nominations for Servicewoman of the Year for every branch of service, including the new Space Force branch.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. ASHWORTH: I will present the first two awards to these women who have accomplished so much in their careers in serving our country, as well as giving back to the communities where they live. Each honoree will receive an award inscribed with their name, rank, branch of service, and the following: "For honorable military service in the War on Terrorism on behalf of a grateful nation, presented in August of 2021." Representing the Navy is Petty Officer Shelby Schroeder.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Shelby was unable to be with us today as she has just returned from deployment and has been accepted into Officers Instructors School and must complete numerous flight hours in order to move up in rank.

Shelby's inspiration to join the Navy was her grandfather, Richard Zulch, an Army Vietnam veteran and past Ohio American Legion Department Commander. Immediately after graduating from High school, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy on June 23, 2017. Being a junior Auxiliary member of Freedom Unit #183 since birth, her life revolved around the American Legion Auxiliary as she traveled with her grandparents to various events. Before fully enlisting in the Navy, Shelby was in the pre-enlisted phase where her community service work with food pantries, assisting with school events, and in homeless shelters gave her the feeling of accomplishment in helping others. Currently stationed in Jacksonville, Florida --

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: -- Shelby is an AWO2 Petty Officer, Aviation Warfare Specialist Operator, and is responsible for the tracking of the submarines overseas. She has spent multiple deployments overseas in Misawa, Japan, El Salvador, Diego Garcia, and most recently in Bahrain. While it was difficult to adjust to these cultures of the different countries, and being away from home, she is able to explore the world. Shelby is an athlete and has run cross country and track in school and excelled in all sports. During her time in the Navy, she has run five milers for Heroes for Veterans, Wounded Warriors, and Veterans for Miles, where she carried the American flag, and five milers for the Humane Society. She has spent many hours volunteering at the animal shelter in Jacksonville, Florida. She is an avid motocross rider and enjoys outdoor sports when she can and relaxing with her dog Maverick and her cat Lolo. Shelby was recently presented the Naval Good Conduct Medal while stationed overseas. She also earned the Overseas Expeditionary Medal for her overseas deployments. Shelby is eager to accomplish so much in the military while earning credits as she proceeds in life. From helping with hurricane and tornado disasters, to retirement and reenlistment ceremonies, she is always eager to lend a hand. As I mentioned, Shelby couldn't be with us, but she did send us a short video greeting.

(Video plays.)

PETTY OFFICER SCHROEDER: Hello, everyone, AWT Shelby Schroeder. I'm a lead acoustic operator on the PA aircraft and VPA in the United States Navy. I've been in for four years and I made two deployments to Japan, Diego Garcia, El Salvador, and Bahrain. I'm now at home working towards my instructor designation. I really want to thank everybody who had nominated me for this award, especially the Department of Ohio, American Legion Auxiliary, Freedom Unit #183 and their Past Presidents Parley Chairman Shirley Mauer, as well as my parents and grandparents. I wish I could be there in person to be accepting this award, but duty calls. Thanks to everybody once again for nominating me.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Please help me thank her for her service.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Representing the Marines is Lance Corporal Makayla McDaniel, nominated by the Department of New York.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Lance Corporal McDaniel is unable to be with us today as she has just returned to duty after being on maternity leave. The following information was submitted by the nominating unit, and I quote, "Lance Corporal McDaniel showed great determination at her MOS schooling, scoring high on tests for supply administration. She was then sent to an Air Force Base in Florida in 2020. Though no longer close to home, she still takes time to encourage and support the youth at the dance studio she formerly attended. She is a member of Arthur Cunningham Auxiliary Unit 0440, and her unit is immensely proud of her service to our country. I received the following letter from Makayla, and I would like to share it with you: "I wish to send my sincere thank you to the American Legion Auxiliary Family for this honor. I would like to give a special shout out to the Department of New York for nominating me for this award. I am also honored to serve my country as a United States Marine, and I am a proud dual member of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary. I know how great the American Legion Auxiliary is, as I was blessed to join the American Legion Auxiliary as a junior member in 2008. Since then, I was fortunate to meet many great women who inspired me to support our veterans, our military, and our community. I earned patches, learned about Americanism and Patriotism, and I talked with a lot of veterans in my local VA. I made friends with the patients in the nursing homes, especially a spunky female veteran who told me the greatest gift to give and receive is the gift of service, as she thanked me for volunteering. I knew then that the military was the path for me through and through my teen years and as I struggled to choose which branch of service. During my junior year of high school, the recruiters came to talk to us and the Marines really stood out to me. Then it hit me that I would be carrying on my Grandpa McDaniels' legacy. I am a proud World War II Marine's granddaughter, and although I am small in size, I am strong in character, commitment, and service. I was often told I wouldn't make it because I was a small, petite ballerina. My American Legion Auxiliary never said that. They continued to encourage me. That is why I still reach out to the young girls at my dance studio back home and encourage them in Facetime calls, Snapchats, Messenger, conversations, and texts. I want to show them that, yes, you can do it, you just have to stay focused and try. I am also blessed that Juniors in my unit, county, and district still ask to talk and reach out to me. Being invited to talk in a Zoom meeting, Facebook chat, or one on one, is still important to me. I know that these young ladies are the future leaders of their communities and our organization, and even the military, and it is just part of our legacy to support them. I know that the members of the American Legion Auxiliary are the most committed, caring, and supportive when it comes to our military. I have received a great deal of support from my American Legion Auxiliary Family in New York, but also from those in North Carolina and Florida where I have been serving."

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: “Although it is not easy to ask for help from others, I know that if my military family or I are ever in need, the members of the greatest patriotic service organization the American Legion Auxiliary can be called upon.”

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: “So to all the members of the American Legion Auxiliary, I applaud you for all you do every day for those of us in uniform. Again, thank you for this honor, your love, and support. And I wish you all a fabulous convention as you celebrate the 100th anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary. Semper Fi. Lance Corporal Makayla McDaniels.”

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Her award will be shipped to her. And please help me once again show your appreciation for Lance Corporal Makayla McDaniels.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: The next two awards will be presented by Past National President Rita Navarreté.

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Captain Mary Ellen Durley is commanding officer of the USCG Cutter HEALY, Seattle, Washington. HEALY is 420 feet long, the largest ship in the USCG fleet, with a crew of 19 officers, 18 chief petty officers, 64 enlisted, and berthing for 56 scientists. The premier high altitude low breaking vessel, HEALY travels annually from June to October to the Arctic in support of the U.S., maritime security, and scientific research. Captain Durley assumed command June 2019 after serving as Chief, office of aids to the navigation system at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C. She was program manager for aids to navigation, vessel traffic services, navigation standards, and marine planning within the U.S. marine transportation system. With exemplary vision, leadership, and planning, Captain Durley led U.S. interagency and international partners from the United Kingdom and Japan during 65 days of a \$6 million mission above the arctic circle. HEALY safely navigated over 14,000 nautical miles, reaching the highest latitude of 81 degrees north in the ice covered waters, accomplishing all arctic national strategic objectives and research goals during the arctic west summer expedition.

Captain Durley expertly managed crew efforts during 44 days of a \$10 million dry dock maintenance extension, collaborating with various Coast Guard commands and the science community to plan simultaneous equipment, food, and supply onloads, conduct the vital mission preparations, and complete required crew training for the arduous deployment. Demonstrating professionalism and adaptability, Captain Durley maximized crew readiness and sailed HEALY on time, delivering 24/7 operations for 16 days, resulting in 1,230 safe unique evolutions. Highlights from the 103-day deployment involved 852 casts from the cutter’s A-frames with multimillion dollar equipment, towing instruments over two miles below the surface of the

ocean without assistance of a bow thruster, deploying mooring systems to study environmental changes and acoustics, and conducting ice station research to study the rate of ice melting in the arctic region.

An engaging, compassionate professional mariner, she maintained a positive command climate for this ultimate success of the entire crew. Captain Durley optimally balanced crew workload to maximize morale and achieve mission goals. She rallied the troops during the global coronavirus pandemic attacking the national epicenter in home port, directing and demanding leadership to safeguard the crew and families. Maintaining mission focus while mindfully caring for her crew, Captain Durley mentored staff and offered insightful career advice. She provided timely feedback and built confidence through empowerment resulting in nine newly qualified deck officers and ice pilots, five officer promotions, 13 enlistment advancements, and three officer graduate program selectees. The vital data collected from HEALY's deployment provided information on a harmful algae bloom that causes a negative impact to subsistent hunters, seasonal ice formation, and acoustic energy propagation across the Arctic Ocean.

When not in uniform, Captain Durley participates in activities to give back to her community by speaking at school programs to discuss the careers in the USCG Reserve and Auxiliary forces. She participated with her career in building on roofs on local schools damaged by national disasters, supports local Special Olympic events, volunteers at her church, and assists with fundraising for communities suffering from floods and tornados. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she coordinated donations to the local Seattle Food Bank to feed families and assisted many homeless veterans.

Captain has served over 13 of her 25-year Coast Guard career at sea. She is a native of Potosi, Wisconsin and holds a B.S. in Government with the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, 1995, and a Master's in Public and International Affairs from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2007. Her personal and unit awards are numerous. Please help me thank her for her service as we welcome Captain Mary Ellen Durley.

(Applause.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Captain Durley, the American Legion Auxiliary would like to recognize you for your outstanding contribution to both the United States Coast Guard and your community.

CAPTAIN DURLEY: Thank you very much. Madam President and the rest of the delegation that is here this morning, it is an extreme honor and pleasure to represent the service that I love and receive this award. I did not know they were going to read through my entire biography.

(Laughter.)

CAPTAIN DURLEY: But just to let you know, being from Wisconsin, and I saw one of the pictures was a snow angel, that was in the Arctic. When you go to the Arctic, that's the first thing everybody wants to do when they hit the ice is get out onto the ice and make a snow angel. So that was a bucket list item, and I checked that one off the box.

(Applause.)

CAPTAIN DURLEY: I want to have special thanks to the Department of

Wisconsin President Joanie Dickerson.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CAPTAIN DURLEY: She took her time and effort to nominate me for this special award and it had been some years, I believe 1993, since I served at the Badger Girls State trying to recruit all those young women to be future Coast Guard petty officers and officers in the fleet.

(Applause.)

CAPTAIN DURLEY: Thank you, Joanie. For the past 30 years, yes, I have dedicated, it's now 14 but I think 13 at the time of the nomination, years at sea and I've dedicated my entire life serving in an outstanding military service, devoted to executing humanitarian missions that protect and save the lives of others. 2020 was a year that brought new challenges to the nation, the U.S. Coast Guard, and personally to my own leadership. Leading a crew through a global pandemic was a unique mission and one with dynamic developments each and every day. I know I did not do anything on my own, but I did it as a team. All those accomplishments that were just mentioned were done specifically with Coast Guard Team HEALY, all of the talented, hardworking men and women of the United States Coast Guard.

(Applause.)

CAPTAIN DURLEY: Thank you again for the honor and for all of the tremendous support of the American Legion Auxiliary. The American Legion Auxiliary provides our veterans and military families and our communities with the tremendous honor of serving our nation and knowing how to do that and how to respect those that do.

We know that the American Legion Auxiliary is always ready to assist others and they exemplify the Coast Guard motto, Semper Paratus. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Please remain on stage as we honor the three other services. But now we'll have a presentation.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The National President is going to take a moment of personal privilege. I met Mary Ellen in Wisconsin on my visit. And I knew she was coming because she is the new administrative assistant for my escort yesterday, my cousin, the Admiral in the Coast Guard. So life being a small world, I think things happen for a reason. And Todd told me she had won, and I didn't even know it. So I think it's wonderful how we have connections that we don't even realize and that the world isn't as big as we think it is sometimes. So again, congratulations, Mary Ellen.

(Applause.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Representing the United States Space Force is Captain Danielle Stewart, nominated by the Department of Arizona.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Quoting Captain Stewart in her resume, she states the face of women in the military is much like the face of our civilian counterparts. Our successes are based on the key tenets of flexibility,

resiliency, humility, a commitment to service, and a good sprinkling of luck.

As a military brat moving six times and attending countless schools by the time she was ten, she watched her father change careers and allow his family to settle into some normalcy, showing her what it meant to be a leader professionally and personally. She stated that despite those experiences, and maybe because of them, she never shied away from an opportunity to be front and center always leading. She states she excelled in challenging curriculum, held multiple jobs at a time, was a dedicated athlete, and the head of many organizations, but most proud of her commitment to service in her community.

In her youth, she concentrated on volunteering with programs for children with disabilities. At the age of 14, she volunteered for Horses and Handicapped, a camp that gave children with disabilities the opportunity to experience the therapeutic nature of riding horses. She coached the local area color guard Special Olympics team ultimately to a national competition. In 2006, she participated in Florida's American Legion Auxiliary Girls State.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Modeling the rules and responsibilities of the political system inspired her to think differently about service. She attended Florida State University, studied political science with a desire to become a political lobbyist for the causes she was passionate about. After four years and graduating with a major in political science and criminology, a doctorate in criminology, but after a year into the program she realized she wanted to contribute to the world around more than anything but had lost her passion for academia. She decided to stop pursuing her degree and pursued a commission in the Air Force, whose core values are integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. Captain Stewart states she has been a passionate leader during her time in the Air Force and now the Space Force. She fervently advocates for Salute to Life, the DOD bone marrow donor registry program and is incredibly proud to have participated in and led drives in three states to find life-saving matches. She loves the work she does in the Space Force as a force multiplier for the military. Her husband who is a combat veteran, serves as a constant reminder of the importance of staying focused and dedicated to the mission. She states she will likely never see or experience what he has but hopes for her efforts to help the men and women who are faced with the toughest jobs. She is a lead member of the women's initiative team, advocating for a more inclusive support program for the family and friends of those who serve, working military members, and those who support them around the world. She stated that for many of those serving, her training has prepared her for everything except how to navigate the sacrifice her family makes. She says, "I've been thankful to be in a career that has allowed me to maximize the amount of time that I am on the home front." Like many servicewomen, I struggle to maintain the balance in my life and be open about struggles. Just when I thought I had figured out parenting, we learned my daughter struggled with anxiety. Balancing supporting my family, two shoulder surgeries and recovery, emotional fatigue, and

continuing to make ‘excellence’ a key part of my career has been draining. When I look back at my father’s service, I knew it was not a list of things he had done that made me proud and when I look at my husband’s service, and the sacrifice he made for his country, the sacrifices he made for his family, continues to make for his family as a stay-at-home dad, I feel the same pride. Trying to explain exemplary service feels like a heavy burden when I am consistently surrounded by the most impressive and humble people the world has to offer. What I do know is that I am incredibly proud of the woman I am, both in and out of the uniform.” Captain Stewart is a proud member of Arizona’s Auxiliary Unit 62.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Unfortunately, Danielle couldn’t be with us, but she sent a video greeting.

(Video plays.)

CAPTAIN STEWART: I’m Captain Dani Stewart and I am honored to accept the award for the Servicewoman of the Year for the United States Space Force. The American Legion Auxiliary Florida Girls State set me on the path to where I am 15 years ago, and that makes this especially exciting for me. I know that service before self is a key value that the American Legion Auxiliary, the Department of the Air Force, and I all share. I’m sorry I can’t be there today, but I am currently at Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, where (indiscernible) for the combined space operations. Thank you again. A special thank you to Unit 62 for the nomination and to you all for your support. Thanks.

(Applause.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: Yes, please help me thank her for her service.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. NAVARRETÉ: The next two awards will be presented by Past National President Carlene Ashworth. I’ll turn it over to you.

MS. ASHWORTH: Thank you, Rita.

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Representing the United States Army, it is my pleasure to present First Sergeant Jennifer L. Bell, nominated by the Department of Alaska.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Jennifer joined the Army National Guard on September 13, 2001, two days after 9/11. Although still in college, she felt called to serve her country and Jennifer went regular Army on June 16, 2005. She has served two tours in Iraq. Jennifer received her B.A. in Sociology from St. Cloud State and her Master’s Degree in Sociology from New Mexico State University. She also completed the Comp TIA Security through the Army. Prior to the COVID pandemic, Jennifer coached military children in softball, baseball, and basketball. Jennifer’s battalion recorded a video of her for Women in the Military Month, and it is posted on Facebook. Jennifer has

earned many awards and commendations during her time in the service, among them three Meritorious Service Medals, six Army Commendation Medals, seven Army Achievement Medals, and four Good Conduct Medals. She also earned one National Defense Service Medal, one Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, one Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, one Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, three Non-Comm Professional Development Ribbons, one Army Service Ribbon, one Overseas Service Ribbon, one Armed Forces Reserve Medal, seven Army Certificates of Achievement, and one Marksmanship Qualification Badge. Please help me thank her for her service as we welcome 1st Sergeant Jennifer L. Bell.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

SERGEANT BELL: Good morning, everybody. I'm glad to see that they got my good side. I was a little nervous. National President Nicole, and members of the American Legion Auxiliary, thank you for this astounding opportunity to represent my fellow servicewomen of the United States Army.

(Applause.)

SERGEANT BELL: I said I wasn't going to get emotional, but it is truly an amazing honor. The Army has offered me many opportunities to succeed and I am very lucky in my career. I have had amazing superiors and mentors who have guided me on how to grow as a person and how to be a great teacher and a great leader. I can't say that I haven't had challenges as a female, especially since they can't convince me to jump out of a plane and I am with 82nd Airborne Division.

(Laughter.)

SERGEANT BELL: I have learned to brush it off and just continue to push through the pack and learn as much as I can along the way. But I feel that to overcome these challenges, I have to be more knowledgeable, faster, stronger, and smarter than all of my male counterparts. And let me tell you, they give me a run for my money.

(Applause.)

SERGEANT BELL: All of my achievements that Ms. Carlene read off, I didn't do that by myself. I currently am a 1st Sergeant for a company of 38 soldiers. They are literally all my kids, even my commander, he's younger than me. I'm the oldest one. But they help make me who I am today. So all of my accomplishments, I thank each and every person that I continue to serve with and that are under me. Because they help me be the person that I am today. Both as a child and today, I worked twice as hard to prove to people that I can do it. One thing about 1st Sergeant Bell, is if you tell me I can't do it, minus jumping out of planes, I'm going to do it. I'm a firm believer that the only person that can stop me, is me, and I don't plan on stopping any time soon.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

SERGEANT BELL: In closing, I would like to thank April Sinclair from the C. Russell Huber Unite 57 in Fairbanks, Alaska, of which I am a member, even though I am stationed at North Carolina. And I'm coming to find my

North Carolina counterparts. I would also like to thank Ms. Carlene for being so patient with all my photos. I tried to send them several times in the format she requested, and I'm just glad they showed up. So thank you, Ms. Carlene. Once again, I thank you for the tremendous honor and recognition for this award and I will definitely be taking it back to the 82nd Airborne Division. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Representing the United States Air Force is Colonel Heather W. Blackwell, nominated by the Department of Mississippi. Colonel Blackwell is unable to be with us today as she has recently had a change of duty station and is now stationed at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia and is on a temporary duty assignment. At the time of her nomination, Colonel Heather Blackwell was the commander of the 81st Training Wing, Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi. She commanded 12,000 airmen and civilians, providing technical training for officers, enlisted, and civilians of the U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve, as well as other Department of Defense agencies in addition to international students. The training covers numerous electronic, computer, weather, medical, personnel, comptroller, and information management career fields, and creates combat capability for expeditionary air, space, and cyber space forces. Colonel Blackwell graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1997. She has served in a variety of assignments to include the Director of Legislative Affairs for U.S. Cyber Command, a national security fellow in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and Assistant Executive Officer for the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and as an Air Force Legislative Fellow for Senator Ben Nelson, where she was responsible for his military and foreign relations portfolios. In 2015, she served as commander of the 690th Cyber Space Operations Group at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, where she oversaw six squadrons and two detachments tasked with operating and maintaining the Air Force's global enterprise network. She has received the following major awards and nominations: Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and Air Force Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters. Unfortunately, Heather couldn't be with us but she did send her regards via video.

(Video plays.)

COLONEL BLACKWELL: To the men and women of The American Legion, I am Colonel Heather Blackwell. I am so sorry that I can't be with you in person to accept this great honor. I sincerely appreciate Keesler putting me in for this and I appreciate what The American Legion does for our community, for our families, for our military, and our veterans. Again, it is a great honor to accept this. When I look at the heritage of all the other winners who have received this award, I feel humbled by doing this. This award to me says, Colonel Blackwell, keep pushing. Keep caring for our people. Keep pushing hard for diversity, equity, and inclusion, and keep loving our airmen. Again, I appreciate all of you. I am so sorry that COVID has kept me from

being there in person, but please know that this award touches me to the bottom of my heart. I appreciate you. I hope you have a great conference. Thank you

(Applause.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Please help me thank her for her service.

(Music.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in giving our Salute to Servicewomen honorees another warm Auxiliary thank you for their service and contributions to their communities.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

(Cheering.)

MS. ASHWORTH: Madam President Nicole, this concludes the final report of the Past Presidents Parley Committee's presentation.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Carlene. Let's think what is our future, how wonderful to have all six branches represented and our future is indeed in safe and well cared for hands. Thank you again. Congratulations. They are true heroes.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And as you know, our theme of health and wellbeing, our focus for veteran, military, and their families, they are the veteran, they are the military, and their families at home. So those that you nominated, we had states from all over the country. I was writing down the six states. We have touched almost every corner with these six individuals. So thank you for the nominations. And Carlene, thank you, and Rita, and Kathy for your hard work.

It is now a pleasure for me to welcome the Chapel of Four Chaplains from the Memorial Foundation United States Retired Navy Captain Louis Cavaliere for a special presentation. Louis?

(Applause.)

(Music.)

CAPTAIN CAVALIERE: Good morning, everyone. I give you greetings from the Chapel of Four Chaplains in Philadelphia in the State of Pennsylvania.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

CAPTAIN CAVALIERE: I'm happy to say that we are presenting an award today to your outgoing National President for her service. Now, at the Chapel of Four Chaplains every day is Memorial Day. That is why I am wearing this poppy. And your National President has been a key person with the poppy program. Do you know, at the Chapel of Four Chaplains, we have four programs? And because of the great support that we get from all of you from all over the country, we are able to continue with our Legion of Honor Program, with our Chaplains Training Program, where we are now training chaplains all over the country, with our scholarship essay contest, and with our most important program, our outreach to veterans. Without your support, we cannot do any of those programs and I have to tell you that these programs

right now are in dire need. But today, we are celebrating the tenure, the two-year tenure of Nicole Clapp. And we are going to induct her this morning into the Legion of Honor of the Four Chaplains.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

CAPTAIN CAVALIERE: So before I do that, I only want to say that you are all welcome to visit us. We're in Philadelphia in the Navy Yard. Please come and see us. And we will extend a very warm welcome to all of you. So now I ask that you all please stand. To all who hear these presents, greetings. The Chapel of Four Chaplains is pleased to present the American Legion Auxiliary National President for two years. But this is in recognition of her lifetime of service to this country and to all people regardless of who we are. And this symbolizes the unity of this nation, founded upon the fatherhood of one God. Nicole, congratulations. You are in good company. We are very, very happy to have you in our ranks. Well done. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. My goodness, thank you. All right, here we go.

(Applause.)

CAPTAIN CAVALIERE: This is for you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you very much.

CAPTAIN CAVALIERE: We will see you all in Milwaukee. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I had my private tour about three months ago. I will mention it right now. That's okay.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I need to tell you, I didn't know, I knew they were coming, but I didn't know why. I need to thank the Department of New Jersey, and particularly --

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: -- the alternate NEC Margaret, better known to me as Maggie McMahon. When she was taking me back to the airport in Philadelphia, we had some time on a Sunday morning. And I was provided a private tour of the Chapel of Four Chaplains. And as Louis said, it is a beautiful, living, breathing tribute to our heroes. And he whispered to me, your grandpa is a Navy guy. So how special. But it is a beautiful place to go and visit, and I need to thank all of them, the Chapel of Four Chaplains. So if you have an opportunity, I would put that on your bucket list to go visit if you have the chance. So as we start preserving our history, many of you know that I read the 13 inches of hardbound history of our organization because I wanted to know about the history that came before me as your 100th National President. So preserving, displaying, and sharing our history, traditions, and milestones is the purpose behind our history program. These past two years have been a special time for members to look back and reconnect with our organization's rich past and that is what I did to start to build my foundation when I would come to each of your departments and play a little trivia with you and The American Legion Family. I don't know if she would have said yes when I would have said to Peggy Monroe of Tennessee, would you please

be the National Historian for two years? But I know she did a great job and I can't thank Peggy enough. So welcome Peggy to the stage, please.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. MONROE: Good morning, Madam National President Nicole, it has been an honorable and exciting journey serving as your National Historian for two years. I'm especially honored and grateful to have served as the centennial historian and to write our 100th amazing history. Robert F. Kennedy once wrote, "Few will have the greatness to be in history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation." It was his way of stating that each of us can and do make a difference every day. I pray that history will reflect well on National President Nicole. I have found only good by our dedicated members. The past two years have been of celebration and challenges. Units and departments celebrated a century of service with formal balls, historical displays, parades, and many other activities. National mission trainings were held in the fall of 2019 but were cancelled in 2020. The Department of Kansas reached into the unit's (indiscernible) and some worked on getting oral and written histories from American Legion Family members.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. MONROE: The Wolbach Unit 236 of Nebraska created a five tier birthday cake made from red, white, and blue tires for their community and school's parade. It was adorned with 100 bullet casings, poppies, and The American Legion and Auxiliary emblems.

(Applause.)

MS. MONROE: The cloud of COVID-19 hit the world and everything closed. Our National Convention in Louisville was cancelled. The national staff had to relocate to their individual homes. The Auxiliary had to think of new ways to continue our mission. Thanks to Zoom, units, departments and national held their regular meetings. National President Nicole held her first Zoom NEC meeting. The NEC had to learn how to vote virtually. Members did drive by donation gift bags, items were given to healthcare workers and presented to VA facilities, thousands of masks were made and donated to their local communities. Colchester Unit 91 from Vermont filled four pickup trucks and raised \$1,185 for the Colchester Food Shelf. New Mexico members continued our mission by wearing their masks and draping their charter in memory of all those who had lost their lives. I truly appreciate the hard work of the National Divisional Vice Presidents in the selection of the coveted Toomey Award for the best department history. It was not an easy task and I thank you. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. As the American Legion Auxiliary celebrates its centennial, we are happy to report our members are more excited than ever about history. Here to tell us all the ways our units and departments,

as did Peggy for celebrating, please welcome our National History Chairman Cathi Taylor.

MS. TAYLOR: Good morning.

ALL: Good morning.

MS. TAYLOR: Madam National President, how can we know who we are and where we are going if we don't know anything about where we have come from and what we have been through to be where we are? These words from author David McCullough speak to the heart of why we should collect, preserve, and share our history. With that quote, and our centennial in hand, the National History Committee launched three projects. Knowing what to collect for historical purposes, can be confusing. But it became clear after combing through the unit charter ledgers and old newspaper, our current collection failed to reveal the Auxiliary's diversity in those early years. Nor did it give voice to those units composed of one race or ethnicity. Realizing the enormity of the project, we enlisted of the department history chairmen, historians, and the NEC. Excitement abounded but died in its tracks when the pandemic arrived. We have obtained a few items, but nowhere enough. Many of these units have disbanded and are even difficult to identify. With help perhaps one day a more inclusive and complete Auxiliary story can be told. Next, we focused on another centennial, the adoption of the 19th Amendment and created a flyer for ALA Girls Nation. Instead of giving just a history lesson, the flyer lets the young women know that many still face challenges. Our hope is that this flyer will inspire them to cherish this right and become resolvers of those issues. Photos of the Auxiliary's first few years are limited, so for our last project we decided to create one of our own. Madam National President, we present the 1921-22 National Executive Committee. This was truly a collaboration. We could not have done this without the department history chairmen, historians, secretaries, the members they enlisted, the Daughters of the American Revolution, Ancestry.com, FindaGrave.com, Family Descendants, and our own John Paulsel, JP, who pulled it all together.

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: We were able to procure 48 images of the 54 members.

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: But now, it is time to say goodbye. As the centennial fades into the sunset, so does this committee. It has been an honor to serve the past six years. I cherish the women with whom I have worked and our accomplishments. My only regret is that I failed to effectively communicate to this organization the committee's value and for that, I apologize. If you remember anything, anything I say here today, let it be the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future."

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: Thank you. Before I depart, though, I give you Auxiliary voices from the past, the 1927 National Membership Committee's We Believe Club Creed. I hope you will agree that this should remain a part of us. We believe in working, not waiting; in laughing, not weeping; in boosting, no

knocking. We believe in today, and the work we are doing; tomorrow, and the work we hope to do; and the sure reward which the future holds. We believe in good cheer; in kindness; in generosity; in sportsmanship; and in honest competition. We believe that a woman gets what she goes after.

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: We believe in the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. Oh, what an incredible piece of our history that now has been preserved. And thank you, Cathi, and thank you, J.P., for being able to locate all those pictures. As we know, chaplains provide that 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 Past National Chaplain Rosemarie Hauck today to the stage as she is coming to present National Chaplain Mary Anne Casadei's report. Thank you, Rosemarie.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. HAUCK: Madam President, members, good morning.

ALL: Good morning.

MS. HAUCK: These are the remarks written by National Chaplain Mary Anne. Oh my, what an exciting, trying, and exasperating two years it has been. We had to learn new ways of speaking, new ways of communicating, new ways to celebrate, and new ways to practice our religion. We had to shop differently, gather differently, meet differently, and do doctor's appointments differently. But through it all, we continued in the wonderful tradition of our founders, service to our veterans, military, their families, and our communities. Members continued to care for the sick and homebound and well check calls were on everyone's to-do list and done daily. Drive by celebrations and visits through windows were the new way to stay in touch. Church services through video, shopping by Instacart or Amazon. And the telemed appointments, and don't forget Zoom meetings, became the new practice. Oh my, it has been difficult for me -- this is Mary Anne -- because I am technology challenged, as I know some of you are. So at times, it was double trying. But I did it. I did it all. Through it all, our organization was a beacon of light. Our members took up the challenge and ran with it. Nothing could keep us down. We rose to the challenge and conquered it. This year was a new one for the books. But you, my friends, made it bearable for so many. You brought joy and happiness into many people's lives. You brought light into the darkness and rainbows into the rain. Through it all, we had a wonderful leadership of National President Nicole. We all thank God for her guidance and leadership. It has been a challenging two years. I will miss hearing from you and miss your comments on Facebook. I will miss the laughs and the tears. It has been the most exceptional two years. Thank you for allowing me this amazing opportunity. God bless America and God bless

the American Legion Auxiliary. Madam President, this concludes the platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Our Past National Presidents provide us with, as I said earlier, guidance, leadership, mentoring and knowledge. Their dedication to our organization is so great that when they are no longer with us, their absence is profoundly felt. It is this loss that we come together to celebrate, their achievements, and unique contributions to the American Legion Auxiliary. Today Past National President Virginia Hobbs will help us celebrate the life of Past National President Betty Calder, and then Past National President Linda Boone will lead us in celebrating the life of Past National President JoAnn Cronin. Finally, we will end our ceremony by honoring those we have lost due to COVID. Please welcome Past National President Virginia Hobbs to the stage. Virginia?

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Madam President.

(Music.)

MS. HOBBS: Today we celebrate the life and service of Past National President Betty Calder. While we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary, Betty was involved in celebrating the 50th and 70th anniversaries. Betty was Utah's department president for the 50th anniversary of the Auxiliary and her group of department presidents were known as golden girls. And the 70th anniversary of the Auxiliary was celebrated during the Indianapolis National Convention in 1990, which Betty was privileged to chair. Betty Calder was one of the strongest and most welcoming women that I have ever known. Betty and her husband Bill married in 1948 and shared 49 years of marriage prior to his death. During that entire time, I would wager to bet that Bill never forgot an anniversary. It was his birthday as well.

(Laughter.)

MS. HOBBS: Betty and Bill must have really liked names beginning with L, as all of their seven children bore names beginning with L. They were Leslie, Larry, Leland, Lou Ann, Lynda, Launa, and Lisa. Betty's strength was truly demonstrated in her endurance and perseverance to the loss of her three sons, daughter Luann, son-in-law John, and grandson Alex Calder. Betty was a loving and giving person, who would be a template for the ideal soccer mom. But Betty's caring extended beyond her family and their activities to those of our veterans. Betty joined the American Legion Auxiliary in 1952 and that was on the World War II Navy service of her husband, Bill. During her 47 years of Auxiliary membership -- I said 47, it should be 67 -- Betty served 35 years as a veteran at the Salt Lake City Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Betty also served the Veterans Administration by chairing its Committee on Recommendations and Bylaws in 1979, and in 1979 while serving as the ALA National VAVS representative. In 1974, she was recognized with the Salt Lake City VAMC Leadership Award for Excellence, and in 1980 she was recognized with the National VAVS Leadership Award. While serving as National President, Betty viewed the site of a piece of world

history which occurred during her term, the fall of the Berlin Wall. One of the souvenirs she brought home from Europe was a piece of the wall, which her daughter Lisa chipped out. Betty was a strong advocate for our youth and our younger members. She was heavily involved in her children's activities, whether it was sports or the PTA. She recognized younger members to serve at the upper level of the American Legion Auxiliary. Betty appointed multiple national chairmen who were in their thirties and forties. And her National Commander Miles Epling was also a youngster. Betty arranged a special party for his 40th birthday during their term, and I could not find the gorilla picture with the Commander. After being widowed, Betty crossed paths with a high school friend, Oreste "Rusty" Frazzini, and shared her later years with him. Betty and Rusty resided in the greater Phoenix area, and while she was able they attended department conventions in Utah and made friends of the Legion Family of Arizona. Betty was well respected and liked by members of her home department of Utah and the Department of Arizona. One of the excursions she made during her last year was to the open house hosted by the Department of Arizona. Due to the relationship she developed with members there, they had significant esteem for Betty and prepared an area where they displayed memorabilia from her service as well as that of their own Past National President Maxine Bigalow. While at the open house, Betty was in her element in visiting with members and officers of Arizona. Betty was a great friend and mentor who is sorely missed.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. BOONE: JoAnn Cronin from Imperial, Missouri, became a member at birth through the service of her father, a Marine during World War II. JoAnn held a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Notre Dame College. She began her professional career as a mathematics teacher and then transitioned to the federal government at the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, where she retired after 27 years. NGA is a unique combination of an intelligence agency and a combat support agency, which required JoAnn to have a high security clearance. JoAnn's commitment to veterans and their families was cemented into her priorities from an early age. She served in multiple roles at the unit and department level and began her service at the national level when she became the Girls State Committee Chair during the '92-'93 administration. Her abilities were recognized as she continued to receive national appointments and to her election as the 86th National President in 2006. She chose a unique symbol for her year, Rosie the Riveter, and We Can Do It as her theme. This theme was embraced across the nation by seniors and juniors. From her professional life, JoAnn knew how critical strategic planning is and established a Strategic Planning Committee to systematically address the future needs of the organization. She also emphasized the technology requirements and advantages for the future that the organization needed to adopt. President JoAnn had the opportunity to serve with The American Legion National Commander Paul Morin from Massachusetts, and SAL National Commander Earl Ruttkofsky of Michigan. National Presidents travel the globe during the year of service and often

accompany the National Commander during foreign visits. Additionally, National Presidents try to visit every department along with chairing and attending numerous conferences and meetings. Some fun things also slide into the President's schedule, like a visit to the ballpark, or maybe a relaxing beach day. Two significant issues were addressed -- I think I screwed up. Yes, I skipped one. After a successful year of service and travel, President JoAnn arrived in Reno for the celebration of accomplishments of the organization during the year. Two significant issues were addressed during the pre-convention NEC meeting. One, approving the move for National Headquarters from 777 North Meridien location due to the disrepair of the building. The second was to establish an American Legion Auxiliary Foundation to be able to increase fundraising support to mission programs. During the National Convention, JoAnn presented her selection for Woman of the Year, Gale Pollock, the U.S. Army Deputy Surgeon General for Force Management. Notable accomplishments by the ALA that year were Children and Youth raised \$3 million, serving over 252,000 and awarding 50 Youth Hero Awards; Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation had 92,735 volunteers, providing 3 million volunteer hours, and provided \$7.8 million in assistance by the Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

MS. BOONE: For those of you who may not have had the opportunity to know JoAnn like I had, I'd like to share some personal reflections. JoAnn was very soft-spoken and never the first one to speak during a meeting. She was thoughtful in making decisions and giving opinions, and always quick to smile and laugh, seeing the positive in situations and people. We roomed together many times, and while JoAnn was a no frills person, I'm a higher maintenance person. She would be up and ready, and then go out and get us coffee and muffins while she was waiting for me. JoAnn was the best friend we all wished we had. Here to share about her long-time friendship with JoAnn is Past National Chaplain, Rosemarie Hauck of Missouri.

(Applause.)

MS. HAUCK: Jo, as her family and I called her, had many likes that totally surprised me when I first met her, and I'm sure most of you are not aware. Of course, people knew that she loved her family and that she would shop until she dropped. She loved, loved Black Friday and the early risings to shop. Not me. Do you know she loved convertibles? She loved taking her nieces and nephews for rides. She tried to convince me all the time that I would love the wind blowing through my hair. It didn't happen.

(Laughter.)

MS. HAUCK: Jo liked to play women's recreation volleyball. She also liked cross stitch and puzzle books. Jo did not like to cook, but she loved to eat, especially steak. We often met to eat and of course shop. She loved musicals and purchased season tickets for the St. Louis Municipal Opera yearly, whether I wanted to or not. As roommates, we would giggle like 16-year-olds as we recounted the events of the day. After traveling days were over for her, we still giggled. The first time I went to visit her at the care facility, we were in her room giggling and laughing so loud that the nurse

peeped in the room to see what was going on. After that, when I went to see her they would say, uh-uh. During our last physical visit in March of 2020, we didn't giggle too much. But we still talked about memories. She loved Joel. Then COVID-19 hit, and we weren't able to see each other monthly any longer. Her friendship is still an ever present part of my life, as I continue to serve in the American Legion Auxiliary. Memories of the way we were. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We have with us today Past National Commanders Miles Epling, who was the counterpart to Betty Calder, and we have Past National Commander Paul Morin, as the counterpart to JoAnn Cronin. Thank you for accepting my invitation to come this morning, gentlemen. It's an honor and a privilege.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Now, please join me in a moment of silence as we honor those we have lost in the last two years to the deadly virus COVID.

(Moment of silence.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. Those thoughts will uplift the families that have been affected. And families are affected in many ways. These past 18 months have reminded us just how fast disasters can strike, causing lives to be forever changed. It is our most challenging times that we are most grateful for the generosity and support of others. The Emergency Fund is a perfect example for our members to support our members. This fund provides temporary emergency assistance to our members who have endured a significant financial setback as a result of an act of nature or some other personal crisis. Let's take a look at the video for more information about the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, known as AEF, and its recipients.

(Video plays.)

(Music.)

THE ANNOUNCER: Members helping members, that's the American Legion Auxiliary's mission of service not self in action. Hard times can fall upon us at any moment. That's why the American Legion Auxiliary is committed to help. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund, AEF, is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as a result of an act of nature or other personal crisis. And that's exactly what happened to American Legion Auxiliary member Donna Mortka, Unit 371 in Gibbsboro, New Jersey.

MS. MORTKA: On May 20, 2021, my husband called to say that our house was on fire. I left my mom's home to go see what was happening, and there was smoke and fire smell and fire trucks everywhere. I couldn't even really get down to where my house is.

THE ANNOUNCER: Donna's home was fully engulfed. Donna and her husband lost everything.

MS. MORTKA: So when I finally did get to the house, walking down the street, I saw what was, there was still smoking and all. And I really couldn't go into it because it was just way too overwhelming and emotional for me.

My brother was there, and my husband was there, and I hugged them both and cried. And then I said, I can't go in. I can't handle it. So I walked up the street to our neighbors and went into their house and was crying with them a little bit.

THE ANNOUNCER: After the fire, Donna and her husband were left to pick up the pieces somehow.

MS. MORTKA: So we owned the house and there was a snafu with the homeowner's insurance and we ended up not having it at the time that the fire took place. So we were totally out on our own regarding rebuilding everything.

VOICE: When I heard about Donna's fire I was really upset about it. I couldn't believe it. And I knew about the Auxiliary Emergency Fund because our unit every year donates money to it and I was hoping that she qualified for some sort of aid to help her with her house.

MS. MORTKA: At first when Debbie Buck told me about it, I thought it was just our local Auxiliary. But she said, no, it's national. And at that time, I really didn't think that we would qualify for anything at the national level. But Debbie said, hey, let's try it, let's fill out the paperwork, and see what can happen.

THE ANNOUNCER: The American Legion Auxiliary didn't let Donna down.

MS. MORTKA: So with that, a ton of my husband's friends who are contractors and such got together and we got roof trusses. And the roof trusses were paid for by a GoFundMe that our neighbor established. So I can't even count how many guys were there. It was like a barn raising, where everybody was contributing. They were putting on all the roof trusses, building everything up. And then the Auxiliary came through with the shingles to cover the roof. So now the house isn't going to get any more damage done to it as far as storms and rain. It's going to, it's covered.

VOICE: After Donna was awarded the money, our Auxiliary was so happy and so excited for her. So I am so glad for the Emergency Fund, that it exists.

MS. MORTKA: So we're very appreciative to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. They came and they provided us with this money so that it's a done deal. And thank you just sounds like two empty words, almost like Veterans Day when we write the thank you cards to them as a thank you. It doesn't feel like it's as powerful enough to let you know how much this helped us and how much this saved us. And you know, you never know until you are in this situation. And I hope nobody ever has this type of a situation. But you just don't know what it feels like. Because it's totally overwhelming.

THE ANNOUNCER: Since the Auxiliary Emergency Fund was established, more than \$6 million has been awarded to more than 6,500 deserving members. To continue providing this assistance, we need your generous support. Please donate today and know you are helping make a better tomorrow for your fellow Auxiliary members.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Here with more information about our Auxiliary Emergency Fund is our National Chaplain Vickie Thrower-Mills from the Department of Alabama. Vickie?

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. THROWER-MILLS: Good morning, Madam Nicole, officers, members, and guests. The American Legion Auxiliary is celebrating 100 years of service to our veterans. Our American Legion Auxiliary Emergency Fund, established in 1969 at a bequest from Helen Colby Small of Burlington, Wisconsin, celebrated its 50th year anniversary. Can't you see that Helen Colby Small's dream of five decades ago? Our members have fulfilled that dream this year, even faced with a pandemic. We faced tragedies beyond our imagination with COVID-19, wildfires, earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, health issues, winter freezes, and other life tragedies. We didn't see all that coming, but the American Legion Auxiliary departments and units didn't let that stop them from helping our members. When Sharon Phelps, Department of Texas, picked her theme for the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, she could never have imagined that many of their members would be affected by a winter freeze during their midwinter conference in February of 2021. Many members were left without electricity, water, necessities that we all take for granted, for over two weeks. 4.5 million homes and businesses were without power, causing shortages of food, water, and heat. As you can see by the images, the Department of Texas saw firsthand the need for the Auxiliary Emergency Program. This department stepped up to the plate, holding bake sales, raffles, cook offs, bingo, dime collections, monthly meeting collections, homemade mask auctions, and personal donations. As a result of their efforts, the Department of Texas made the highest contribution of \$22,000 to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund program.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

MS. THROWER-MILLS: The Department of Ohio, Mindy Rue, Chairman, held a race, respect, advocate, care, and educate, with Department President Kristen McLaughlin as their crew chief, she stated as far as the race was going, it felt like they went from a smooth oval track to a dirt track. Things were bumpy, but that didn't mean that they were going to stop. Unit members in Ohio, despite quarantines, curfews, and restrictions, they still had the fires burning to help Auxiliary Emergency Fund program. The Buckeye State didn't use the pandemic as a reason to stop helping their members and the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. Their race team held a final pit stop in 2021 at that AEF race and they learned that they could handle their cars on a rough track. Their units were very creative. They used the National American Legion Family Program 100 Miles of Hope to raise money for the AEF. One member rode her bike for 1,100 miles for an AEF donation.

(Applause.)

MS. THROWER-MILLS: Whew, that's a lot of miles. One of their units made protective face covering masks, with the proceeds of their sales being donated to the AEF. One unit used the idea of members helping members and

donated to their post emergency fund when a tree fell on the post, damaging the building. This department chugged along to the final stretch to make event projects happen in 2021 to benefit the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. They held fundraising auctions, bake sales, raffles that often had to be postponed due to government mandates. But the Buckeyes made a final push in the back stretch to carry out those projects all year long. Our members across this nation could have never been prepared for the many things that we faced this past year, but thanks to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, we have been able to help many of our members. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund grants given this year were \$230,673.

(Applause.)

MS. THROWER-MILLS: And we had 87,086 donations that were received.

(Applause.)

MS. THROWER-MILLS: Congratulations to celebrating 100 years of service to our veterans and 50 years to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund program giving back to our members. With kind hearts and dedicated members, we can rest assured that the Auxiliary Emergency Fund program and our American Legion Auxiliary will continue to help our veterans and our members for the next 100 years.

(Applause.)

MS. THROWER-MILLS: Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The American Legion Auxiliary Foundation positively impacts the lives of our veterans, military, and their families by funding American Legion Auxiliary programs today and for our future generations. Here to tell us about how our generous donations and supporters were able to make a difference in the lives of our veterans and their families is the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation board president Dory Hammeke. Dory?

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: Good morning. I think every day is a great day to be happy, don't you?

ALL: Yes.

MS. HAMMEKE: Today is no exception. We're all happy to be here with our fellow American Legion Auxiliary members, happy to be celebrating our 100th anniversary, and really happy to know that the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation is well positioned to meet the future needs of veterans, military, and their families. While the ALA is 100 years old, the ALA Foundation is a mere child by comparison. We're only 14 years old, but like any teenager we're a force to be reckoned with. In the past two years, we awarded 58 grants to Auxiliary units and departments totaling more than \$235,000.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: Combined with the \$107,000 given to ALA programs

like ALA Girls Nation and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, the ALA Foundation reached the milestone of awarding over \$1 million to support veterans, military, and their families since 2007.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: I don't know about you, but those statistics make me pretty happy. Let's talk about a few of the grants awarded since our last convention. There were 15 Veteran Project Fund grants. One of those went to the Department of Alaska. They were awarded over \$2,500 to purchase outdoor furniture for the patio at the Alaska Veterans Home in Palmer, Alaska. This allowed for socially distanced visitations to happen outside during the lockdowns. Just think, without this, the families might have been kept apart for more than a year. Not only will this furniture be enjoyed by veterans for years to come, but it also played a vital role in a really challenging time. The Foundation awarded six local VCAF grants. New York Unit 1524 was awarded \$1,600 to support their annual Veterans Creative Arts Festival in March of 2020 at the VA Hospital in Syracuse. They used their foundation grant funds to purchase recognition materials, which made the experience all the more special for the participants. They were able to hire a photographer to send the photos of finalists' art pieces to the considered for the national competition. The festival was a huge success, touching the lives of over 75 veterans who participated in creative writing, painting, drama, and music. We can't wait to see this program continue to grow in future years.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: We continue to see high demand for Mission in Action grants to help departments and units with funds to assist with ALA branding. We really love these applications because they enable us to promote all the great things that the Auxiliary does. Look at this cargo trailer that the Department of Vermont was able to purchase with their \$2,900 Mission in Action grant. They are using it for lots of purposes, but they are especially proud to use it for the transportation of packages for their veteran gift giving event. Instead of spending money to rent a U-Haul, they are able to put more money to the purchase of gifts for the veterans' family members. At the same time, this cargo trailer lets everyone in the community know that the Auxiliary makes this heartwarming project possible. Sixteen total Mission in Action grants were awarded between 2019 and 2021. And finally, because of the Foundations nonprofit status, we were able to help 2,200 different units and departments with subgrants totaling more than \$130,000 to support the mission.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: I am incredibly humbled and grateful that the ALA Foundation is able to play a role in the continued service of veterans, military, and their families through all of these really incredible projects. None of this would have been possible without our generous donors, which have helped our mission endowment fund grow from just over \$1.2 million at our 2019 convention to over \$2.1 million today.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: I'm happy to repeat those numbers. In the last two

years, we have grown the mission endowment fund by nearly \$1 million.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: Thanks to you. We welcomed over 100 new Heroes Giving Hope members. These are the donors who support the Auxiliary or the Foundation on a monthly basis, as well as seven new Legacy Society members. Those are individuals who have chosen to include a planned gift to the American Legion Auxiliary or the Foundation in their estate plans. This growth would not have been possible without our dedicated board of directors, who work tirelessly to make sure that we serve as many veterans as we can to the best of our ability. This year we are welcoming Kay Hirst, Lauralee Gooch, and Vickie Koutz to our team. We are excited to work with you and see how your many talents will help us serve veterans in new ways. At the same time, we say goodbye and a massive thank you to Laura Santino, Dave Rehbein, and National President Nicole Clapp, who have all made a huge impact on our team and ultimately on countless service members across the country. Thank you so much for your dedication.

(Applause.)

MS. HAMMEKE: I am confident that you will each continue to be ambassadors for the Foundation long past your tenure on the board. And finally, if you have not already, please take a moment today to make a gift to the ALA Foundation to help us kick off our Giving Tuesday campaign. You can do that on your convention app, or at the booth located just outside the general session hall. This donation will allow for the continuation and growth of not only our ALA Foundation grant program, but also of various ALA programs for years to come. And it's going to make our development team very, very happy. Before you leave, be sure to stop by, add your hero's name to our wall of heroes, grab your free gift, and help us meet our goal of \$20,000. Thank you for all that you do. Madam President, this concludes our report.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: As advocates for our veterans, it is our duty to ensure legislators are thinking about what our military faces while deployed and what they will need when they return. Here to tell us what they accomplished, please welcome National Legislative Chairman Norma Tramm.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. TRAMM: Madam National Vice President Kathy, President Bill Clinton said, "Of course you can't gain ground if you are standing still." The American Legion Auxiliary does not stand still. They continue to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion no matter what the conditions. Missouri's department legislative chairman, Claudia Goodin, is a liaison to the Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations, a group that brings together the service organizations to promote legislation that benefits veterans and our active military. Missouri discovered working together as one united veterans group got more accomplished than working individually. Teri Clinton, department legislative chairman, reports that Colorado has a veteran lobbying corporation called the United Veteran Coalition of Colorado. She is

a member as an affiliate organization, defined as an Auxiliary of a primary organization. Teri is able to fully participate and receive all information. Minnesota has a commander's task force made up of commanders of the nine chartered veterans service organizations in Minnesota. The American Legion Auxiliary was invited to attend the monthly meetings. They also meet quarterly with the Governor of Minnesota. On one of these Zoom meetings, Patty Coleman, Department Legislative Chairman, had the opportunity to speak directly with the Governor. She shared information concerning legislation regarding the widow tax. The bill allowed for the tax benefit to have a one-time transfer to another dwelling if the widow wanted to change residence. Comments were well received, and shortly after the meeting the bill was passed in Minnesota's special session. Congratulations, Patty. I'm sure there are other departments with similar groups. The American Legion Auxiliary is pleased to be included as our legislative program is based on the priorities of The American Legion. Art Semro Unit 28 of Washington has a unique opportunity. Like many units, they provide town hall meetings and also opportunities for elected officials and candidates to speak to the community. Years ago, before TV and other social media opportunities, candidates for office would often ride the train and stop at various towns to share their platforms. These were called whistle-stop campaigns, as they stopped at each town or whistle-stop. One of the members of Unit 28 is the director of the county museum and they have the opportunity to share an old time political rally during election years. The politicians speak from an old railroad car. Information tables are set up on the grounds by the politicians and they supply the drinks while the Post and Unit, for a cost hamburgers and hot dogs. Legislative Chairman Jane Montaney states, "The rally helps keep members in contact with the politicians, hearing what they have to say, ensuring they know our concerns, and give us an opportunity to provide legislative point papers to the public." Encouraging our community members to be on board with The American Legion legislative agenda is a great idea. Collaborating with other programs of the American Legion Auxiliary can provide great results. Education of students is a very rewarding opportunity. Michigan's Department Legislative Chairman, Mary Dubay, introduced Schoolhouse Rock, I'm Just a Bill. What a great resource to share at our local schools. Loretto Unit 146 of the Department of Tennessee went to Leona Middle School and shared with seventh and eighth grade students how to advocate for veterans and military members by connecting with their legislators. Students researched the flag amendment and wrote letters to their Tennessee members of Congress. Over 400 letters were sent. What a great learning experience. Reaching out to our students, communities, and especially our elected officials is the key to our successful legislative program. Follow The American Legion legislative priorities and continue to advocate for our veterans, military, and their families. Madam Vice President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Our units and departments continually (indiscernible) our mission for education. To share with us their

great accomplishments, please welcome National Education Chairman Deb Albers.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. ALBERS: The future is so bright, you've got to wear shades. The centennial year for the American Legion Auxiliary never looked quite so bright. 2020 entered in, and that was the year we thought we would be able to see more clearly with 2020 vision. But you all know how that turned out. That's when our world shut down and we all took a vacation. Department offices shut down and units did not meet. We were lucky, though, in education. The March 1st deadline for submitting scholarships passed and units had them in their hands. But enter in COVID-19, and due to closed departments and deadlines had to be extended for judging. Thanks to each of those department chairmen and division chairmen for getting the job done in 2020 and being creatively prepared in 2021 to complete the process with no deadline extensions.

(Applause.)

MS. ALBERS: Over \$900,000 was awarded in 2021 in scholarships.

(Applause.)

MS. ALBERS: But over \$1 million was awarded in 2020.

(Applause.)

MS. ALBERS: In 2017 a letter was received from Jenni Zauch of Illinois. Her letter stated, I would like to bring to your attention that the offered scholarships are only for high school students and there are no scholarships offered for traditional students presently attending college. She of course was referring to our National American Legion Auxiliary scholarships. Her letter ignited a spark that produced a new scholarship in 2019 and 2020. For the centennial year, the Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship was created. It targeted traditional college students who were once junior members and have continued their membership as senior members. Thank you, Jenny, for bringing this to the attention of national leaders.

(Applause.)

MS. ALBERS: And President Nicole, who was once a junior herself, for allowing this to happen. The future is bright, as each of these Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship recipients are senior members of the American Legion Auxiliary. I talked to many of them and I sensed a deep pride in our organization that really warmed my heart.

Central Division recipients are Ashley McKesson, Indiana; Mica Allen, Indiana; Jenna Klos, Wisconsin; Haley Christine Hall, Michigan. "I am thankful for the leadership skills I have gained by being both a junior and an adult member of the American Legion Auxiliary. And I'm forever grateful for the support that I have received from local, state, and national members. Jenna Klos, Wisconsin."

Eastern Division recipients: McKenna Rogowsky, Maryland; Alicyn Gormley, Massachusetts; Julie Posey, New York; Victoria Gorgolioni, New York. "I am so grateful to have received the Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship. Thank you to the national and local ALA for such a wonderful

community and support system as I pursue my dreams. With gratitude, McKenna Rogowsky, Maryland.”

Northwestern Division, Lexus Efta, Minnesota; Kennedy Grover, Minnesota; Emma Thede, Nebraska; Taylor Wagner, Nebraska. “I am so thankful for receiving this scholarship so I can pursue my goal to be a cardiac vascular stenographer. Thank you again, Taylor Wagner, Nebraska.”

Southern Division, Haley Jane Carr, Oklahoma; Alyce Keys, Texas; Anisa Cornett, Texas. “The American Legion Auxiliary showed me how to expand my horizons as a young girl, teen, and now a college graduate. I am very excited to experience our nation over the next 100 years as a result of the ALA’s positive influence on its youth. Warm regards, Haley Carr, Oklahoma.”

Western Division recipients, Celestina Cruz, Alaska; Leah Boskovich, California; McKensi Spears, New Mexico; Isabelle Courture, Arizona. “The Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship has been vital in my college education. Many scholarships I have looked at were aimed toward incoming freshmen. Sincerely, Tina Cruz, Alaska. I want to give a big thank you for being so generous as this scholarship has made a significant difference, McKensi Spears, New Mexico.”

We always say our Juniors are our future. And these are the brightest and the best. The future of the American Legion Auxiliary looks to be bright for the next 100 years. So bright, you gotta wear shades.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

MS. ALBERS: Madam Vice President, this concludes my platform remarks.

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: The future is definitely bright, so thank you.

MS. ALBERS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Through leadership, you will plant the seeds of success and growth will continue. That was the goal of the Leadership Committee and they were able to achieve great results. For more information, please welcome National Leadership Chairman Diana Sirovina.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. SIROVINA: Good morning. Madam National President, picture it, Fall 2019. The enthusiasm in my state was infectious, wrote one department leadership chairman. The leadership team took off like a rocket, wrote another. We were excited. We had a lot to celebrate, and that’s just what we did. One hundred years of outstanding leadership and a future full of possibilities for training more great leaders was in sight. Record numbers of our members attended mission trainings, Junior meetings, department trainings, district and unit workshops, and even Legion College. Unit 81 of Shelby, North Carolina encouraged their members to be active ALA participants and take advantage of the many educational opportunities available to them. They hosted a leadership workshop that included members

from all across their district and especially welcomed members who had just joined the Auxiliary. Perhaps their most interesting leadership exercise was to give all their officers a chance to be acting president for one meeting. What a great idea to help train members for future leadership roles. Many departments reported new and creative forms of leadership training. The Department of Florida used an adaption of Jeopardy to teach leadership in a fun way. Georgia had three goals for their leadership workshops: learn something new, make a new friend, and have fun. Then came spring of 2020. Those familiar words, improvise, adapt, and overcome became a way of life. We found a whole new way of providing useful leadership information to our members. We learned how to Zoom. It was interesting at first. But in our usual resilient Auxiliary way we made it work. We connected with members of all ages, and even some of our furry four-legged friends joined us on occasion. The ALA Academy brought another opportunity for members to learn leadership skills while being away from their usual meetings. Many courses were offered on a variety of subjects. This gave members a chance to experience training whenever and wherever they wanted to. The Department of New York took leadership training to the next level by creating video presentations and putting them on YouTube for their members to access at their convenience. The Department of Virginia embraced Zoom technology and were able to complete all their normal in person training sessions virtually. Members all over the country took advantage of leadership training and it is very apparent they put all that information to good use. We need to remember that being a leader does not necessarily mean standing in front of a group and leading a meeting. Being a leader also means stepping up and doing things for the good of our organization and our communities. A perfect example of this happened in the Department of Puerto Rico. Their Department Chairman's report reads in part, "This year of 2020, it has been a challenge to every member of our department. We have been challenged by nature ever since last year when the earthquake shook our south coast. And then the pandemic came. But these situations have not been any obstacle to our members. We as members of the American Legion Auxiliary have been helping those in need. Sometimes what people needed most was a hug, and arm to cry on, or an ear to listen. This year I am grateful because every member of our department has demonstrated the true leader they have inside."

(Applause.)

MS. SIROVINA: Leadership can mean many things, whether it be leading a meeting or helping those in need. Each one of us is a leader in some way. We have shown this every day for these past 100 years and we will continue to be those leaders as we begin the next 100 years of service. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Strengthening our communities is something American Legion Auxiliary members strive for each and every day. Member activity increased through events and fundraisers. Please welcome Jeanne Haas, National Community Service Chairman, to tell us more about how our members contributed to our communities.

(Music.)

MS. HAAS: Thank you, Madam Vice President. Masks, masks, and more masks. Food collections, along with making and distributing food, and enjoying food. All departments reported activities involving mask and food. Whether it was helping your next door neighbor or supporting the community during natural disasters, American Legion Auxiliary members answered the call to help. Members of Unit 15, Harlowton, Montana, saw a need on a windy day in February of 2020. An orange glow beamed around the city as a fire burned more than 4,000 acres around their community. Jesi Otten, a member of Unit 15, posted on her Facebook account the need to feed the firefighters who were coming into town. Unit President Mechelle Holmes responded that she had 100 frozen hamburger patties at her house. Meeting at the Moose Lodge kitchen, members of Unit 15 partnered with the members of the Moose Lodge to prepare a meal for these firefighters. Coming together in a time of need is a major part of engaging in service to our communities. With over 3 million hours of service reported by members of the American Legion Auxiliary, many departments shared stories of partnering with organizations to assist their communities. The Mayor of the historical city of Lewes, Delaware called on members of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 17 to help reopen the walking tours of their city during the summer of 2020. Knowing that this was a group that could get her done, the members of Unit 17 helped coordinate a Hospitality Ambassador Program for the streets of Lewes. Two members of the unit serve as chairmen and operation coordinator for this program. Involving the entire Legion Family of Lewes, members strolled in two- to four-hour shifts during the summer handing out masks, sharing events, and just making visitors feel welcome. The Ambassador Program was so successful that this group was called on during the winter months to become elves helping with Santa's house of social distancing. Not only were the visitors of Lewes impressed with the friendly ambassadors but the local shop owners looked to this group of American Legion Auxiliary members for a friendly helping hand when delivering food and a smiling face to greet them during their workdays. During their conversation, these ambassadors shared of their service to our veterans and to our organization. What a way to be seen in a positive view. It's branding at its best. Whether you are taking part -- yes, give them a hand. It was branding at its best.

(Applause.)

MS. HAAS: Whether you are talking part in one of the more than 600 community service projects reported by the Department of Ohio, or if you needed to get a round "tuit" from the Department of Indiana to remind you to volunteer, members of the American Legion Auxiliary were always there ready to help. Janet Young, Department of Connecticut's Community Service Chairman said it best when asked about the community service programming. "The members and myself let our hearts guide us to help our communities and to follow all restrictions of this year."

During the centennial years, members of the American Legion Auxiliary shared with members of their community by following their hearts, giving almost \$2.5 million to help others. Another round of applause for that great --

(Applause.)

MS. HAAS: Look around and you will see the future of the American Legion Auxiliary by their service. Madam National Vice President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Public relations strengthen our identity and attract potential members. To share the accomplishments, please welcome National Public Relations Chairman Marty Peters.

(Music.)

MS. PETERS: Madam Vice President, as the ALA celebrated 100 years, COVID did not define us, it challenged us. The pandemic did not deter us, we just got creative. Though uncertain times, we stayed true to our mission and conveyed it in every way we possibly could. We reached and stretched and we will be better for everything we learned and endured. In the span of just one century, public relations has gone from handwritten letters and handset typed newspapers to instant and constant sources of information in today's world, and all of you have embraced social media. In 2020, the pandemic changed our world and our ways of doing almost everything. But our mission didn't change, just how we accomplished it and how we shared it. Our dedicated members rose to the challenge, thinking outside the box, recognizing and embracing to a greater degree everything that you see on the screen and more. We have forged alliances and collaborated with organizations that you see pictured and others. The Department of Colorado Public Relations Chairman Laurie Kuntz partnered with Americanism Chair Teri Clinton to present project "25 Patriotic Days Till Christmas." How many of you saw this on Facebook? I know I did, along with thousands more. In California, the unit PR chairs called themselves the Pony Express, and worked together to promote events through newspapers, social media, with flyers, and posters. They overcame the obstacles of getting mail to the community by not giving up. Department of Florida Unit 16 was featured on the news with Blessings of the Buckets for veterans. Springfield Nursing Home veterans went on a virtual honor flight presented by Department President Ann King-Smith, appearing on ABC Channel 13. Tampa Unit 5 recorded the ceremony as wreaths were laid on the veterans' graves. A QR code was printed on the back of business cards, enabling the ceremony to be watched virtually. YouTube videos created the virtual fall conference, including chairmen explaining the program action plans. A total of 20 videos were available year-round. In the Department of Tennessee a new unit created weekly social media content strategy with theme days, as you can see on the screen. Midland, Texas Unit 19 sponsored a West Texas force Youth Basketball Team for at-risk children with the unit name and emblem on the team shirts and all printed material. Unit 50 worked with the City of Cleburne to create a Memorial Day 2020 video that was posted to the City's Facebook page and viewed by over 5,000. The unit then worked with local churches, creating a Four Chaplains video in January of 2021, which was also seen by several hundred and shared by many. This unit also celebrated the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II with drive-by parades at five nursing homes with

World War II veterans and widows. The organizer was interviewed by one television station and the event was seen on three different networks. South Carolina Unit 90, along with the Legion Post, hosted a community flag retirement ceremony that aired on three different time slots.

Maryland Unit 236 member Kathy Crampton tried to alleviate the loneliness of isolated nursing home residents by arranging a Waggin' Train parade weekly with their adorable dogs.

(Applause.)

MS. PETERS: It was picked up by newspapers and TV stations, and of course the members wore their bright red ALA shirts with our emblem. Another Maryland unit sent poppies to local TV personalities. One weathercaster stopped his report to explain the meaning behind the little red flower on his lapel and who sent it to him.

(Applause.)

MS. PETERS: Throughout our great organization, our members and our public relation chairmen celebrated our great history by conveying in every form and fashion that we are still working the programs that have been developed over these 100 years, utilizing all media outlets, and we were not stopped by a global pandemic when it comes to passing on our passion about our mission. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

(Laughter.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Sorry. National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir and our National Finance Committee are charged with overseeing the management and reporting of our organization's finances. Their responsibilities and actions have a strong impact on the public's perception and trust in our organization. Therefore, those who serve in the role of the National Treasurer must possess desirable skills such as financial literacy, attention to detail, and a willingness to ask questions. And I can guarantee you that Marybeth has all of these. Here with her report, please welcome National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir.

MS. REVOIR: It truly is a new dawn, a new beginning, and a time to move progressively forward. In 2019, a change in philosophy was pursued and the National Treasurer and National Secretaries were tasked with duties of governance and service to the national organization board of directors, our national executive committee. These newly defined roles were now to be the obligation of the volunteer segment of our organization. I was truly surprised when National President Nicole asked me to fill this newly established role. I did feel I could bring some knowledge to the table from my many, many years of serving as a department treasurer for the American Legion Auxiliary. I enthusiastically accepted. National convention was about eight months away, and it was my thought that a new Treasurer would be named for the next administration. How hard could all of this be? Attend a few meetings, diligently review all financial information, and sign a few things. As I stand before you today, I humbly can tell you I was so wrong. The National Treasurer is tasked to serve as custodian of all funds. It is a role of review, accountability, responsibility, and signing checks and documents. Oh believe

me, my signature is now everywhere. But please know that I am totally committed and willing to embrace my responsibilities and I enjoy the challenge that is being presented to me. The complexity of the financial workings of a volunteer organization of this size is no small matter. The greatest portion of our income to fund operations comes from the dues we all pay. With the decreasing of overall membership, we now only realize 60 percent of what is needed each year. As you can well assume, the challenge to bridge the deficit can be a daunting task. I would like to assure you that the national staff, in conjunction with those volunteers tasked with financial management work diligently to trim expenses without jeopardizing mission delivery. Optimizing alternative revenue streams such as advertising in our publications, direct mail appeals, along with pursuing grants from philanthropic entities. Donations to national programs and initiatives overall are up seven percent. Our future is now. We completed the first 100 years. How do we financially plan for the next 100? That is our mission and I believe we are all up to the task. Madam Vice President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Working right alongside with the National Treasurer, the National Finance Committee works to ensure the fiscal health and longevity of our organization. Please welcome our National Finance Chairman Past National President Sharon Conatser.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. CONATSER: If we had a million dollars we'd be great, right? Madam President, the American Legion Auxiliary's National Finance Committee includes five appointed members, each serving a five-year term. The primary role of the committee is to develop the annual proposed budget and review the national financial reports. The National Finance Committee members review the draft budget and make adjustments that may be necessary to reflect new and changing goals. The committee recommends a budget for the National Executive Committee's consideration and adoption. Additionally, the National Finance Committee oversees the financial policies of the organization, reviews the annual audit of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation, makes financial policies and recommendations to the National Executive Committee for action, and ensures that the ALA national organization is meeting non-profit benchmarks and financial mandates. One member of the National Finance Committee is also designated to serve as liaison to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation board of directors. Another committee member is designated as liaison to the American Legion Auxiliary national audit committee. These liaisons promote cooperation and increase knowledge for all. With our decreasing revenue and membership, it is increasingly difficult for your engaged Finance Committee and the fantastic development staff to create income sources. Due to the pandemic, we ended up with a cash balance in our funds. However, with that said this will not sustain us in future years. The National Finance Committee and national staff have worked to explore

opportunities for alternative income streams other than membership. Investment income has been the stream that the organization has relied on for a number of years. That is no longer enough. Significant discussions have resulted in reducing a number of expenses but we are still at a deficit budget. For most of our 100 years, we have been able to rely on membership dues to balance the budget with the occasional moderate dues increases. It is now time to realize that our organization has been decreasing in membership for over 30 years while the expectations to provide the same level of programs and services has increased. Before the last dues increase in 2017, we had had 16 years with no national increases. This is to notify the departments that during the FY '22 year, the National Finance Committee and staff will be developing a dues increase proposal for action at the 2022 National Convention. The intent is to provide a detailed plan with enough time for the departments to discuss and be prepared for a dues increase in the 2024 membership year. The successful fundraising efforts by our direct mail vendors continue this fiscal year with three appeals designed to the Auxiliary and one for the ALA Foundation. Fiscal year donations as of July 31st totaled a net of \$997,132. Of those gifts, \$812,266 came from you, our ALA members, and \$184,866 came from the non-ALA members. That's right. That's good. This bug is on my glasses. Sorry. The ALA continues to be fortunate to receive such tremendous support from the donations outside the ALA. The USAA credit card royalty revenue shared with departments for fiscal year '21 is expected to be about \$22,500. The National Finance Committee continues to believe in the value and knowledge gained by members through ALA mission trainings and national junior meetings. With the pandemic, these were held in a different format but our hope is to return in person for our ALA mission trainings and National Junior meetings, showing our support to train and mentor our senior and junior members.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: So on behalf of the National Finance Committee, thank you all for your dedication, your commitment, and your general financial support of the Auxiliary's tireless efforts to fulfill our mission. Thank you.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: The National Secretary operates as the custodian of the corporation's records, with duties such as updating governing documents and maintaining articles of incorporation. Please welcome National Secretary Past National President Linda Boone.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

MS. BOONE: Good morning. Yes. My tenure as National Secretary began in September of 2018, when the responsibilities also included being the Executive Director of our National Headquarters. While there are many challenges that needed to be addressed, two were my priorities. Relocating the National Headquarters to the building we had purchased the year before, and re-establishing a close working family relationship with The American

Legion. Relocation plans needed to be altered and replanted due to many issues arising from buying a 25-year-old building. With the entire staff stepping up to assist with a shortened move schedule, the move occurred over a December weekend that was cold, snowy, and windy. Then unpacking and prepping the building to host the February 2019 NEC meeting required staff to continue being dedicated to their duties, daily duties and responsibilities, and pitching in to continue organizing the building.

Our new headquarters provided an opportunity to start rebuilding the family relationship with The American Legion. We hosted a meeting between the two executive staffs and celebrating their 100th anniversary. During the Legion's spring 2019 meetings, we invited their attendees to visit our new headquarters. Working meetings between both staffs began on a regular basis to explore how leveraging joint initiatives could enhance results for both organizations. Those meetings in a variety of formats continue today.

The organization has now transitioned to a new model. For the national board secretary, that of a volunteer. That provides oversight for the corporation in a variety of topics. The new position of executive director was filled in November of 2019 and that position is responsible for the National Headquarters management. These changes were necessary for our 100 year old organization as we prepare for our future years. Embracing change is challenging and this organization has survived by doing just that for 100 years. Madam Vice President that concludes my report.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUIDSTEL: Our National Headquarters consists of 40 staff members, nine divisions, and is at the center of all our national mission delivery efforts. President Nicole and I have worked with National Headquarters for several years and we are both thankful for all the great work they do for our organization. Please welcome our National Headquarters Executive Director Kelly Circle.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Okay, I brought the fly back with me. Okay, I'll try not to let it distract me too much. First, let me thank you for allowing me this incredible opportunity to serve this amazing organization on a level I never imagined when I was seven years old, dancing to the juke box in a local Legion community hall while waiting for my mom to pick me up, or even just over a decade ago when I became a member of ALA Unit 153 Olathe, Kansas. This is a dream I never dared to dream, and it has come true. So thank you. Now I'd like to introduce the talented and dedicated directors I am fortunate to work with at National Headquarters. Michael Butt has been the communications director for 12 years at ALA National Headquarters. His father was in the Air Force and served in occupied Japan. He is especially proud of our supporting role with the National Creative Arts Festival. Colette Fike leads the programs and events team. Eligible through her father, a 93-year-old Korean War veteran, she has served at National Headquarters for nearly 14 years. Colette attributes her longevity to the motivation she gains from meeting Auxiliary unit members of the year each year and hearing their

inspiring stories at National Convention. Kelly Harrier is our Membership Director and has been with the American Legion Auxiliary for nine years. Kelly is a member of Indiana E-Unit 438 since 2013 and is eligible through her grandfather's service, who served in the Navy during World War II. Kelly and her entire team enjoy helping members and departments with all their membership questions and needs. Yes, we love Kelly and her team.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Stephanie Abisi is the Director of Operations and has worked at National Headquarters for 21 years. Our running joke is that she started when she was in elementary school. Three of her four grandparents are veterans. Her father is a Past Department Adjutant, and her grandfather is a Past Department Commander. She works for the ALA to help members deliver the mission in the best way possible. Madison Maves, I hope you have all met her by now, Development Director, has been with the organization for nearly 10 years. She is also a member of Indiana Unit 438 through the service of her grandfather, James Sharp, U.S. Army. Madison enjoys introducing people to the ALA's mission and learning about their story and what this organization means to them. She truly believes that giving is not just about making a donation, but it's about making a difference. Yes, that's a good one.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Tyra Nelson is the D.C. Site Director for the American Legion Auxiliary and has held this position since 2019. Her membership eligibility is through her grandfather, who served in World War II. Tyra served the military for more than 10 years in various positions and believed it was only befitting to continue her mission working for the Auxiliary. Go Tyra.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Gary Ward served in public accounting for several years initially and obtained his CPA license during this time. In July of 2020, he joined American Legion Auxiliary as Director of Finance. His father served in the National Guard and his wife's father served as a medic in the Navy. He wants to feel like his work makes a difference in improving people's lives and our communities. Working for the ALA definitely improves the lives of those we serve, which is very fulfilling for him. Tamara Shumate, Director of Administration, has been with National Headquarters for 15 years and is a member of D.C. Unit 1. Her division includes administrative assistant, governance, national officers, archives and history, the building, and its grounds. Tamara has loved being a part of this organization and is excited to watch it evolve and advance to ensure another century of service for our veterans, military, and their families. And finally, Shannon Hitchcock, our Director of Human Resources, has her MBA with a concentration in HR, and has been working in the field for 22 years. She recently celebrated her second anniversary with the ALA and truly enjoys the staff and volunteers. She is an Army National Guard veteran with eight years of service and her husband has served for almost 30 years. Thank you both for your service to our country.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: And now just a little bit about me. It has been almost two years and many of you may have read parts of my bio here and there, but now I finally get to introduce myself in person. You may have heard I'm a doctor and a lawyer, and I know that sounds somewhat pretentious but honestly it just took me a while to figure out what I wanted to be when I grew up. Also, please don't have any kind of medical emergency and expect me to help because I am a doctor of philosophy rather than a medical doctor. The reason I bring up my education is because of how much I use it every day and how much it has helped me in this position. My Ph.D. has helped me to learn more about veterans and their needs as I wrote my dissertation on college choice of veterans and why they choose the colleges they do. I use my law degree daily in almost everything I do, whether it is reading statutes, drafting and reviewing business contracts, or applying our governing documents to a specific question. I spent 13 years in higher education administration, most recently as Dean of Instruction at Red Rocks Community College in Lakewood, Colorado. I gained a great experience in curriculum development, online pedagogy, and adult learning theory. This has helped me tremendously as our staff pivoted quickly to provide online trainings and meetings for our members over the last year and a half. And now I have to stop here and acknowledge our amazing programs and events, operations staff, and the volunteers working with them to create valuable and engaging content to help our members continue to work our mission. They have been great.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: I have been a member of the ALA since 2006, gaining my eligibility through my mother and my father both serving in the Navy. My brother also served in the Army as well, so I want to give a shout out to him for his service in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: The ALA's mission of serving veterans, military, and their families means providing support to those who make the commitment to serve our military and our country. It's not something that I could do and I admire anyone who can say I'm willing to give my life for my country. I have the utmost admiration for the family members who stand behind their service members and are there for them no matter what. The personal strength and conviction of service members and their families is a source of inspiration for me and I want to do whatever I can to help them. And there is a lot of you in the audience today. So thank you. One of my goals as Executive Director is to develop relationships with our members. I want to work with unit members to give the support and resources you need to work our mission in ways you feel passionate about. I feel like there has been a disconnect between what is happening at the national level and the activities that our unit members are focused on. It's my personal goal to remember my roots as a unit member so our values at the grassroots and national level align and support each other. One of my activities to connect with members is writing a weekly briefing. At first it was just going out to the NEC, and then I expanded it to department presidents and secretaries as well and encouraged distribution however they wanted. It then occurred to me that many volunteers lead very busy lives, so

rather than asking people to take time to distribute, I decided to post the briefings on our website. These are usually sent Friday afternoons and are posted on the website the next week. These briefings are short, easily digestible segments of what we are working on at National Headquarters, upcoming events, member benefits, anything I think our members might be interested in. I encourage all of our members to log in their member portal and check it out. It can be found under member resources. Please feel free to reach out to me and let me know what you think. And while you in the member portal, make sure your email address is up to date. This is a way we can ask you for feedback so your voice can be heard. Be on the lookout for a survey to be sent out later this fall and understand that that is going to be a great means of communication for us. My leadership philosophy is one of shared governance with community, collaboration, and respect among all constituents. I have seen where there is an environment of mutual respect and open communication, the best ideas come to the surface. In the coming year, you will be hearing a lot about diversity, equity, and inclusion. This is not just a trend or new corporate buzzwords, rather these values are at the core of our membership growth and retention. Diversity is the presence of differences that may include race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, ability, age, among others. Diversity is about taking account of the difference between people and groups of people and placing a positive value on these differences. An example of diversity is bridging generational gaps and placing a positive value on the perspectives of those not of your generation, whether that is young or old. I'm a Gen Xer. Now, I see the world in a very different way from a member who is in the Gen Z generation. It's sad. They don't get my lame jokes referencing eighties pop culture. It's sad, but I still like them. It's important we listen to each other's views respecting differing views and work together to create an environment that works for all. Equity ensures everyone has access to the same treatment, opportunities, and advancement. Equity aims to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent full participation of some groups. This might mean a scholarship fund for members interested in pursuing a leadership role but don't have the disposable income to afford hotels and gas to travel throughout the department. Inclusion is an outcome to ensure those who are diverse actually feel and are welcomed. Inclusion outcomes are met when you, your organization, and your program are truly inviting to all. It's not enough to post the date and time of meetings anymore. It's reaching out to offer a ride to a unit member who can't drive at night. It's calling members who haven't been to a meeting in a while and inviting them back. It's a welcome chairman, perhaps, who sits with a new member at a meeting, answers questions afterwards, and follows up with a phone call or another invitation to an event. If we learn these concepts and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion, we will recruit new members who are passionate about our mission and retain those members we already have. I want to apply all that I have learned through my education, life, and work experience as I serve as Executive Director and remind the American public of the wonderful programs the ALA has to offer to our veterans, military, and

our community. As we enter the next century of service not self, I hope to generate enthusiasm among our current members and increase membership, especially with our post-9/11 veteran families. Madam President, it has been a pleasure serving with you. And members, thank you for your time. And I am looking forward to serving you for many years to come. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Hi, I'm back.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The American Legion says hello. All right. So National Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, Trish Ward, has been working hard to ensure our governing documents are maintained so that we may easily answer questions about our governance, programs, and eligibility. Now, I have to say I don't think Trish ever thought all the different topics that we have never explored would be explored and researched in the last 24 months. But please welcome Trish to the stage. She has been a lifesaver when it comes to our constitution and bylaws and our governing document maintenance these last two years.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

MS. WARD: Exciting, interesting, and lively are just a few of the words that accurately describe the activities seen in the Constitution and Bylaws program over the past two years. We can affirm and attest that the program that is not always at the top of everyone's interest list became a fan favorite as we successfully navigated and discovered new and innovative ways to operate and function. In case you didn't know, the document referred to as the blue book made everybody's book club in 2020. What could we do, what couldn't we do, and how can we do something we've never done before became regular topics of conversation and thanks to a strong foundation, we survived, thrived and are future focused for success as we power into our next 100 years on behalf of those we serve.

(Applause.)

MS. WARD: Our members became avid readers of governing documents with language and definition taking on heightened levels of importance. The teams learned to dissect words and meaning like grammar and linguistic prose. Words like should, could, must, and our favorite might, came into play as we addressed issues and resolved complicated challenges that had never before been witnessed. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee commends our members and departments for supporting each other and adopting a can-do attitude when finding new and innovative ways to function, survive, and thrive during unprecedented global disruption. We dug in and came out better, stronger, and more skilled to adapt and change when things didn't go quite according to plan. And most importantly, we discovered that our constitution and bylaws provide sound direction and guidance when life throws lemons. It was exciting to watch our members embrace the first ALA Read Your Constitution and Bylaws Day on November 14, 2020. Teams got safely out and about and nearly everyone got in on the action. Past National Presidents were caught reading. Chairmen were spotted. And so too were our Junior

members. We saw members showing their stuff at some of our most recognizable American landmarks. Dorothy, Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion got in on the act. And members even engaged their friends. The blue book was spotted everywhere and thanks to you, we proved that engaging in the Constitution and Bylaws Program really can be fun. Kudos and well done to George Tatlock E Unit 472 in the Department of California.

(Applause.)

MS. WARD: Zoom meetings didn't slow this team down, when they used the meeting experience to study, read, and get enlightened about our organization's constitution and bylaws. It became clear that finding ways to stay involved and support our mission became the norm in 2019 through 2021, and whether in person or virtual, our organization's governing documents often took front and center. When situations are most challenging is when our constitution shines brightest and remains a beacon of hope to provide guiding principles and direction during storms. As Mrs. A. H. Hoffman, National Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, from Iowa, in 1938 said, "Much time and thought has been given throughout the years of our organization in the form of a constitution. These rules are yours. You have lived them. You have felt their need. You have brought them to the national organization and you have codified them for the guidance of future years." It was true in 1938 and it remains true today.

(Applause.)

MS. WARD: Our constitution and bylaws brings life to a vision for and about our members. Your participation, your input, and your continued interest give great hope to those who will follow our lead and see the light of promise in governance for years to come. A bright future is most certainly on the horizon. Please join me in recognizing the two departments who were winners of our \$50 gift card challenge. The gift card for the team reading the constitution at the most recognizable American landmark went to the Department of South Dakota who were caught reading the C&B at Mount Rushmore.

(Applause.)

MS. WARD: Our selection for most creative submission went to the Department of Tennessee, who were spotted reading the biggest ever C&B at the Nashville National Cemetery. Congratulations to these two outstanding departments. Madam National President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Are there any proposed amendments?

MS. WARD: Yes. There are five amendments to the bylaws and one amendment to the standing rules.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: 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 number 11. Motion forms are located at stage left. I'm not sure I see them, but they are there I'm sure. The debate will be limited to two minutes per 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 on the stage to fairly enforce the rule. These rules also state that during debate, delegates, alternates, and guests are to remain seated within their own delegation or assigned seating area unless they are approaching the microphone or completing a motion form or exiting or entering the general hall. Are there any questions? I will tell you it is extremely hard to see. We have mikes positioned throughout the room, but once we get past mike number one and number two, we'll need you to do a little happy dance if you want to be recognized. Because from there on, we really cannot see. But I'm told there are multiple microphones throughout the hall. Trish, let's proceed with presenting the first amendment.

MS. WARD: It is the responsibility of the Constitution and 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 and Bylaws Committee move for the adoption of all amendments. Remember, all departments and delegates received advance copies of these amendments.

Amendment number one, Madam National President, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee presents Amendment number one, a proposal from the National Constitution and Bylaws Committee to amend Constitution article four regarding the National Executive Committee, Section 2, paragraph 2, if adopted will read, "There shall be an Executive Committee to the National Executive Committee. The purpose of the Executive Committee shall be, one, to review, research, and make recommendations to the NEC on matters requiring NEC action; and two, to address and act on time sensitive matters subject to ratification by the NEC, except those duties reserved for the Executive Committee in the Bylaws, Article 5." The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends that the amendment be adopted. Madam National President, on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment 1.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Amendment 1 as just read. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommended that the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Are you ready for the question? Those in favor of Amendment 1 will press the number one key on your voting keypad. Those opposed, press the number two key. Please begin voting now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: WE recognize that departments have lots of voting to do so we are giving you ample time. Voting is closed. Please show the results. All right. The Amendment 1 has passed, 610 to 59.

MS. DICKERSON: Madam President?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Which microphone are you at, ma'am?

MS. DICKERSON: Microphone 4, ma'am.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay, yes.

MS. DICKERSON: Joanie Dickerson, Department of Wisconsin, point of order.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes?

MS. DICKERSON: Our delegation's keypads are not recording our votes.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And how do you determine that, Joanie?

MS. DICKERSON: The keypads never lit up green.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. We will confer with the back where the voting keypad system is located.

MS. DICKERSON: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: You're welcome, Department President. We will confer for the next vote. Recognizing your delegation's strength, it would not impact the results of this vote. But we will address it as we are preparing for the second amendment.

MS. WARD: Amendment 2, Bylaws. Amendment 2, a proposal from the National Executive Committee to amend the Bylaws by adding a new Article 5, Executive Director. If adopted, Bylaws Article 5 will read, "The Executive Director shall be responsible for implementing the policies and directives of the National Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall oversee the hiring, disciplining, and terminating of all National Headquarters employees and perform such duties as provided in the Standing Rules or as assigned. The Executive Director shall be hired, disciplined, or terminated by a majority vote of the Executive Committee of the National Executive Committee in accordance with the terms of employment established by the Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall regularly be evaluated by the Executive Committee. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Executive Director, the Executive Committee may name a person to serve in that capacity until a new Executive Director is hired."

The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends that the amendment be adopted. Madam National President, on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Amendment 2.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Amendment 2 as just read. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends that the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Are you ready for the question? Adoption of this amendment requires a two-thirds vote. Those in favor of Amendment 2, press number one on your voting keypad. Those opposed, press two on your voting keypad. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Voting is now closed. Are you individually seeing the green light when you vote? Yes? Okay. Back in the corner, Wisconsin? You're not getting any green lights? Please show the results. On Amendment 2 the results are 601 to 62. We're going to, backstage we're going to do a test. I'm going to test the Wisconsin. Everybody else, can we hold tight for a second? Obviously, I want everyone to feel that their vote is being recorded and appropriately given. Yours isn't working either, ma'am, is that what I'm hearing you say? Okay. Those that aren't working, I know the delegate strength for Wisconsin so I want to test that first because we know how many votes should be coming in. So let's pretend you're doing just a test. Do you want to come to National Convention next year in Milwaukee, vote one. Because it's in Wisconsin, I'm hoping I get 100 percent, or two, no, you want

to go somewhere else like Des Moines, Iowa. Okay. Backstage, can we make this happen? We're good? Okay. Voting is now open. Wisconsin, vote one to go to Milwaukee, two no. Voting is now closed. Please show the results. 45 votes for the Department of Wisconsin are voting, the strength is voting. Does that match? Yes. So Department of Wisconsin, Joanie, could you please stand? I can't find you. I see you getting up now. Does this satisfy Wisconsin's need for further edification or change in the system?

MS. DICKERSON: Madam President, we have 21 voting delegates. Something isn't right.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: That is a problem. All I can say is, Kathy, it's a COVID year, isn't it? We'll take a moment, please. Everyone relax, sit back and enjoy. Let's play some music, please.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I know, you didn't even get a whole three-minute song in. I'm sorry. I have just been informed from the back of house that the green light may not always light up even though your vote is recorded. Also, based on the number of clicks, we had more than the delegate strength from Wisconsin voting on our test. So please, if we follow directions, we get closer to lunch. And I know I don't like things to stand between me and my four letter F words that starts with F is food. All right? Can we move on? Can I have an affirmative to move on, a clap or something? Okay. Here we go. Okay. Trish, on to number three.

MS. WARD: Madam National President, Amendment No. 3 is to the Constitution, Article 5, the section on the National Executive Committee, and was submitted by the Executive Committee to the NEC. The subject of the amendment aims to rename the National Executive Committee to the National Board of Directors. If adopted, the section will read as follows: "Constitution Article 5, National Board of Directors, Section 1, between national conventions, the National Board of Directors shall serve as the governing body of the organization with fiduciary policy and strategic responsibility for the organization." The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam National President, on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee I move the adoption of constitutional Amendment No. 3 as just read, including consequential amendments to make global changes throughout our governing document as distributed in the amendment packet.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Constitution Amendment No. 3 as just read. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommended the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? I see light at number three.

MS. STIER: Madam President, Mary Jo Stier, Department of South Dakota. Since The American Legion is not changing the executive committee to the national board of directors, why is this necessary for the Auxiliary to change? Who has ever questioned this name?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. Do we have any other -- I see others that might, oh, over there, is that number four?

MS. SEELEY: It is number four.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I think that's Glynis I hear.

MS. SEELEY: It certainly is.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay, Glynis, Department of Nevada.

MS. SEELEY: Department of Nevada, Glynis Seeley. Department of Nevada would like to know why are we changing the name of the larger body and not the name of the smaller body. It would make more financial sense to keep the larger NEC than it would be to change the smaller body. The smaller body is only, what 14, 15 people, if I remember correctly. And the larger body, we all have to go back and change, 52 departments have to go back and change all their constitution and bylaws, all our national publications have to be changed. If we change the name of the smaller body, it just seems to make more sense. It would be a lot easier to accomplish.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And Glynis, I can give you, I was going it in my head. It would be 11 compared to 52, to clarify your question of how many.

MS. SEELEY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Mm-hmm. All right. I see someone at mike number one.

MS. KRAFT: Rose Kraft, Department of South Dakota.

MS. KNICKERBOCKER: Deborah Knickerbocker, Department of Connecticut. I also feel that to do this will undermine our relationship with The American Legion, as the respect and camaraderie that we have built up over the years. And I also agree that the, if The American Legion does not change its name we should not either.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you for your comments. Okay. Back to mike number three.

MS. KRAFT: Rose Kraft, the Department of South Dakota. If this is necessary, will the department need to change from the DEC to the board members?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Anyone, other microphones besides for number three? Number three, you have the floor.

MS. UPSHAW: Alice Upshaw, South Dakota. Who does this cause confusion to as stated in the rationale?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. I'm going to take all the comments and then we will have a collective response. I think that will be a little bit more efficient. Number three?

MS. NELSON: Michelline Nelson, South Dakota. In the corporate world, the executive committee is the nucleus of the board of directors. It functions as a steering committee making strategic decisions. This executive committee is the voice of our departments. Is it my understanding that you would have an executive committee to an executive committee? Which one is the board of directors?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you for your question. And I don't see any other microphones, microphone number three?

MS. DEACON: Sandy Deacon, Department of Iowa. To comment on the rationale, new members don't care about our national governance. They want to help veterans. If it isn't broken, don't fix it. And I also agree that the National American Legion's NEC has much more respect for us now and I

don't see a reason to change this. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you for your comments. Is there anyone else at the microphones that I'm not seeing? If I do, I apologize. The rationale as my understanding was developed to make it more consistent with the corporate world. But I'm hearing obviously the relationship with the Legion to take into consideration as well. Are there any other comments? I think that's technical support by mike number four. Okay, yes. All right. Are you ready for the question? I didn't hear a yes or a no. Thank you. Yes, that's good. Thank you. All those in favor of Constitution Amendment No. 3, press one on your voting keypad. All those opposed, press two on your voting keypad. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Voting is now closed. We will let the computers process the results. This is the quietest I have ever heard this room.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We are still having a birthday party, aren't we?

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. Okay.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Amendment No. 3 is defeated, 507 no's, 160 yes results. Is that two-thirds, which is needed? Right. So I'm just saying, we are confirmed that it has been defeated. We will now move on to Amendment No. 4.

MS. WARD: Madam National President, Amendment No. 4 is to the Bylaws, Article 3, Duties of Officers, specifically Section 6 on the National Treasurer and was submitted by the National Finance Committee. The subject is authorizing the Executive Director to sign checks. Currently, only the National Treasurer has the authority to sign checks. If adopted, the section shall read as follows: "It shall be the duty of the National Treasurer to serve as custodian of the funds of the national organization, to account for the same, to sign all checks in disbursing the funds of the organization, and shall perform other duties as assigned. In the absence of or in addition to the National Treasurer, the National Secretary and the Executive Director shall be authorized to sign checks according to policy." The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Bylaws Amendment No. 4 as just read.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 4 as just read. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the adoption of the amendment. Is there any discussion? Oh, hello microphone four, big and bold, thank you.

MS. SEELEY: Glynis Seeley, Department of Nevada. During the pre-convention meeting, we did make a change to the words in the sentence that starts, "Treasurer to serve as custodian of the funds of the national organization, to account for the same, to sign all checks, and disbursing," the way it is written in our pre-con memos says disburse.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Since it is a housekeeping technical typo,

disbursing would be inserted.

MS. SEELEY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you for the clarification, Glynis.

Microphone number one?

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz from Alaska. My question is, how many people are allowed to sign on a check? And is it only one name on a check or is there two names?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Currently it's one name up to a check of \$25,000. I just needed to confer. And after that, then it is two signatures. And you have the National Treasurer's signature and then the second signature.

MS. DIAZ: And right now, who is the second signature?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Some directors have signature authority. But on those checks, it follows the financial policy that's already in adoption and in action. We would look that up for you if that would clarify further information.

MS. DIAZ: No, just asking.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: No problem. Well, that's a perfect question. NO other information required, are you ready for the vote, for the question? All right. All those in favor of Bylaws Amendment No. 4, press the number one on your keypad voting machine. All those opposed, press the number two key. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Voting is now closed. Please show the results when they are ready. Amendment No. 4, that would equate, Chris, correctly for two-thirds? That is two-thirds confirmed in the affirmative for Amendment No. 4 has passed, 579 to 86 in the negative. Please continue Trish.

MS. WARD: Madam National President, Amendment No. 5 proposed by the National Audit Committee is to the Standing Rules, Section 6 on Committees, specifically the National Audit Committee. The subject is striking the current Audit Committee purpose and inserting new Audit Committee purpose. If adopted, the Audit Committee responsibilities section will read as follows: "The Audit Committee responsibilities are to review the integrity of financial statements and financial disclosures, ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, engage the independent auditor, and review and approve the annual financial audit and IRS Form 990, oversee the organizations internal controls and risk management procedures, meet periodically with management and auditors to gain an understanding of the potential significant risks and exposures facing the organization, and propose needed internal controls to reduce risks. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Standing Rules Amendment No. 5 as just read.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Standing Rule Amendment No. 5. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? I feel like I'm out at sea. I can only see so far. Hearing no discussion, are you ready for

the question? All those in favor of Standing Rule Amendment No. 5, please press the one on your voting keypad. All those opposed, please press the number two key on your voting keypad. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I think this is kind of like Cornelius' kind of music. Voting is now closed. Please show the results when they are tabulated. Amendment No. 5 has been approved. It is vote yes, 656 to 20 in the negative. Number five is approved, amendment. Trish?

MS. WARD: Madam President, we have one additional amendment that was circulated electronically on Monday, August 22nd, 2021. This Amendment No. 6 and is a proposal to amend Bylaws, Article 5, on committees, Section 2, and seeks to change to name of the Audit Committee to the Risk and Compliance Committee. If adopted, the section will read: "There shall be the following core national standing committees: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Children and Youth, Americanism, National Security, Membership, Constitution and Bylaws, Finance, Risk and Compliance, and such other mission and member organizational support committees as may be provided in the standing rules." The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Madam President, on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, I move the adoption of Bylaws Amendment No. 6 as just read with the consequential amendments as distributed in your amendments packet.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Bylaws Amendment No. 6. The Constitution and Bylaws pre-convention committee recommends the amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Seeing no one at the microphones, are you ready for the question? All those in favor of Bylaws Amendment No. 6, please press 1 on your voting keypad. All those opposed, please press the 2 key on your voting keypad. Please vote now.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Trish thinks she learned the cha cha cha last night. I'm not sure sure.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I was trying to do the hokey-pokey and it didn't work either. All right. Voting has now closed. When the results are tabulated, please show them on the screen. Amendment No. 6 has been adopted, 611 yes votes, 163 in the negative. Trish, you have completed two great years of service. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: She's going to work on her hokey-pokey and her barrel before she gets to Milwaukee next year, she said. All right. You know, I like to celebrate, you know I like to smile, you know I like to have fun, and a cup half full. Well, now is the time to truly celebrate all of your hard work. The National President's Award for Excellence gives me the opportunity to highlight units that are doing amazing work to carry out the mission of your organization. Historically, this award was limited to five units and one department. But after the challenges we have faced over the past year and a half, we didn't feel it was right to limit the celebration when Kathy and I

started reviewing the applications. Honestly, if you have managed to find a way to deliver the mission in spite of all the chaos and uncertainty, then I believe you should have the right to celebrate.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So that's what we are going to do this morning. This year, we are going to recognize ten units for their awesome mission delivery work they have accomplished over the last two years. Now I know there are so many members and units out there doing amazing work that we never heard about you at the national level. So a big thank you shout out to all members, units, and departments working the Auxiliary mission and programs each and every day. Your hard work is what got us through the last two years and ultimately will keep our organization alive and able to carry our mission forward in the future. So let's get ready to celebrate today's winners. Vice President Kathy, would you like the honor of announcing the first National President Award for Excellence?

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: It would be my pleasure, Madam President. And our first winner is Unit 1879, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, Unit President Tracy Trujillo.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: As the first campus affiliated unit of the Auxiliary, members of 1879 sought to bridge generations around a timeless fundraiser: the community cookbook. Their fundraiser cookbook titled Serve, features recipes from the ALA archives going all the way back to 1919. By collecting ALA cookbooks from every department, this unit takes the reader on a journey that will feed the body and the soul while celebrating a century of service through delicious recipes. Congratulations, Unit 1879, we are very proud of you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The unit president is actually Karen Baylor, not Tracy. So we want to make sure that clarification is met. Yes, you can leave, unless you, you can stay if you like the limelight. You're welcome. You're welcome. Congratulations. You're welcome. The second unit to receive the National President's Award for Excellence, let's give a big round of applause and welcome them to the stage, is Bohnsdahl-Gustin Unit 107 in Mosinee, Wisconsin.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: President Joan Campbell.

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And this is Joanie Dickerson coming up to the stage. I've known Joanie for many, many years. Congratulations. Sunday, September 27, 2020, might have been like any other day for most of you in the audience, however the members of Unit 107, it was a day a longtime dream was finally realized. You see, for several years they had been working

on getting a Gold Star Mothers Memorial erected in their community park and it was on that Sunday their hard work paid off. Congratulations, Unit 107. Your Gold Star Mothers Memorial is beautiful. We are so proud of the impact you are making on your community. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Our next winner joining us on stage is Charles Conklin, Unit 28, in Grand Haven, Michigan, Unit President Darleen DeHaan.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: In spite of all the challenges we faced over the last year and a half, this unit managed to continue working the ALA programs with great success. They involved their Junior members in the Cards of Cheer Program that delivered handmade cards to veterans on lockdown in local facilities. They were also able to raise over \$14,000 and volunteer over 5,000 community service hours. And of course, we love their poppy Santas fundraiser. What a great idea! Unit 28, you have done an excellent job of getting creative during these challenging times. We are very proud of all your efforts in the community. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Accepting the award is the outgoing department president, Georgia Downs. Okay, number four, to receive the National President's Award for Excellence is Palmer-Roberts Unit 214 in Willoughby, Ohio, Unit President Sue Fratina and Diane Worner. Are they both here?

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I'm not disappointed, I just, they have the radio show and I've been on the radio show every, I've been on it three times. I think I got a record for incoming National President and twice as National President. This is Kristen, was Little, now Kristen McLaughlin, the Department President, to receive the award.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Not only did the unit succeed in the face of a pandemic, but they did so as a Legion Family, worked closely with their Post to implement Ride for Wreaths, a program their members call their Christmas in July. This two-day event had members riding 88 miles on their bicycles to help kick off the National Wreaths Across America event. In total, they raised enough money to purchase 400 wreaths to be used to honor our veterans. And I think each wreath is about \$15 an individual pop, so that is tremendous. This unit understands that working as the American Legion Family and building a brand recognition in the community is key to its membership growth and success. Members of Unit 214, congratulations on an amazing year.

(Applause.)

(Cheering.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I will take a note of personal privilege. One of the unit members who was very instrumental in Unit 214 passed away due to

COVID, Martha Setlock that many of us know. And she was the Vice Chairman of our National Public Relations Committee. So hopefully this will help with the healing for that unit in Ohio.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: So let's keep this celebration going with our next winner, John J. Morris Unit 62 in Peoria, Arizona, Unit President Tammy Early. Unit 62, we are so impressed with your Heal Her art wellness program for female veterans. This program embodies the presidential focus of health and wellness for our veterans. We are so proud of the virtual 80 art sessions you were able to host during a pandemic, and the \$15,000 in fundraising or funding that you secured via grants from organizations that support the mission of the ALA. Congratulations on an amazing program.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Now if you didn't put two and two together, that was our poppy painting party hosts yesterday. Did you have fun if you painted a poppy?

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I have determined once I am no longer National President, painting will not be my next career. But I sure had fun yesterday. All right. Joining Unit 62 in the winner's circle is Liberty Unit 289 in Strasburg, Illinois, Unit President Sarah Wyckoff.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Unit President is Jill Layton. I know Jill, and I'm like that's not Sarah. All right, Unit 289 didn't let anything like a little pandemic get in their way on their mission delivery. Come back out here, honey. It's your moment in the sun. Yes, right on the blue X. There you go. They continued their highway honor signs project that recognize local town heroes who are currently serving in the military. They raise money to support a veteran and his honor flight and created a Halloween candy event where they asked the community to donate Halloween candy to service members overseas. Congratulations, we are proud of you, Unit 289.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: And the celebration continues with Unit 230 out of Martinsville, Indiana, Unit President Sherri McGee.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Unit 230's encouragement project started as a simple way of thanking the local school staff, everyone from teachers to janitors and the principal received ALA branded bags of mints with letters of thanks and encouragement. This education project grew in popularity and was even featured in the national magazine. This is a great example of something so simple that has such a great impact, and it's ALA branded, which makes it even better. What a great idea, Unit 230. Good job.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay, everybody, we're down to our final three. Let's give it up for Elmore Unit 26 in Elmore, Idaho, Unit President Isabelle Annette Espinosa.

(Music.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Receiving the award is Carmen Metzger. All right, from hosting veteran bingo night at the local nursing home to serving over 300 veterans at the community food pantry, this Unit 26 is steadfast in their service to our veterans. You all do a wonderful job carrying out the mission of the ALA, and we are happy to celebrate the work of your members. Congratulations, Idaho.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Next up we have Jacksonville Unit 172 in Jacksonville, Florida.

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Unit President LuAnn McDonald.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Members of Unit 172 took to the streets to raise awareness for homeless veterans. These members created a box city, which consisted of unit members sleeping in cardboard boxes outside their Legion building. This display received local news attention, including newspaper and television coverage. Even better, members of Unit 172 are always ALA branded for every project. Way to carry out our mission and show your community who we are and why we matter. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right. And our final winner of the day is Judith Gap Unit 70 out of Judith Gap, Montana, Unit President Francis Allen.

(Applause.)

(Music.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Accepting is Department President outgoing Sue Coughlin. All right, this unit might be small on members, but they are big on bringing the ALA into their community. This unit works with local schools to send care packages to veterans overseas, makes cookies for the local VA clinic, sponsors a craft fair to raise money for Girls State fees, and participates in Wreaths Across America. Unit 70, you might be small, but I know you are mighty. Well done.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It is difficult to be limited by time and only be able to share briefly about these amazing achievements. But there is good news. You will be able to read the full story on our National President's Award for Excellence winners on our national website. So let me encourage all of you to consider joining these units on the path to excellence by planning now to submit applications for next year's awards. I'm sure Kathy will love to see those roll in. Our National Headquarters team created a system that

allows members to apply for this award online. It takes a matter of seconds to upload your entire report, including the pictures. So really, there is no excuse not to enter. Let's give another round of applause for all the National President's Awards for Excellence recipients.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. Would our Executive Director Kelly please give us convention updates?

(Music.)

MS. CIRCLE: All righty. The ALA Showcase of Fashion begins at 2:30 p.m. in this hall. Remember the event is open to everyone. No registration required, so please join us and let's see what our Past National Presidents have to show. The National Commander's Banquet is this evening at 7:00 p.m. in the south building, halls F and G and the ballroom. If you are staying at the Hyatt or any hotel within close walking distance, I recommend wearing comfy shoes for the hike and bring your pretty shoes in your bag. That's what I'm going to do. Okay. If you haven't already, or even if you have, be sure to swing by the Giving Tuesday booth on your way out of today's session. And finally, don't forget to place your bids for the Foundation's silent auction and do some shopping at Kendra Scott today. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right. Thank you, Kelly. Who is coming this afternoon to the ALA Showcase of Fashion?

(Cheering.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: That's what I like to hear. We have been planning this for two years and the PNP's got their practice, you know, this morning. They came on stage, so we got practice done, now it's ready for the show. So please be in your seats so that we can start right at 2:30. I think, Kathy, you would like after adjournment for anyone involved in installation tomorrow to please stay. Yes, please, she says. Okay. We will do that. This meeting is adjourned until tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m., when I will see you back in this very room and with those beautiful smiles and I want to hear all about your celebrating birthdays tonight. Have a great afternoon, thank you.

(Applause.)

(Bell rings.)

(Whereupon the above meeting was concluded on Tuesday, August 31, 2021)

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Good morning. Did you have a fun celebration last night?

VOICES: Yes.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Good, because our birthday party continues. The first item of business, this is the nominations for National Office for 2021-22 administrative year. Representatives making nominations as well as the

candidates are seated on our stage. Linda Boone, National Secretary, will read the rules governing nominations and elections. Linda?

MS. BOONE: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. BOONE: Nominations, Rule No. 21. Nomination of national officers shall be made from the floor. 22: 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. 23: Following nominating speeches for national officers, each of the nominees for National President, National Vice President, National Chaplain, 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. Election of National Officers. Rule No. 24: Election of National officers shall be held on Wednesday. When there is but 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 two highest numbers of votes with the candidate receiving the most votes on the second ballot being elected. Madam National President, that completes the reading of the Nomination of Election Rules.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I think one thing that we didn't do this morning, and I try to follow the script, but I'm going off script so behind stage. I think we could use a morning opening prayer.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Rosemarie Hauck, please?

(Cross-talk.)

MS. HAUCK: Let's go in prayer, please. Dear God, remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Remember the sacrifices made for each of us. Please hold our servicemen and women in your arms. Cover them with your grace and presence as they stand in the gap for our protection. Bless those at this meeting. Give them your patience and understanding. Keep any anger at bay. Bless those as we go forward through this election. Let us feel your love and your support and we ask this in your almighty name. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

MS. HAUCK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right. Please be seated.

(Ringing of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: That kind of sets the tone for the day. This is a very important day. We are ready to turn to the new century of service for the American Legion Auxiliary. Nominations are now in order for the office of National President. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

MS. BOONE: The Department of Kentucky has announced a candidate for the Office of National President. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The Chair recognizes a delegate from Kentucky for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. ROBEY: Madam National President, microphone 2.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 2?

MS. ROBEY: Bonita Robey, Delegation Chairman for Department of Kentucky.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Go ahead.

MS. ROBEY: Would the Chair please recognize Karen Toll for the purpose of a nomination for the Office of National President?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes. Okay. Floor is yours.

MS. TOLL: Thank you. Good morning, Madam President, Officers, Delegates, and fellow Auxiliary members. My name is Karen Toll and I am the incoming Department President for Team Kentucky 2021-2022. On behalf of the Department of Kentucky, it is with great pride and honor to present my best friend, my sister, Kathy Daudistel as the candidate for the Office of National President. Kathy is a 25-year member of Latonia Unit 203. She is eligible through our deceased father, Bill Kaelin, who served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War era. The Department of Kentucky is super proud to have Kathy as our representative and will be most happy to share Kathy with all of you to serve as our National President. Kathy is very dedicated to the American Legion Auxiliary and it shows through her work on the many committees that she has participated in and chaired at the unit, department, and national level. Kathy was our unit president for several years and our department president from 2009 until 2010. Her passion for The American Legion shows in the many, many, many friends that she has in each of you and across the entire American Legion family. In her personal life, Kathy has two daughters, Stephanie and Beth, two wonderful son-in-laws. She has four grandchildren, we have a brother and our wonderful mother, Nancy. Kathy retired from Western Southern Life Insurance and has dedicated her time to the Auxiliary. On behalf of the Department of Kentucky, I am honored to place a nomination in the name of Kathy Daudistel for the office of President of the American Legion Auxiliary for the year 2021-2022. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Kathy Daudistel is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National President?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Hearing none, nominations are closed for the Office of National President. Woo-hoo.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Nominations are in order for the office of National Vice President. The National Secretary will call the departments with announced candidates.

MS. BOONE: The Department of Indiana has an announced candidate.

The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purpose of a nomination.

MS. MAUNE: Madam President, microphone 1.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The Chair recognizes a delegate from Indiana at microphone 1 for the purpose of nomination.

MS. MAUNE: Jennie Maune, Delegate Chairman, Department of Indiana. Request that you recognize Jane Anne Hanby for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, very much. Jane Anne?

MS. HANBY: Madam National President, Nicole, American Legion Auxiliary members and guests, my name is Jane Anne Hanby and I'm a member of the Department of Indiana. I'm here today to introduce my good friend, Vickie Koutz. Vickie is a 47-year member, paid up for life member, of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 200 in Boonville, Indiana. Her eligibility is through the service of her husband, Jim Koutz, who served in the United States Army with service in-country Vietnam. Jim served as National Commander of The American Legion in 2012-2013. Their son, Michael, is a chartered member of Boonville Squadron 200. Vickie has held most offices in her unit, district, and department serving as Indiana's Department President in 2006-2007. She began her service on the national level in 2007 and has held many National Chairmanships and served on committees. She has been very dedicated throughout her years of service to our organization. Vickie is employed at Fox & Lutz Attorney at Law as a legal assistant and has been blessed with the support from them to have time off to devote to the American Legion Auxiliary. Assisting clients with adoptions is her favorite part of her job and she will miss it greatly when she retires in November. Being elected to this office has been something that Vickie has worked toward for many years. I know she credits her American Legion family as well as her husband, son, brothers, and several angels in heaven for helping her achieve this well-deserved office. It's my honor and my privilege on behalf of the Department of Indiana to nominate my sister of my heart, Vickie Koutz, for the office of National Vice President of the American Legion Auxiliary for the year 2021-2022. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Vickie Koutz is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Vice President?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Hearing none, the nominations for National Vice President are closed.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Woo. Nominations are now in order for the office of National Chaplain. The National Secretary will call the departments that have announced candidates.

MS. BOONE: The Department of Ohio has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purposes of a nomination.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Microphone 2?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 2. The Chair recognizes a delegate from Ohio for the purpose of making a nomination.

MS. MCLAUGHLIN: Kristen McLaughlin, Department of Ohio. The Chair asks that we recognize Donna Ray from the Department of Ohio for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. Donna Ray, the floor is yours.

MS. RAY: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. RAY: Madam National President Nicole, officers, delegates, alternates, and guests, I am Donna Ray from the Department of Ohio. It is an honor and a privilege that I present to you on behalf of the Department of Ohio, Carol T. Robinson, Ohio's endorsed candidate for the office of National Chaplain. Our honored nominee is eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary through her late brother, William A. Hawkins, who served in the United States Army during the Korean War. Carol is a proud 35-year paid up for life member of General Daniel Chappie James American Legion Auxiliary Unit 776 Riverside, Ohio. Carol has one daughter, granddaughter, and a great-granddaughter, and they also belong to Unit 776. Carol held the office of President and her district unit department President in 2007 and '08. Throughout her 35 years she has held numerous chairmanships and served on many committees on the unit, district, department, and national levels. As department Chaplain, Carol has compassionate and sincere when she performed many Auxiliary memorial services and countless acts of kindness through cards, phone calls to ill members and grieving families. In addition, she posts daily on Facebook inspirational thoughts and prayers. Delegates, I will not go through her impressive and long educational background, community involvement, and leadership position. Madam President, delegates, alternates, and guests of this convention, it is with great pride that I present to you for consideration the Department of Ohio's candidate and my friend, Carol T. Robinson, for the National Office of National Chaplain for the year 2021-2022. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Carol T. Robinson is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of Chaplain?

MS. BOONE: The Department of Wisconsin has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purposes of a nomination.

MS. DICKERSON: Madam National President, microphone 2?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 2?

MS. DICKERSON: Joanie Dickerson, Delegation Chairman for the Department of Wisconsin. I request that the Chair recognize Diane Duscheck of the Department of Wisconsin for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The floor is yours Past National President Diane.

MS. DUSCHECK: Good morning. I'm Past National President Diane Duscheck from the Department of Wisconsin. Madam President, it is a honor to present Rebecca "Becky" Mueller as a candidate for the office of National Chaplain. Becky is a member of Krause-Kraft-Mueller Unit 106 Seymour,

Wisconsin. Becky has dedicated herself to God and country. First, her dedication to God. Becky is a lay leader in her church serving on a variety of committees and continues writing curriculum for community-wide Bible study. As mission coordinator for her church, Becky leads members in preparing and serving a meal each lunch at a local warming shelter. Becky relishes the opportunity to lead several church services during the year, both in her own church and in other area churches. As Department Chaplain, Becky provided prayer and thoughtful reflections throughout the two years of the pandemic. Her dedication to country. Becky presented new ideas to her unit so they could make a difference when serving veterans and the community. She's held many offices and chairmanships in the unit, served as District President and then Department Chaplain. Becky continues to share new ideas to educate members and keep the Auxiliary relevant. She helped develop and remains co-chair of a member training program the Department uses to teach about programs, meeting protocol, and leadership skills. She also visits distressed units as part of the Department membership team to assist the units in revitalizing. Becky will be continued to be dedicated to God and country and she wants to serve as your National Chaplain. Madam President, it is with much pride that I present Rebecca "Becky" Mueller as a candidate for the office of National Chaplain.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you.

MS. DUSCHECK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Rebecca "Becky" Mueller is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Chaplain?

MS. SINGLETON: My name is Dawn Singleton from the Department of Pennsylvania. We ask the Chair to recognize Lisa Boyer of Pennsylvania for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The Chair recognizes the Department of Pennsylvania that has an announced candidate for the purpose of a nomination, Lisa Boyer.

MS. GALLAGHER: Thank you. Good morning. Thank you, Madam President Nicole.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: You're welcome.

MS. GALLAGHER: I'm Kathy Gallagher. Lisa is eligible through her son, Herbert Phillip Dueter (phonetic) who is currently serving in the U.S. Army. She has six children, 10 grandkids with another one on the way. Her ALA journey through Department -- 2019/2021 Department President and alternate NEC, 2021/'22 incoming NEC, Department Vice President, Department Sergeant of Arms, Department Poppy Chairwoman, delegate to Department conventions, coordinated an event for Department conference. Through Council President -- she was President, Vice President, Chaplain, Finance Committee, various chairmanships. Through the unit she was President, Vice President, Sergeant of Arms, helped and continuously helped at events and other things. Appointment ALA hospital representative and ALA National Conventions delegate, and pre-convention meetings, attendance breakout sessions, enjoys continuous learning of the ALA and

engaging in the organization. Her education and learning opportunities were mission trainings in-person and virtually, ALA online academy leadership courses, she -- Lisa thoroughly enjoys all opportunities offered to learn of the ALA and tried to attend as many as possible. She supports the Legion family. Lisa attends TAL 9th District meetings when possible and partnered with AM40 Salon 182. Other passions are a love of animals, nature conversation, preservation, being in the outdoors. She has served as the Executive Planning Committee, also served as the Recording Secretary, assisted at club events, mostly archery, and volunteered to help with what was needed, served as a coordinator, did PR, and ran events from start to end.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Time.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Just so you're aware, remind everyone we do have timers up here. So if you hear me say "time," that's just that we're at that point. So Lisa Boyer has been nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Chaplain?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Hearing none, nominations for National Chaplain are closed. Nominations are now in order for the office of National Historian. The National Secretary will call the Departments with announced candidates.

MS. BOONE: Thank you. Okay. The Department of Virginia has an announced candidate. The Delegation Chairman should ask the Chair to recognize the delegate for the purposes of a nomination.

MS. THOMAS: Madam President, microphone 2.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 2?

MS. THOMAS: Dawn Thomas, Department of Virginia. I ask the Chair to recognize Past National President Peggy Thomas for the purpose of a nomination.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. Past National President Peggy, the floor is yours.

MS. THOMAS: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. THOMAS: Past National President Nicole, all officers, all members. It is with great pride that the Department of Virginia endorses Carol Campbell as a candidate for the Office of National Historian for the 2021/2022 Auxiliary year. Carol is a member of Manassas Unit 10 in Northern Virginia. Her eligibility is through her father, James J. Gallagher, a World War II Army veteran. She is married and she and her husband, Victor, have three adult children and one grandchild. Carol retired from the federal government after 26 years. She held top management jobs including Staff Chief, Government Accountability, and Audit Liaison to just name a few positions. She has been unit, district, and department historian. She has held the following department chairmanships; 100 Anniversary Chair, National Security, Legislative, Public Relations. On the national level, member of the 100th Anniversary Committee, two years; member of the National History Committee, member of the Legislative Committee. Carol is a dedicated Auxiliary member and does a great job on anything that she takes on. She is a great community

leader and has held high positions in several notable organization. The Department of Virginia is proud and happy to endorse Carroll Campbell for the National Historian for the 2021/2022 year.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Carol Campbell is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Historian?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Hearing none, nominations for the National Historian's position are closed.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yay. With these nominations and the nominations made during the division caucuses on Saturday, August 28th, 2021, nominations for the 2021/'22 national officers are complete.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yay. The convention rules provide the nominees for the offices 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 given a maximum of two minutes for their remarks. Will the representative from Kentucky please introduce the candidate for National President?

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Madam President, Team Kentucky is proud to announce Kathy Daudistel as candidate for the American Legion Auxiliary National President.

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: Thank you. Madam National President, officers, members, and guests. It is such an honor to be standing here today as a candidate for National President of this great organization.

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: Over the past two years, our emotions have been all over the place, but today my joy, my pride, and yes, even my excitement at what the future holds has grown. We're still making history as we're about ready to step off into a new century. The mission has not changed, that we certainly have seen that means of achieving this mission have. Through crazy times, we remain committed to enhancing the lives of our veterans, active duty military, and their families. We do matter and we will continue to matter. I am humbled and highly honored that you believe in me enough to make me your National President Candidate for the American Legion Auxiliary. Thank you and God bless.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Will the representative from Indiana present the candidate for National Vice President?

MS. MAUNE: Thank you. The Department of Indiana would like to introduce to you Vickie Koutz for the candidate for National Vice President for the year 2021/2022.

(Applause.)

MS. KOUTZ: Thank you, Jane Ann, for nominating me and being here with me on this special day. This is such an honor to have the opportunity to be the National Vice President candidate of this great organization. What a blessing to be able to work side-by-side with our incoming National President Kathy. I am a proud member of Boonville Unit 200 in the 8th District from the Department of Indiana in the Central Division. I want to say thank you to each of you for your love and support during my journey. If I had not joined the Auxiliary all those years ago, I would have never had the friendships that I have today all across our nation. As our organization moves into a new Auxiliary year, I pledge to continue my support for our veterans, military families, and children. And last but not least, please remember every day is Veterans Day. Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Will the representative from Ohio present the candidate for National Chaplain?

MS. RAY: Madam National President, on behalf of the Department of Ohio, this is a lot of pride that I introduce to you for the candidate for National Chaplain, excuse me, Carol T. Robinson for '21/'22.

MS. ROBINSON: President Nicole, Auxiliary members, and guests good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. ROBINSON: This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice in it and be glad. I want to thank the Department of Ohio for endorsing me. I want to thank my friend Donna Ray for those kind words she said about me, but what I want you to know is I am a child of God.

(Applause.)

MS. ROBINSON: I am blessed. Now, I'm still a work in progress. He's not done with me yet. I stand here before you to ask for your consideration for -- of a vote for National Chaplain. If elected, I will, with God's grace, do my best to represent this office according to Psalms 31, Verse 3. "For you are my rock and my fortress. For your namesake, you will lead me and guide me." Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Will the representative from Wisconsin present the candidate for National Chaplain?

(Applause.)

MS. DUSCHECK: Madam President, it is an honor to present Rebecca "Becky" Mueller from the Department of Wisconsin as your candidate for a National Chaplain.

MS. MUELLER: Madam President, Auxiliary members, and guests; thank you, Diane. Look around at all the butterflies freshly awakened flexing their wings getting ready for flight. We are emerging from the cocoon of isolation, restrictions, disappointments, illness, and even death. Many of us have become broken in body, spirit, and in our relationships. I am blessed to be part of this transformation. God is still in control and has plans for us together. We are beloved children of God formed and shaped in his own image and design. We are family. Now is the time to proclaim God's love.

We are loved, all of us. We must love ourselves and each other encouraging each other as we reconnect, reconciling in our differences, and joining together into a beautiful flight of service, not self. Let us soar together. Thank you and God bless each one of you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Will the representative from Pennsylvania present the candidate for National Chaplain?

MS. BOYER: Hi. I'd like to present Lisa Boyer, nominee for Chaplain.

(Applause.)

MS. BOYER: Good morning, Madam President --

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Good morning.

MS. BOYER: -- officers, delegates, and guests. I'm Lisa Boyer from the Department of Pennsylvania. We have faced many challenges and obstacles and this is what develops perseverance to go on, but it is how we choose to go through and rise above. Through these times, we have our God, we have our faith which gives us the hope to carry on. A Chaplain is more than a representative for the organization. It is the spiritual component of the Auxiliary. A Chaplain is a representative of God exemplifying faith, has a heart of compassion for all of the ALA, our veterans, and even those we don't know. A chaplain is led by the Holy Spirit and speaks from the heart. A chaplain is a good listener, encourager, and prays for and with those who are in need or as situations arise. Personally, with my grandchildren I am part of their spiritual rearing. In the past, I've taught children in Sunday School, involved with youth groups, women at Bible studies, always growing in my faith. None of us are perfect. Those times are when we need our Lord more. I would consider it an honor if elected. I will do my best to fulfill the duties of chaplain, uplift and encourage President Elect Kathy Daudistel and her team of officers, and with upholding the members of the American Legion Auxiliary in prayer. Thank you and God bless you all.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. Will the representative from Virginia present the candidate for National Historian?

(Applause.)

MS. THOMAS: President Nicole, members, on behalf of the Department of Virginia, I'm proud to present to you the candidate for National Historian, Carol Campbell.

(Applause.)

MS. CAMPBELL: Madam President, National Officers, Auxiliary members, and guests, how wonderful it is to be with you all this week and celebrate in our celebrating a century of service concludes. What incredible memories we now have as we celebrate our 100th anniversary in our units, districts, and departments, and at national convention. We have so much to be proud of. It is indeed an honor to stand before you and seek the position of National Historian. Thank you to the Department of Virginia for their endorsement. What an amazing experience it has been serving on the 100th Anniversary Committee, the National Committee, Department of Virginia Historian, and the Department of Virginia's 100th Anniversary Chair. Our

records truly reflect who we are, what we do, and why we matter, and that we are a strong community of volunteers serving our veterans, military, and their families. With great enthusiasm, I look forward to carrying out the responsibilities as National Historian for the upcoming year and that our future generations will look back on our accomplishments and say, "Well done." Thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: This concludes the nominations for 2021/2022 national officers. We're at this moment. We will proceed with the election of our national officers. You have nominated, please stand, Kathy Daudistel of Kentucky for the office of National President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: In accordance with the rules you have adopted, there is but one candidate for the office. The nominee will be elected by voice. All in favor of electing Kathy Daudistel as National President for 2021/'22, please say "yes" or do your clapper.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I have to make it official. Opposed, "no."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The clappers have it.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Congratulations, Kathy.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The Chair declares Kathy Daudistel of Kentucky duly elected as National President for '21/'22 administrative year. Vickie Koutz of Indiana is the only candidate for the office of National Vice President. All in favor of Vickie Koutz for the office of National President, say "aye" or give us a clap everybody.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Vickie Koutz is duly elected as the National Vice President. Please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. On Saturday at the division caucuses, each division nominated a candidate for National Division Vice President and the current Division National Presidents have certified that the Chair has nominated the following: Central Division National Vice President, Denise Delaney-Wrolen has been nominated for the Office of Central Division National Vice President. There she is. Please stand, Denise.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All those in favor of Denise Delaney-Wrolen as Central Division National Vice President, please say "aye" or give us a clap.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Formally opposed, "no."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Denise Delaney-Wrolen has been duly elected as

Central Division National Vice President. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Election of Eastern Division National Vice President, Marie Pytko has been nominated for the Office of Central Division -- excuse me, Eastern Division National Vice President. All those in favor for Marie, please say "aye" or give us a clap.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Congratulations, Marie. And opposed?

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Marie, you have been elected Eastern Division's Vice President. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Dee Dee Buckley has been nominated for the Office of National Northwest Division Vice President. There she is. All those in favor of Dee Dee Buckley for Northwest Division Vice President, please give us a "yay" or our clappers.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed, "no."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: No. Congratulations, Dee Dee elected -- Dee Dee Buckley.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Gabrielle Barnett has been nominated for the Office of Southern Division Vice President. All those in favor of Gabrielle Barnett as Southern Division Vice President, please say "yes" or give us a clapper.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed, "no."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Gabrielle Barnett has been elected Southern Division National Vice President. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Toni Gimpel has been nominated for the Office of Western Division Vice President. All those in favor of Toni Gimpel, please say "yes" or give us a clapper.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Oppose, "no."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Toni Gimpel has been elected Western Division National Vice President. Congratulations, Toni.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: For the Office of National Chaplain, we will be voting with your electronic keypads. Please pay close attention to what I'm about to say. The nominees, if you'll please stand, Carol T. Robinson from Ohio, please stand so they can see you. Okay. Rebecca Mueller from Wisconsin and Lisa Boyer from Pennsylvania. If you would like to vote for Carol T. Robinson, you will press 1. If you would like to vote for Rebecca

Mueller, press 2. If you would like to vote for Lisa Boyer, press 3. Please vote now.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Madam President, you need a two-minute clock.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I'm sorry. You need a two-minute clock. This is a request from the floor?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I will need a motion and a majority vote to allow for a caucus to occur from the floor and a second. Is someone going to make a motion to have a caucus or we will proceed?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do I have to go to the microphone.

VOICES: Yes.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: If you're making the motion, yes you have to go to the microphone someone, please. Okay. Thank you. It's so hard to see.

MS. DIAZ: Microphone 1.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 1.

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz from Alaska. I'd like a two-minute caucus before we vote.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: A two-minute caucus has been requested before the vote. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I hear a second. All those in favor say "aye."

VOICES: Aye.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed say "no."

VOICES: No.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It has been -- it has failed. The election will proceed. So everyone have your clickers. Carol T. Robinson, 1. Rebecca Mueller, 2. Lisa Boyer is No. 3. Please vote now.

(Pause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Voting is now closed. Please show the results when they are tabulated.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The choice for National Chaplain, the election is Carol T. Robinson from the Department of Ohio. Congratulations, Carol T.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Carol Campbell of Virginia is the only nominee for the office of National Historian. All those in favor of Carol Campbell for the office of National Historian, "yay" and clappers.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Opposed, "no."

(No response.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Carol Campbell has been duly elected as your National Historian for '21/'22. Congratulations, Carol.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you your 2021/2022 American Legion Auxiliary National Officers. Congratulations, ladies. Please stand.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And a big thank you to the entire Elections and Tally Committee. These women, you may not realize, are here very early every morning distributing keypads and they stay very late in the afternoon collecting them after the sessions. Please help me give these women a round of applause.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: They are Margaret McMahon, Judy Casados, Jill Puett, Regina Whipple, Lisa Liford, Janice MacLeod, Anne Ritacco, Mindi Rue, and Pat Kranzow. Thank you, ladies.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: You can be dismissed. As they are exiting, what a wonderful day it is as we turn that next century of service. You have elected tremendous leaders and I can't wait to watch and be support for their future endeavors. Let's give them one more round of applause as they're leading the stage.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We will wait so we have -- don't have a traffic jam in the back. How many went to the Commander's Banquet last night?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. I like that sound. How many are going to the State's Dinner tonight?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: That's a lot louder, a lot better. Perfect. We're looking forward to having all of you. I think we are now ready to proceed. Members across the nation worked hand-in-hand to promote the American Legion Auxiliary's promise of service not self. Our grassroots members and national officers worked with the Americanism Program to educate and grow our future. To tell us more, please welcome National Americanism Committee Chairman Denise Conrad from the Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

MS. CONRAD: Good morning, Madam President Nicole. No one saw what was coming and how our lives would change with the pandemic. VA Hospitals and nursing homes were closed to visitors and family. Our children were thrust into a virtual learning. Parents were now responsible for their education and they were trying to work from home. But the hardest hit were our health care workers who had to care for the sick and dying. We ask our members to thank them by using #ALAThankYou on a poster for the dedication love and respect of our first responders were showing to all those affected by this terrible crisis and the response was amazing. Our ALA members had to dig deep and come up with a plan to continue our mission and wow, did you ever. Unit members were learning how to navigate the virtual world not only holding their meetings virtually but making videos and using social media to support our mission. Star Spangled Kids was promoted by presenting booklets on the U.S. Constitution, promoting the oratorical contest, the essay contest, and teaching flag etiquette. In Pennsylvania and New Mexico, they made videos about flag etiquette and presented them via

Zoom to the students complete with a test administered by the teacher. As teachers searched for ideas to keep their virtual students engaged, our members came to the rescue with Americanism projects to assist them. As you can see, little hands make beautiful patriotic art. In New York, virtual -- they encouraged students who did not have a flag in their virtual learning room to close their eyes and picture the flag waving as they recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Applause.)

MS. CONRAD: Tyler County Unit 48 in West Virginia supplied an entire football team a flag to carry at the beginning of each game. It made such an impression in the community that the Unit President promised next year the flags will be bigger.

(Applause.)

MS. CONRAD: In Wisconsin, Indiana, and Ohio, Americanism and government tests are administered to high school students. Ohio awards the top 18 winners an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. where they have the opportunity lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers. This past year, the Ohio Legion family made a poppy wreath for this purpose at their mid-winter conference. Instead of the usual parades and holiday events, our members had to get inventive about promoting patriotism. Using ALA branding, some units decorated patriotic trees in a local mall or on a street corner or made a display in a downtown shop window to celebrate the patriotic holiday. Inyo Unit 118 and Big Pine Unit 457 from California asked all neighbors to participate in the Flames of Remembrance lighting three candles at dusk on Memorial Day. A red one for the blood shed for our freedom, a white one to keep our POW and MIAs forever in our prayers, and a blue one for all deceased veterans, first responders, and 911 victims.

(Applause.)

MS. CONRAD: But the most unique project this year was the 25 Patriotic Days 'Til Christmas. The Department of Colorado Chair Terry Clinton asked for children to perform patriotic themes such as flag etiquette, Why I Love My Veteran, U.S. Constitution, singing or playing a patriotic song, reciting a poem, verse, or patriotic document. Included in this submission was to be a letter from the student stating why they felt passionate about their submission. She selected the top 25 and sent a date to each winner telling them their patriotic rendition would appear on the ALA Department of Colorado's Facebook page on that date. What an outstanding project. In closing, I would like to thank the members of my amazing National Americanism Team for your time and dedication to the ALA and our mission. You helped make all of this possible. Madam President, thank you for leading us on this amazing journey to the future. This concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Denise. No task was too big or too small for the members to support our armed forces and their families. Here to tell us about the wonderful volunteer activities to help our military families is National Security Chairman Melanie Taylor from California. Mel?

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: Madam National President Nicole, units of the American Legion Auxiliary all throughout our country continue to support our active duty military, National Guard, and Reserves. They have supported the active duty families by working with the FRG on nearby military installations and they've provided snacks, American flags, and gifts, and activities for the children at yellow ribbon events. The Department of Texas has a National Security Facebook page where members can share their activities supporting the military. Most units supported local blood drives. Many of them were hosted at their Legion Hall. Ohio reported 65 blood drives were held with 1,723 pints collected.

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: Members reported participating online and in-person the community emergency response training courses. Little did they know this would come in handy a few months later. Maine's Department President Virginia Chaput sent out a 100 challenge to all her Department committee chairman to celebrate the American Legion Auxiliary's 100th birthday. Each committee chairman was asked to collect 100 items or volunteer 100 hours. Maine's National Security Chairman Joan Caron chose to send 100 care packages to the troops stationed overseas as her first project. Her second project was to send 100 letters or cards to active duty military. She remembers back when her son was stationed in Iraq and she and her Unit 135 members met with the local schools and asked the children if they would like to write a thank you note, make a drawing, or write a letter to the service members serving overseas. Some of the teachers wrote a little letter that was included and they thanked them all. She was happy to report approximately 150 cards and letters were sent in time for Christmas. See what you can accomplish if you set your mind to it? Now, here we are March 2020. Who would have ever thought the world would be changed due to a pandemic? Our whole way of life changed. Shelter in, do not leave your homes, social distance, 6 feet apart, and wear face masks at all times. This hit our Auxiliary members hard. No longer were we allowed to meet in person. Our post homes were closed. We could no longer hold special events in support of our military. As we struggled to figure out what to do to continue our mission as difficult as it was, many of our units stepped up and did just that. Friday night fish fries and other drive-through dinners with Legion and SAL members helping were provided as a means to raise money. Blue Star and Gold Star banners were presented to families leaving them on their porches, and ROTC and JROTC awards were purchased and delivered to the schools for presentations. Donations were also made to the USOs. Red shirts were worn on Fridays remembering everyone deployed. It seemed a lot of our Auxiliary members became quite proficient in sewing making masks and selling them as fundraiser. Whitmore Unit 28 from the Department of Wyoming --

(Applause.)

MS. TAYLOR: -- upon hearing of the restrictions for allowable face masks for the West Point cadets, black masks and black elastic only, bought the material and sewed 75 masks for an Auxiliary member to distribute who just happened to be one of those cadets. The future does look brighter as our

Auxiliary members continued to work the National Security Program. Thank you for not forgetting our military and their families. To quote Rahm Emmanuel, "Never let a series crisis go to waste," and what I mean by that is an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before. Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The American Legion Auxiliary members are -- have made it a priority to protect, care for and support our children and youth, particularly those of veterans, military families. Here to share the wonderful ways our Departments and units use their own creativity and generosity to engage our Children and Youth is National Committee Chairman Lisa Williamson from Alaska. Lisa?

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. WILLIAMSON: The ability to adapt and overcome when things don't go as expected is often the difference in leading, maybe even excelling through tough times and I'm here to tell you that members as well as our youth have excelled.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: You've heard the stories over the past few days providing examples of just ,and I won't disappoint you as I continue to share how we've celebrated a century of service even in the face of a pandemic. The pandemic made us think outside the box and still provide some sort of normal for our kids. Legion family Halloween events last October were mostly held outside with some version of Trunk-or-Treat. One thing we have learned over the past few months with COVID-19 is change is the one constant and one such change is the ALA Halloween coloring book. Thanks to Communication Manager Aaron Meyer for his creativity and design work, we were able to release it in time for Halloween. 10,000 were ordered

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: -- and 207 were downloaded from the website since its release last summer and many departments report distributing them, and the important thing is that the kids liked them too. The sounds of laughter during the holidays was anything but normal, but Legion families hosted Christmas COVID style with drive-through events complete with Santa, prepackaged goodies, and a gift for each kiddo. As we celebrate a Century of Service, the Children and Youth Program has been concentrating our efforts on presenting 100 youth hero awards and 100 good deed awards. As a reminder, the youth should demonstrate a physical act of valor for the Youth Hero Award while the youth should demonstrate leadership role and community service for the Good Deed Award. Through the teamwork of 46 departments, we can celebrate we made both goals.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: ALA members nominated 559 young people for the Good Deed Award and we awarded 117 Youth Hero Awards.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Let's hear that again. Whoopee.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: And while we might have had twice the time to do it, we nearly quadrupled the prior year's awards, so congratulations to all including these very deserving kiddos. Let me mention just a few here. Rather than receiving gifts for Christmas, Kamryn Rice from Kentucky wanted to purchase gifts for the pediatric cancer patients through the Dragonfly Foundation.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: She then expanded her project by asking friends and family to donate new toys and gift cards. Kamryn was able to collect those 200 gifts for young cancer patients. For those of you who don't know, Kamryn Rice is our President-Elect's granddaughter.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Connor Haywood received the Good Deed Award after he designed, built, and installed a dropbox for old and worn flags for his Eagle Scout project.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Seeing a need due to the pandemic, Kiera Dutler of Iowa --

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: -- was awarded a Good Deed Award for making and collecting 245 handmade masks for the VA Medical Center as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award. Do you see the connection there?

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: School kids in Connecticut -- Connecticut in the house?

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: -- created wooden forts to display at area restaurants as a part of an initiative to bring people back out as COVID wanes. They too were awarded the Good Deed Award.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: With over 675 awards presented, there is no way I can tell you about each, but let's take a minute just to look at a few.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: We use these opportunities of these awards to be able to showcase these youth installing good citizenship in them for years to come. A 2018 Good Deed recipient just stated, "Alone we can do so little. Together, we can do so much." With that kind of insight, I know our future is bright. Madam National President, this concludes the platform remarks for the Children and Youth Committee.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Wonderful. Great report, Lisa. How much fun we are celebrating. This is a special moment. There are many reasons why our male ALA members to choose to join us, honoring their spouse's military service, showing care and appreciation for veterans, military, and their families, being part of something positive that's bigger than themselves.

Vibrant posts, units, squadrons, and chapters thrive when all four entities of our American Legion Family work together. Today I am proud to say that we have over 1,000 male spouse members in the American Legion Auxiliary. I have had the opportunity to meet several across the country and give them a special gift each time I do. Today there with those 1,000 members let's take a look at a story about who demonstrates how spouse memberships can help grow our ranks and increase our ability to serve.

Can we roll the video, please?

VIDEO: "I am pleased to present you, Mike, with your 2020 membership card as the first male spouse to join the ranks of the American Legion Auxiliary.

MALE VOICE: Thank you, so much.

FEMALE VOICE: Congratulations.

(Applause.)

(Video plays.)

FEMALE VOICE: Since that historic day in August of 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary has welcomed over 1,000 male ALA members. One of them is Jeff Crouser of Delaware who understands that the way to grow membership is to grow the entire American Legion family.

MR. CROUSER: I joined The American Legion 22 years ago when I was stationed at Dover Air Force Base. During that time, I climbed the ladder through the Post to become a post commander, an honorary life member, and I figured that was about it as far as The American Legion was concerned.

FEMALE VOICE: That's when Jeff learned that nearby Post 3 in Milford, Delaware was about to lose its charter.

MR. CROUSER: So a number of us, five of us, transferred from Walter L. Fox Post 2, gave up our honorary life membership, and become members here at Milford Post 3 and started a revitalization effort. One of the first things we did was we moved where we were holding our meeting. We were holding our meeting at the Ruritan out in the middle of nowhere with no lighting or anything else. We met with the VFW here in the city of Milford and they said, "Sure. We'd be more than happy to host you." So the first year we took it from 52 and falling to 99 members and growing.

FEMALE VOICE: Their rapid growth made finding their own post home a necessity.

MR. CROUSE: We looked at purchasing. We ended up deciding to rent here in a strip mall which is unique in and of itself.

FEMALE VOICE: But something was missing.

MR. CROUSE: So once we got into our post home, we knew something was missing. So at that time we contacted the Department Secretary and the Department Adjutant, applied for our charters for both the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of American Legion and from there, membership took off and grew.

FEMALE VOICE: That's when Post 3's American Legion family became to flourish.

MR. CROUSE: I was elected Unit 3 president of the newly reformed American Legion Auxiliary Unit 3.

FEMALE VOICE: In fact, Jeff is the first male unit president in the history of the Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

FEMALE VOICE: Unit 3 has grown from zero to 97 Auxiliary members.

MR. CROUSE: Our American Legion membership goal was 199. We finished the year at 396. The Sons of The American Legion finished squadron goals up at 130 percent of membership. My son is a member of the Sons of The American Legion. In order to grow one part of the Legion family, you must grow the whole family as -- together.

(Applause.)

FEMALE VOICE: To Jeff, it really is all about The American Legion family.

MR. CROUSE: I joined the Sons of The American Legion in recognition of my father's service. I joined The American Legion in recognition of my service. I joined the American Legion Auxiliary in recognition of my wife's service. The reason that I felt that as so important is we weren't eligible until just recently and it was only right to recognize her service. And of course, I'm a member of The American Legion Riders.

FEMALE VOICE: And at Milford they know how to spread the word.

MR. CROUSE: We, as an American Legion family, we utilize social media, the traditional media, local TV, community newsletters, newspapers, and it's all free and it works. People come to us to join our family organization.

FEMALE VOICE: Jeff's membership in the American Legion Auxiliary has really made a difference.

MR. CROUSE: Although my term in office as president is over, I'm still involved with the American Legion Auxiliary. I am the Unit Secretary. I'm involved with The American Legion, the Sons of The American Legion, and The American Legion Riders. After all, it's all about service to the veterans, military, and their families.

FEMALE VOICE: Like Jeff, encouraging spouses to join the American Legion Auxiliary can make a huge impact in our ability to serve."

(Video ends.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: So as we look at our male spouse membership, what a wonderful time to look at the broader picture and inspiring ideas our Membership Committee went above and beyond to enhance our membership strength. To give us more insight into this vital program, please welcome National Membership Chairman Pam Ray from the Department of Illinois.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Good morning.

VOICES: Good morning.

MS. RAY: Madam President Nicole, Departments around the country not only lit the spark for membership, but they have kept the fireworks going in spite of the pandemic, COVID, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and so much more. I think it's time to celebrate all of our members and their

accomplishments. Yay.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: We didn't see it coming, but changes in our eligibility have been a welcome gift. The Legion Act, the addition of the Space Force, and the addition of male spouses being able to join our ranks. From reading all the Department reports, it is clear that they took full advantage of these changes. Congratulations to Laura Bondurant, Department of Washington. She is their Membership Chairman. She signed up Washington's first male ALA member and the Nation's first male PUFL member.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Now, that's a reason to celebrate.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: In our first two years of new eligibility, we surpassed 1,000 male ALA members.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Units and Departments across the country have been thinking outside the box as well as inside the box to recruit, retain, and rejoin members. There have been membership tents and vehicles at fairs, parades, and community celebrations. Units and Departments used all forms of social media and many shared their efforts on our National Membership Facebook page. I am sure many units are appreciative of all the fresh ideas. One week of caring and sharing, or maybe two weeks of caring and sharing, or maybe 104 weeks of caring and sharing produced so many wonderful results, but best of all was the personal touch with so many members. While we did get some renewals and rejoins, the greatest benefit was letting our members know they are missed and they are valued. Units reported so many thank you's and so many excite members just because someone took the time to make that personal connection. I want to share the story of Oregon membership Chairman Debra Godman. Oregon, are you there?

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: She took the phone call to the next level. Debra called 159 new members to welcome them to the ALA, answer questions, address concerns and make them feel extra special. That's caring and sharing all year long. Thank you, Debra.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: We also spent the year reaching out to our membership to recognize not only our longest serving member, but also our most young at heart living members. Congratulations to Lorita Holmes of Arizona Unit 62 for her 90 years of service and she's 90 years old.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: And happy birthday to Janie Harkie-Roberts of Oklahoma Unit 123 --

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- who turned 104 this year.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: And thank you for your continued service. The Department of West Virginia celebrated the different decades of the American Legion

Auxiliary at their fall 2019 conference. Membership Chairman Lynda Lancaster had different Districts dressed in different decades and they celebrating with a great cake. I think everyone had a good time.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: With the theme Celebrate Our Past, Awaken Our Future, the Department of Illinois included everybody in the fun at their fall meeting. I loved those roaring 20's costumes and for sure I do not want to mess with their commander. In Puerto Rico, they didn't let any old earthquake stop them from celebrating and they had a great time.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Many of us missed our March Madness in 2020. I know my family certainly did. The Department of Pennsylvania Membership Chairman, Kelly Moyer, decided to bring March Madness to membership. She created membership bracket dates. Each council team with the highest membership total by 10:00 p.m. on those dates would win the bracket and move on to the next bracket and the winner received a monetary prize. And it's always exciting to welcome new units to the American Legion Auxiliary. In 2019, not 2020, we welcomed 43 new units and in 2020, 2021 we welcomed 29 new units.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: All right. This is the audience participation part. If your Department started a new unit in the last two years, Department President stand up quickly and give yourselves a hand.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: We want to celebrate and recognize all units that reached their 100 percent goal by the ALA's 100th and 101st birthdays. I'm so excited to say we had 269 units by November 10th of 2019 and 210 by November 10th of 2020. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: If your unit was 100 percent by one of those dates, stand up and wave quickly.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Yay. Oh, lots of you. Good. We all want to give you well-deserved applause and our thanks and thank you so much units. We appreciate you. I hope you're all wearing your 100 Percent Unit ribbon you should have received at Pre-Con or your division caucuses. All of our Departments have worked very hard under extenuating circumstances over the last two years. On behalf of your National Membership Committee and me, thank you. Some Departments reached stellar goals over the last two years. Our 2019 75 percent Pearl Harbor Winners were Iowa --

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Minnesota --

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Mississippi --

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Montana --

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Puerto Rico --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- South Dakota --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- and Wisconsin.
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Our 2020 Pearl Harbor winners were Iowa --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- and Nebraska.
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- congratulations to those Departments. Reaching 95 percent by Armed Forces Day was another goal that several departments obtained. In 2020 we saw Arizona --

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Delaware --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Florida --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Maryland, New Hampshire --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Puerto Rico --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- and Washington reach that milestone.
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: In 2021, we congratulate Delaware
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- District of Columbia --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- Florida --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- New Jersey --
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: -- and Tennessee.
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Department Membership Chairman and Department Presidents from those states, stand and waive. You guys worked hard. Stand and waive.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: And last, but not least, we want to recognize some Celebration Award winners. These are Departments that were 100 percent or better by 30 days prior to National Convention. Madam President Nicole has asked the Department Presidents from our Celebration Award winners to come on stage and be recognized.

In 2020, Puerto Rico reached over 103 percent. Woo-hoo.
(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Our 2021 Celebration Award winners, let's hear it for them, Department of District of Columbia, 100 percent goal. Woo-hoo.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Department of Delaware, 109.7 percent.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: The Department of Alaska, 101.15 percent.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: And the Department of Florida with 101.26 percent.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Please, ladies, these ladies worked so hard. Give them another round.

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Thank you, so much. Reading the Department reports is always so much fun. There were so many different themes, yet there also seemed to be a common thread. We all wanted to honor and celebrate not only our past, but with a vision of what is to come and we wanted to do it together and we certainly found ways to do that in spite of many road blocks. In the words of Joel A. Barker, "Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes time. Vision with action can change the world."

(Applause.)

MS. RAY: Madam President, this concludes my platform remarks.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We just got an email for our Membership report while Pam was speaking. In '19/'20, we reached a goal of 94 percent .74. So 94.74 percent. I think that's pretty good at the beginning of a pandemic. Yes, our goal of overall membership was a little bit less this year because of the pandemic at, Madam Chairman, 95.57 percent.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. And when the pandemic hit, I had to start calling chairman and committee members and the very first committee I called, I was on a conference call with the Membership Committee and that's a tough word, that's a tough haul. You don't think about doing that for two years, so I had my fingers crossed. Every single one of the nine committee members said absolutely yes, as long as Pam Ray was still going to be the Chairman. So I think they all did a yeomen's job. Thank you, so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: As we continue to celebrate a century of service, we know it is our membership that makes the difference, so thank you, Madam Chairman.

MS. RAY: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right. Go ahead.

MS. RAY: Madam President, we do have one resolution to be considered this morning.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The Resolutions Chairman, Donna Thurman, will come forward.

(Applause.)

MS. THURMAN: Madam National President, Resolution No. 1 was

submitted by Kathy Phillips, the immediate past department president of Alabama. It was circulated on Monday, August 23rd, 2021. The subject is, "A Change to the ALA Membership Eligibility." It reads, "Whereas the American Legion Auxiliary mission promotes service and support to veterans, military, and their families, and whereas the American Legion Auxiliary is a diverse and inclusive organization, and whereas the American Legion Auxiliary seeks to be an organization inclusive of anyone who supports veterans, military, and their families, and whereas eligibility for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary is determined by The American Legion, and whereas The American Legion changed their governing documents to allow all spouses to become members of the American Legion Auxiliary in 2019, and whereas the American Legion Auxiliary changed its Constitution in 2019 to update without American Legion Auxiliary Governing Board action should The American Legion further change its Constitution regarding eligibility for the American Legion Auxiliary, and whereas the most recently revised IRS regulation for 501(C)(19) organizations states, www.irs.gov, 'Charities, Non-Profits, Other Non-Profits, Veterans Organizations. A veterans post or organization must meet the following requirements to be exempt under 501(c)(19). It must be organized in the United States or any of its possessions.'

Number two, 'At least 75 percent of its members must be past or present members of the United States Armed Forces.' Number three, 'At least 97.5 percent of its members must be present or former members of the United States Armed Forces, cadets including only students in college or university ROTC programs, or at the armed force -- armed services academies, and spouses, widows, widowers, ancestors, or lineal descendants of individuals, referred to in the first or second bullet.

Number four, 'It must be operated exclusively for one or more of the following purposes. To promote the social welfare of the community, for example; to promote the common good and general welfare of the people of the community; to assist disabled and needy war veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces and their dependents and the windows and orphans of deceased veterans; to provide entertainment, care, and assistance to hospitalized veterans or members of the United States Armed Forces; to carry on programs to perpetuate the memory of deceased members of United States Armed Forces and comfort their survivors; to conduct programs for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes; to sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature; to provide insurance benefits for members or their dependents or to provide social and recreational activities for members.'

Number five, 'No part of its net earnings may inure to the benefit of any private share-holder or individual. and whereas the most recently revised IRS regulation for 501(c)(19) organizations states,' www.irs.gov, Charities, Non-Profits, Other Non-Profits, Veterans Organizations. An organization may be exempt under Section 501(c)19 as an Auxiliary unit or society of a veterans post or organization if it meets the following requirements:'

Number one, 'It is affiliated with and organized in accordance with the bylaws and regulations of a veterans post or organization described above.'

Number two, 'At least 75 percent of its members are veterans, spouses of veterans, or related to a veteran within two degrees of consanguinity,' grandparent, brother, sister, grandchild, represent the most distant allowable relationships.

Number three, 'All members are either members of a veterans post or organization described above or spouses of a member of such post or organization or are related to a member of such post or organization within two degrees of consanguinity. No part of its net earnings inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

And now there -- therefore,' excuse me, 'be it resolved, the American Legion Auxiliary requests The American Legion change its governing documents to allow membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for all grandparents, parents, siblings, spouse, natural and adopted descendants related to The American Legion eligible member, and be it finally resolved, should The American Legion change its governing documents to allow membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for all grandparents, parents, siblings, spouse, natural and adopted descendants related to The American Legion eligible member, the American Legion Auxiliary shall immediately allow into the American Legion Auxiliary membership grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, natural and adopted descendants to The American Legion eligible member.

Rationale: There has been much confusion with the membership eligibility and IRS regulations especially in the last decade as the IRS has continually amended regulations and conducted more audits of non-profit organizations. Previously, protecting traditions and the non-profit status of our organization, The American Legion family chose to maintain strict eligibility rules above the minimum requirements of the IRS regulations.

While this adherence to strict enforcement of the regulations remains an important priority, creating an inclusive and diverse environment to execute our mission is significant to increasing our membership, following the IRS regulations, and expanding the eligibility of our membership eliminates previously identified barriers that will make our organization better and stronger to ultimately enhance our support for our veterans, the military, and their families. The Membership Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution be adopted.' Madam President, on behalf of the resolutions committee, I move the adoption of Resolution No. 1 as read.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question is on the adoption of Resolution 1 as read. The Membership Pre-Convention Committee recommends the resolution be adopted. Is there a second? I didn't hear anyone.

VOICES: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Is there any discussion?

MS. TRAHAN: Madam President, mic 1.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 1?

MS. TRAHAN: Yep. Christine Trahan, delegate of the Department of Texas Executive NEC to the NEC. I move that we postpone this motion indefinitely.

VOICES: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: There's a motion and a second that the resolution be postponed indefinitely. Is there any other discussion?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Madam President?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I'm sorry. Microphone 2?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Microphone 2.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The reason this resolution was brought was because an at-risk veteran whose only living relative was her grandfather

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- and he wanted to join.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you for that information. We have a motion on the floor. Is there any other discussion on the motion?

MS. VICK: Number 1.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone No. 1?

MS. VICK: Yeah. Marion Vick of Florida. You know, they dropped the great-granddaughters.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes, that's understood.

MS. VICK: So why are we taking older relatives when we really need younger relatives?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Is there any other comments regarding the motion on the floor to table it indefinitely?

MS. SEELEY: Glynis Seeley, Department of Nevada.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Microphone 2.

MS. SEELEY: Microphone 2. It was stated that this was distributed on 8/23. This was not enough time to bring it to our Departments to discuss this resolution in depth because our convention convened on 8/27. That's four days. That is not enough time to bring this to our Department delegations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Are there any other comments? Microphone 2? I see a hand raised. Thank you.

MS. DAUGHTRY: Judy Daughtry, NEC Department of Alabama. It is my understanding that if this resolution would pass, whether it passed today or it passes in the future after more discussion, that great-granddaughters would be allowed.

VOICES: No.

MS. DAUGHTRY: Pardon?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Two degrees of consanguinity is currently from a veteran.

MS. DAUGHTRY: Okay.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: That's how you have granddaughter not great-granddaughter.

MS. DAUGHTRY: And there was some discussion in a pre-meeting and if I could ask Kelly Circle to speak to that?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: The question on the floor right now is to table the motion.

MS. DAUGHTRY: Okay. All right. Well, I would -- in the event that

great-granddaughters could come in, I would encourage it that we must find some way for our great-granddaughters to be members. I presently have a great-granddaughter who cannot belong, but her twin brother can be a Legionnaire. I mean, can be a Son.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: With the two -- with the definition of two degrees, the way our membership eligibility current reads, it's our eligibility is based on a veteran who served. With this amendment -- resolution, excuse me. It's a supporting resolution. That would equate a Son of The American Legion equal to a Legionnaire.

MS. DAUGHTRY: Thank you.

MS. WARD: Madam President, microphone 1.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I'm sorry. One?

MS. WARD: Trish Ward, delegate from the Department of Kansas. I speak in support of postponing this resolution to allow more time for research and investigation into the specifics of the resolution to be able to be presented more articulately in the future.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you for your comments as well.

(Applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Madam President?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Just a second. I think I have someone over at microphone 2.

MS. PHILLIPS: I want everyone to understand that this has been going on since the winter, but I wasn't sure what my process was. So I apologize for that and I understand the need for people to take it home and talk to others. That doesn't bother me, but there are people out there that are waiting and I want you to keep in mind.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Kathy, and this is your second time to speak on this subject. I think I saw --

MS. DIAZ: Madam President?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: -- someone at one.

MS. DIAZ: Sue Diaz, delegate of Alaska. I call for the question.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: A second is required for the question to be called.

VOICES: Second.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Second? And we'll need a two-thirds vote. So the motion on the table is to postpone indefinitely, tabling, this resolution. Oh, I'm sorry. I've got to back-up. I was ahead of myself. Yes, the two-thirds vote is to end debate. We'll do that vote first. If we're ready in the back, vote 1 to postpone. Excuse me, 1 to end debate; 2 to continue. 1 to end debate, 2 to continue. Vote now.

(Pause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right. The voting -- okay. The end debate is 635 to 41 votes. So we will end debate on Resolution 1. Now, do we have -- we had a motion on the floor to postpone. We are back to that aspect of this discussion. We've had a second. We've had discussion. Is there any other discussion to come before?

VOICES: No.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We are completed that because we have done the debate. We called the question. I just want to make sure everybody is on the same page and why we're proceeding the way we are. Okay. The vote will now be 1 to postpone indefinitely. You vote 1 to postpone, 2 we reopen the discussion. Please vote now.

(Pause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: This vote will require a majority versus a two-thirds. Voting is closed. When the results are tallied -- oh, faster today.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: 606 to postpone indefinitely the resolution. No votes, 76. The motion has been defeated to continue on the discussion. The resolution will be postponed indefinitely.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Donna and Pam. Thank you so Membership and Resolutions Chairman. I greatly appreciate your assistance. Thank you everyone for your due diligence and obviously, we have work to do. Thank you. Okay. We have a treat in store for you. You know how much I like doing yours and you know how much I enjoy you saw the pictures of children that I've been with in the last two years. Here comes two of our special, special young people. All right. I will turn the microphone back over to Chairman of Children and Youth, Lisa Williamson, for our special surprise this morning.

MS. WILLIAMSON: So let's celebrate.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: I might have concluded my platform remarks, but just like the commercials say, "But wait, there's more." So if you guys would like, I would like to introduce to you Jordye Quigg. Jordye, would you come up here, please? Can you come stand up here? Jordye is a junior member of John J. Morris Unit 62 here in Arizona.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: During the pandemic, Jordye took it upon herself to send one of the unit's longtime Auxiliary members, Nadine Ruse (phonetic), a card every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for the entire year to help curb the loneliness that Ms. Ruse was experiencing during the shutdown as the restrictions in her assisted living home would not allow friends or family to visit. Ms. Ruse is 90 years old and looked forward to these notes. On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, National President Nicole Clapp is proud to present you this Good Deed Award.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Not very often that a National President is the one who's able to present the award.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: On a somewhat sad note, and I know I'm going off script, JP, I apologize; Nadine passed away three days ago.

VOICES: Awe.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: I do have a feeling Jordye will find another pen pal. Jordye, you may not know it, but National President Nicole was a junior member herself even having served as Honorary National Junior President. I would guess that you're going to follow her footsteps too. A round of applause for Jordye and her wonderful good deed.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Next, I'd like to introduce you to Diego Garcia.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Last November, if you were here, Diego was walking by the Glendale High School's campus when he heard odd noises behind a locked gate. Thank goodness he did not keep on walking. School counselor Dannette Garcia (phonetic) had a diabetic episode and passed out falling face down on the sidewalk. Diego called 911 and he stayed with her giving comfort. He even jumped the fence to allow the paramedics quicker access.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: Mrs. Garcia is also here, the counselor. She didn't know her name or where she was. She was taken to the ER for treatment. Diego said that he was a little scared, as he should have been, but he knew he needed to remain calm. He did all the right things and acted quickly. Diego, on behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, National President Nicole Clapp is proud to present you this Youth Hero award.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: And Diego's mom is over here.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: His dad was unable to attend, but they're going to stream it later tonight so he could see Diego get this award.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: He's an example of the goodness of America's youth. I can assure you it's not often that a youth can claim that a National President is able to give this award.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: To both Jordye and Diego, The American Legion thanks you for your efforts in making a difference in your community. These awards were created to recognize young men and women like yourselves who demonstrated an act of caring selflessness like Jordye or performed a heroic act of valor like Diego. Thank you and congratulations all, again.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: I believe that actually concludes my presentation.

(Applause.)

MS. WILLIAMSON: That's what we're here for.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. You can all leave the stage. Thank you for your heroism and your creativity, and your sense of passion and commitment.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Doesn't that just warm your heart?

VOICES: Yes.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: It does. It does, this morning. At this time, I am pleased to introduce the dedicated Resolutions Committee. You've met our Chairman coming on the stage, Donna Thurman, from Kentucky.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Lynne Edwards-Akers, Vice Chairman from Pennsylvania.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And Darla Davidson, member from Iowa.

(Applause.)

MS. THURMAN: Madam National President, members, guests, the Pre-Convention Resolutions Committee meeting was on Saturday, August 28th at the appointed time. Past National President Janet Jefford represented the national organization and Professional Parliamentarian Chris Dickey was in attendance to offer clarification and professional direction. Madam President, we have one courtesy resolution and I would like to introduce Darla Davidson and Lynne Ackers to present the resolution.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. Thank you.

MS. THURMAN: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. DAVIDSON: Whereas the delegated delegates, alternates, and guests have gathered in Phoenix, Arizona for the ALA 100th National Convention to hear the accomplishments of the world's largest patriotic Auxiliary organization and to show their dedication to serving our heroes in their membership and mission outreach efforts, and whereas the past national presidents, the national officers, the national chairman, and the national committee members have shown their commitment to this great organization by promoting programs, mentoring new leaders and celebrating a year of accomplishments, and whereas the national and local convention committees, the national headquarters staff, the convention center staff, City of Phoenix, and the members of the Department of Arizona have extended a warm hand of hospitality to all of us, and whereas we have been honored by many distinguished guests including our guests from The American Legion.

MS. AKERS: Whereas President Nicole has chaired an inspiring and successful national convention, therefore be it now resolved, that this courtesy resolution expresses our heart-felt appreciation and grateful thanks to all the names in this resolution who shared with us at this time, and be it further resolved, we express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the extraordinary women, American Legion National President Nicole -- woman -- by giving her a standing ovation demonstrating our love, support, and pride in all her accomplishments along with the unanimous thank you for a job well done.

(Applause.)

MS. THURMAN: Madam National President, this concludes the resolution report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, everyone. Thank you, Resolutions Committee. It is an honor and a privilege to serve. As we now move ahead in

the program, we will now have -- the Resolutions have approved their resolution and now the Distinguished Guest Committee, we will move on to introductions. The Resolutions Committee is not only the hardworking group behind the scenes at convention, so let's give a big hand for our Distinguished Guest Committee. They are coming out from backstage. Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, past national president, is Chairman.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Vice Chairman, past national president Carlene Ashworth.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And committee member past national president, Rita Navarrete.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, ladies. We greatly appreciate what you've been doing behind the scenes. Would Darla Davidson from the Department of Iowa please come to the podium and present the National President's scrapbook?

MS. DAVIDSON: Madam National President, good morning. Neither of us can actually recall when we first met. It was likely in middle school or so, then we were simply junior Auxiliary members back home in Iowa. Next thing we know, as freshmen at high school, I'm handing a gavel to you after concluding my year as Department of Iowa Junior Auxiliary President. You began your year then in my church and you have never looked back from there. I mean, look where we're at now, Nic.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: A little louder.

MS. DAVIDSON: A little? Okay. We have been friends since then. We chose the same career path, not just the same school. We have always been together. We have shared graduations, weddings, the birth of our boys Ryan and Trevor, or me becoming a grandma and so much more. And when I say "me," I include my husband Scott in that as well because he's graciously just learned to just go with the flow with Nic and I. We shared many letters back then when you did that sort of thing as teenage girls until we got cell phones. We have shared football games, parades, being pages, girl state stuff, bottles of wine, and late nights just talking. We have shared many tears and hugs, and way many more laughs than we can count. Iowa, as well as your parents Darryl and Jeanie have gladly shared you with all of you for two years now and we are so very proud of you. We can all sit here and say, "Nic, I knew you when," but they can't honestly say that they really knew you when, but I can. It's not about that. It's all about true friendship, one that's something like 40-ish years in the making and still counting. Here is just one of your many, many, many scrapbooks. So please enjoy them for years to come, Nic. I love you, my friend.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you, Darla. What a wonderful way to have a very good friend. I don't think she thought a scrapbook would be two years' worth, but she's a trooper and she'll hang with us. I was so excited at some point to be actually able to enjoy and reminisce. And those of you that know

we've been taking pictures beyond pictures everywhere we go, and I can't thank all of you enough when I would say, "Here, take the camera. Start taking pictures." You all did a yeoman's job, so thank you very much. It's a great way to remember where we've come, how much great work we've done, and I think you'll hear me say a lot about fun, and fellowship, and passion and I hope that's echoed through on every one of my visits. Now, before we move to our closing ceremonies, I will ask Executive Director Kelly Circle to please come forward with updates. Kelly?

MS. CIRCLE: All righty. Departments must pick up and pack your flags following the conclusion of this session. You can keep the packed flags in this room, but any flags left in the room at the close of installation will be turned in to Lost and Found. Installation opens at 1:15 p.m. and we'll start at 1:30 p.m. State's Dinner begins at 7:00 p.m. in the South Building, Halls F and G. Thank you to the incredible support of all of you all at, that's y'all, and our donors at home, we have reached our regional goal of raising of \$20,000 for our veterans, military, and their families.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: Yay. Luckily, USAA was so impressed with your generosity, they decided to help us set a new goal of \$25,000 and to help us reach it, your gifts will be doubled up to a total of \$2,500 today only, so make another contribution.

(Applause.)

MS. CIRCLE: That means you can impact twice as many heroes with your gift. Don't miss this unique opportunity to make double the difference on these brave men and women and please stop by the Giving Tuesday book on your way out of our session today. Thank you, so much.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, what a wonderful surprise, \$20,000 and now we're going for 25. I think the Development Team is out in the hallway, but would someone in the staff please let them know that your National President just made a \$1,000 donation?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We're one step closer. Twenty-five is our goal. We've hit every goal we wanted to this year. We were this close on membership. Let's make this one for our future endeavors so that we are positioning ourselves for future mission delivery.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. We have waited two years, two years to celebrate the 100th and here to tell us celebrating our 100th anniversary has been so much fun, but we have to admit it's been a little bit of work too. And my script says, "a ton of work." I'm going to say a little bit of work. So many amazing people have been working behind the scenes to ensure that we capture and share the ways our members have been celebrating over the last two years. Here to give her report is none other than our 100th Anniversary National Chairman, past national president Linda Newsome, better known as the Queen of Diamonds Jubilee.

MS. NEWSOME: Madam President?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes?

MS. NEWSOME: You're too tall.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: You're too short.

MS. NEWSOME: Oh, I'm too short. All right. Madam President, Happy birthday American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: Oh, my goodness. We have waited so long to be able to say that, 100 years and a little bit more. So many plans were put on hold, but not forgotten and you didn't quit. No. You held many celebrations with cakes, balloons, hats, PR, costumes, skits, proclamations, and parades. While many celebrations needed to be put on hold for a time, you didn't give up. For example, Illinois changed its date and location and had a rip-roaring time at Department headquarters.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: But a special member historian, Sherry Meinet from Illinois Gold Star Unit 676 began looking for a World War I veteran named Ole Oleson. I can't get that right. Oleson. Anyway, it's close. Ole's family was defrauded by the banker. They lost their farm and sent his dad to an asylum where he died, and Ole registered for the World War I draft. He was declared dead, so the family was really surprised when Ole returned from France. And then no further word, but Sherry continued her search. At Memorial Day services in 2014, Ole was recognized as a charter member of Post 676. After many dead ends, Sherry -- that was not supposed to be a pun -- Sherry was finally able to get a copy of "her Ole's" death certificate. He was buried in Wisconsin in a grave with a government provided marker until Sherry and a great niece worked to place a stone on the grave. Congratulations to Sherry for fulfilling a veteran's rightful place.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: What a way to celebrate our 100 Years of Service Not Self. Becky Larson also from Unit 342 and Legion family member had a centennial celebration where she dressed as Edith Hobart, the first national president, and family members distributed poppy's, and who says time doesn't stand still. Don't tell that to Lynne Akers and her committee in Pennsylvania.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: Time will stand still for another 50 years in a beautiful time capsule filled with the history of Pennsylvania, letters from past and current national president, and letters from the Pennsylvania Department. And more, also memorabilia from 1921 to date such as pins, newsletters, thumb drive with videos and even an ALA COVID mask. We're glad to see that buried. Well, almost.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: The American Legion family participated in a flag day ceremony followed by the burial of the capsule, then it was time for food and fun. Iowa, the home of the current president, Nicole

--

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: -- outdid itself. They began with the motto Serving a

Century Side-by-Side. To begin, after raising funds, they wanted to educate their members so they produced a brochure of Iowa's legacy of leadership featuring Iowa's five national presidents and --

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: All right. Go ahead, and other national officers. Certificates of appreciation were given to units submitting outstanding reports. It contained a history of their organization, many pictures, and milestones. There is also a write-up of their Department presidents. Needless to say, there are pictures of our National President both as a senior and junior national president. Good job, Nayana (phonetic) and your committee. And we can't forget --

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: -- that a certificate was given to Alvina Wendl of Unit 20 who is a 104 years young --

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: -- and a 71-year member.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: During our 75th anniversary, Headquarters commissioned a firm called One of a Kind to do a collage of our first 75 years. And during the 100th anniversary, that same artist that did the original collage added the last 25 years to complete the 100th history of our organization.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: I hope you all will someday get a chance to go to National Headquarters and view that. And so we close this chapter of our organization, we are passing the mantle to those who follow. We have led the way. But on behalf of the National Committee, we decided that we would be around the next hundred years to make sure they do it right.

(Applause.)

MS. NEWSOME: Thank you, Madam President. It has been a hoot.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well, she might be around a hundred years. Not so sure about the rest of us. Oh, thank you, Linda. Well, let's keep this celebration going and join together in singing, I'll be honest I didn't know we had an Auxiliary song when I took -- become president until I started doing all the histories and readings. I have two special friends from the Department of Iowa, Mary Jo Berning and Mary Andersen will please come to the stage to lead us. So everyone, you can join in too. Just turn to the last page of your commemorative sing-along that will be the lyrics for the book. Here we go. Oh, there they are. Okay. They're going to put it on the screen; is that right?

MS. BERNING: Yep.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay.

MS. BERNING: And we're on the screen.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Go for it, Mary.

MS. BERNING: All right. (Singing) Auxiliary of the Legion to thee we lend refrain e'er you be in the nation in wisdom may you reign; carry on and strive to keep at your command justice, freedom, democracy, and helping

hand; Auxiliary of the Legion our task is not in vain ever loyal we will be, Legion and Auxiliary to the red and white and blue. Auxiliary of the Legion we hail you one and all from coast to coast through the nation we'll heed your beck and call; we ordain ourselves to share without pretense service friendship, sincerity, benevolence; Auxiliary of the Legion we pledge our hearts to you ever loyal we will be, Legion and Auxiliary to the red and white and blue.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Well done. Woo. That's a hard song. Well done. Wow. Well, Sony Records might not be offering us a contract soon, but I think we had a good time. Didn't we?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: All right. Well, the time has come. I want to take a few moments to share with you how you have impacted my life over the last two years. When I took office in August of 2019, I was thinking 12 months later I would be closing another chapter of my life and looking to begin another. Well, we all know that wasn't quite the case as the pandemic tried to control our lives. As I reflect on the past 24 months, I choose to focus on the collective resiliency, dedication, and get 'er done attitude to preserve no matter what the obstacles. Yes, our troops step up to the call every day to protect our freedoms and we did likewise. For this national president until March 15th of 2020 in New Jersey, it had been a pretty typical year. Well, Cornelius and I, we had traveled over 73,000 miles during our 33 trips that we had taken, and we were at the halfway point with 33 more trips slated for the rest of the year. Most you know I did not have a Facebook account prior to taking office. When you would comment and say, "We feel like we're traveling right along with you, Madam President," when I am posting at 1:30 in the morning and I end up being your wake-up message, it brought a huge smile to my face every night when I kept nodding off trying to do a post. Now, I have to confess Cornelius is more popular than the National President at times. But even without going to foreign travel units, I tried my best with Cornelius at my side to represent you with approximately 140,000 miles and 42 Department visits that we were able to interact with. I want --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Oh, thank you. Thank you. Thank you for making every visit so memorable and, of course, all that cake from coast to coast to south to north to celebrate our 100th birthday. I enjoyed playing the historical trivia with The American Legion family while bringing the realization of the significance of our organizations accomplishments in this great organization. Some seeing my 8,500 National President portraits that I signed hanging in your post homes warmed my heart each and every day. I know my grandpa is smiling down every time I told the poppy story about how I became an ALA member, which still brings tears to my eyes every time. You shared with me your Department histories, you unique activities, your milestone celebrates be it Georgia's Molina Michael at her grave site dressing out for style shows, Vermont's Isadore Fox, Indiana and Illinois teaching me how to make their special poppies. Several of you tried out

adaptive sports right alongside me and I cannot forget how proud New Mexico and Past National President Rita Navarrete was when, get this, they served me four pieces of cake all in one day. Many Departments were excited making my list of over the 50 foods I had never tried before, be it a Bierocks, a pony shoe, fry sauce, Cheerwine soda, a Louisiana snowball, huckleberries, cruise nuts (phonetic), a pork roll, or a quahog to just name a few. Yeah, some of those I didn't know what they were either. Seeing life come full circle is what I experienced on my trip to Hawaii for the traditional wreath laying at the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial where I represented the entire American Legion family in 2019 at the Remembrance Day. I was so excited to meet, as you heard me say in the style show, 97-year-old, Sterling R. Hale, the last Pearl Harbor survivor living in Hawaii and to come to find out, he wanted to meet me. He compared his life growing up in Galesburg, Illinois on a farm in the Great Depression to my life growing up on a small farm outside of a small time in Gladbrook, Iowa in the 1970s. He personally handwrote and printed out our life comparisons, but we both went into health care to help others. He went into pharmacy. I went in to -- became a burn nurse. So obviously burn nurse resonated with him when he was recovering survivors and remains the day of the attack and our birthdays are just one day apart. He said, "Nicole, when you get out of office, why don't you just become my nurse?" He will turn 100 on November 29th.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And I'm wishing you, Sterling, I know you're having major surgery this month so I'm crossing my fingers for you and your family. During this remarkable trip while speaking to over 100 young marines at the National Punch Bowl Cemetery, I befriended a 10-year-old native from Ohio, Jacob McMillian (phonetic). He has wanted to be a marine his entire life. I presented him one of my National President pins and he tapped on it and he said, "These are the poppies you talked about in your speech." Warmed my heart, a big smile on my face, and his grandmother, his escort said, "You actually listened to what she said?" And I will cherish the fun and vivid interactions I had with our junior members. How many times did they come up to me and say, "Nikki, if you can do it, I think I want to be National President someday."

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I truly believe our lives were in good hands with our veterans. We entrusted our lives in their hands and I am confident that our lives will continue to be protected well into the future with the caring and compassion that I have seen and demonstrated by these individuals and each one and every one of you over the past two years. So now it is my pleasure for you to enjoy Celebrating a Century of Service 2019-2021.

(Video plays.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Celebrating a Century of Service was the focus during the American Legion Auxiliary's centennial year. Our ALA members found many different ways to mark our major milestone. Some paid tribute with programs, projects, and outreach continuing our tradition of selfless service to our veterans, military, and their families while other Auxiliary

members celebrated with fundraising events, special dinners, party and cake, lots of cake. More on that later. Our centennial year began with a couple of changes. First, we made history by opening ALA membership eligibility to male spouses of veterans. Today, I am proud to say that we have more than 1,000 male ALA members in our ranks.

(Applause.)

FEMALE VOICE: Second, we turned our focus to National headquarters. Working with our Search Committee, we hired Kelly Circle, a Kansas ALA member, to be the executive director.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Kelly has been an asset to our organization. Our centennial year also included five fantastic mission training events; either National Vice President Kathy Daudistel or I attended each of the Mission Training 101 sessions. I was in mission trainings in Baltimore, Orlando, and Kalamazoo. I was able to use technology to pop into Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Las Vegas. National Vice President Kathy and I hosted ALA 100th birthday parties at each event. I'm very proud to represent the ALA in all the events that we could. These mission-focused moments included meeting a handful of Pearl Harbor survivors on my official visit to Hawaii during the 78th anniversary of National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and being a part of Veterans Day observants at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. During my president travels, I had opportunities to learn more about adaptive sports and lifestyle changes, the focus of our 2019-2021 administrative year with the emphasis on the health and well-being of our veterans, military, and their families. It has been my goal to gain some perspective on what life is like for someone using adaptive devices such as prosthetics and sensory aids. I am grateful that my travels afford me the privilege of visiting places like Aurora, Colorado, Washington State, New York, and Vermont where I experienced a driving simulator, walking with a prosthetic leg, operating a modified golf cart, skiing with an adaptive chair, and learned how to use a hand-cycle. And of course, I'll never forget my trip to Walter Reed Medical Center where I learned to play kayak football. For my Facebook followers, you know what I'm talking about. I got a sense of how challenging it can be to adjust to these devices. A little bit of understanding goes a long way when it comes to helping America's veterans and their families. People like the Verardos who have made adaptive assistance part of their everyday life. Additionally, I had the opportunity to visit Turnstone, a United States paralympic training site in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where I learned about a paralympic sport called Goal Ball. The game is for athletes with visual impairments. Two teams of three blind-folded athletes attempt to throw a ball with bells inside into their opponent's goal. This fast-paced game requires amazing listening skills as well as strength to throw an almost 3-pound ball. I got the chance to wear the blind-fold goggles and couldn't see a thing. I gave it a try and was able to stop the ball, but it was no easy feat. The athletes were training for the Goal Ball paralympic team. Go USA. Looking out for the health and well-being of our veterans, military, and their families is a key reason why it's so important for our American

Legion family members to work together. Here are a couple examples of teamwork at the national level.

American Legion National Commander Bill Oxford and I recorded several public service announcement videos together. Our topics included buddy checks, 4,600 legion posts without Auxiliary units, and membership eligibility. SAL National Commander Clint Bolt joined us for National Poppy Day. I was also asked to accompany the Legion on their System Worth Saving visits to VA medical centers and town hall style meetings with veterans. I participated in a visit to the VA Medical Center in Washington, D.C. and to the Lexington VA Health Care System in Kentucky. The information gathered during these visits is assembled annually into a System Worth Saving report which goes to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs officials, members of Congress, and yes, the President of the United States. The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, a traditional live stage show in 2019 and an at-home event last year, continued to be inspiring and therapeutic for our veterans. I am thankful for National VA&R Chairman Vickie Koutz's leadership. Now, back to the sweet ways our Auxiliary members from all over celebrated the centennial with parties and cake, lots of cake, not that I'm complaining. There were cakes with the ALA emblem, cakes with our centennial year logo, cakes with poppies, and of course there was a cake with my face on it. And don't forget the Cornelius cake which featured a full size Cornelius in his poppy mask. We all know the COVID story, a global pandemic triggering fear, uncertainty, and even death. Everything put on pause for months, social distancing, and gathering limitations, and finally gradual reopenings. Our hearts continue to go out to those who lost loved ones due to COVID or have otherwise been impacted by this pandemic. The silver lining for those served by the ALA, it is the resilience and boundless can-do spirit that sparked our Auxiliary members to press on. We found safe ways to fulfill our mission of helping and honoring our veterans, military, and their families. It wasn't long before ALA members were safely helping others by sewing thousands of face masks and contacting veteran's homes to see if the residents were in need. ALA Juniors also stepped up. Their many projects included distributing gift bags with treats to essential workers and bringing smiles to everyone they encountered. In some cases, ALA members teamed up with Legionnaires, Sons of The American Legion, and the Legion Riders to do mission-based outreach like safely getting food to local veterans and their families who might otherwise go without. And don't forget the many drive-by birthday parades and celebrations. ALA members also looked after one another. During our caring and sharing week in April 2020, members called each other to make sure they were okay. Later that year after our 2020 National Convention was cancelled, we didn't throw in the towel. We continued working the mission. We didn't let COVID stop the celebration. We forged on into a second year of celebrating a Century of Service. Throughout the country, we threw birthday parties to mark our 101st birthday. Our display of strength and commitment will surely be among our organization's finest moments. It was great seeing the photos and hearing stories from National Children and Youth Chairman Lisa Williamson who

attended the U.S. Air Force Academy Awards graduation ceremony on behalf of the Auxiliary. 2021 has continued to be a Year of Service, Not Self. I have seen firsthand the differences that ALA members make in the lives of our veterans, military, and their families as well as in our communities. We made a difference when we presented a quilt of valor to U.S. Army Korean War veteran and Legionnaire, Don Hyman, at the Iowa Veteran's Home. You made a difference when you continued to contact our senators and representatives about issues important to our veterans during the virtual Washington, D.C. conference. Every day our members are making a difference and I want to celebrate all you've done these past two years and will continue to do as we move our mission forward into another century of service. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to meet so many of our grassroots members while serving as your national president. We all taught each other, sharing new ideas when it came to technology or modifying our programs to fit the current situation. We all learned to adapt and overcome. That is the military way, after all. 2021 has brought light back into our in-person events. Seeing the spirit, determination, and willingness of our ALA Girl's Nation senators while they spent a week in our nation's capital rejuvenated a sense of energy. Our future is bright in these young ladies' hands. As a former Junior, I appreciated seeing all our younger members working the mission, getting involved in service projects, and learning how to become future leaders of the ALA. Please continue to stay involved. You never know where it might take you. Some day one of you may be giving this report as National President of the American Legion Auxiliary. My story started years ago with a single pretty little red flower that bloomed into a stage full of poppies as I took my presidential oath on my first day in office. It has been an honor to serve during our centennial. Thank you for the opportunity to lead our organization.

(Video ends.)

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Thank you. In May of 1969 during the 50th anniversary of The American Legion, the spring meetings were held in St. Louis to commemorate the famous St. Louis Caucus of 1919. The Department of Missouri rededicated a monument which had been erected years ago to include the Legion's Fame of Freedom and a time capsule to be opened on the 100th anniversary. We are told it contained pictures, documents, and a letter written by the National President, Mrs. Hannell, to be opened by the 100th National President. We know this year has had ups and downs, so unfortunately after many attempts, the letter could not be retrieved. Disappointing, yes; but I am here today to share a letter to be opened by our 150th National President. Here we go.

"Our future American Legion Auxiliary members, greetings from the year 2021. It is my privilege to tell you a few things about our noble organization which celebrated a century of service in 2019. Understanding the past can help you navigate through tough times and charter a course to a future filled with success. The American Legion Auxiliary has always been a community of volunteers selflessly serving veterans, military, and their families, mentoring youth, promoting patriotism, and making positive

contributions to our communities for well over 100 years. It's the ALA legacy. That wasn't always easy as each generation of ALA members has had obstacles to overcome. Some of those obstacles were quite overwhelming. How did the Auxiliary build such a legacy despite seemingly unsurmountable roadblocks and disruptions? Each generation of Auxiliary members stood on the shoulders of their predecessors finding hope and inspiration in those who came before them. My generation was no different. We looked to the previous generations of ALA members when we are faced enormous challenges to fulfilling our mission of selfless service. I'm sure you've heard about the COVID-19 pandemic that struck in the late-2019/ early- 2020. Our hearts went out to those loved ones who died of COVID-19 and those others who were directly or indirectly impacted by the pandemic. ALA members were stopped briefly from carrying out our mission of service as America had a short time of national shutdown to stop the spread of this dangerous virus. We were slowed significantly in our work where America came and the national shutdown occurred, and we were faced with social distancing and health and safety guidelines, but our commitment to the cause and the resolve to achieve our mission never waned. We drew from examples of determination and resilience of the previous generations of ALA members who persevered in the face of great obstacles of their day. We looked to that generation for hope and inspiration, and we got back to work. We adapted to the conditions of the day and reimagined some of our traditional outreach, events, and activities. ALA members found safe ways to serve others such as assisting at food pantries that helped veterans, service members, and their families. We found ways to carry out longstanding tradition of distributing red paper poppies in exchange for donations. As usual, all the money collected was used to directly assist disabled veterans and hospitalized veterans in our communities. The list of ALA mission-focused achievements during this challenging time goes on from there. We carried on with our work because we knew the need of our military heroes and their families did not cease because of the virus, a national shutdown, or social distancing. If anything, the needs were greater because of those items and those situations. We knew the previous generation stayed the course when things got tough for them. They demonstrated, yes, resilience, resourcefulness, determination in the midst of big roadblocks of their day. We followed their example. We stood on the broad shoulders and renewed our resolve adapting and finding those safe ways to help and honor those who serve. If you could not become weary, we did not, or disillusioned, or challenged. You have something to help. You need to rise above it. I humbly offer to you my generation's examples of resiliency, resolve, resourcefulness, and dedication to the American Legion Auxiliary's selfless mission. Stand on our broad shoulders. Though we are separated by spans of time, we are bound in spirit by our unwavering commitment to the continued fulfillment of the American Legion Auxiliary's noble mission of service to veterans, military, and their families. My generation of ALA members is counting on you, and so are those we serve. Nicole Clapp, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary 2019-2021."

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And so as we continue, we now have an opportunity. Over the last few days we have learned and revisited accomplishments of the American Legion Auxiliary in our first 100 years. Now, let's take a look at what the future and we can imagine how ALA members will reflect when they celebrate our 200th National Convention in 2120. Maybe that convention might be right here in Phoenix. Remember, what we do now just like what our founders did a century ago and what our members have accomplished for 100 years will pave the way for many great things to come in the future. Let's take a look forward and review our future history accomplishment. Imagine these possibilities. In 2025, members completely embrace a culture of good will which pave the way to unity and more effective mission execution.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: How about in 2035 spouses account for 26 percent of our ALA membership? In the year 2045, homelessness of American veterans was completely eliminated.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Every veteran has a home, and the medical care, and food they need. In 2050, ALA volunteer hours exceed 10 million.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: In 2060, membership in the ALA exceeded 1 million members for the first time since 1955.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: In 2070, wait times at the VA were reduced under 10 minutes, satisfaction exceeds 95 percent.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: In 2085, the American people elect the third alumni of ALA Girls Nation to the Office of President of the United States.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: In 20 -- let's see, 20 -- I guess 2002, so it's 2000 (sic). The ALA Foundation awarded full scholarships to each Girls Nation senator.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: And in 2119, members prepare to celebrate their third century of service.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: I think you know me, anything is possible. Because of what we've accomplished over 100 years and what we're doing right now, again we'll pave that way for great things to come. We want to end our convention as a transition as we transition of celebrating a century of service to focusing on our next 100 years demonstrating our collective unity in mission and purpose, I now welcome Kathy Daudistel, the 101st National President to the podium with me.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Okay. Thank you, Kathy. We are happy and later this afternoon you will be installed at the 101st National President of the

American Legion Auxiliary.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We have great expectations of you and for you. Your leadership will kick off the ALA's next 100 years of service.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Audience, please stand and help us countdown to our next century of service. Kathy, are you ready?

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Are you ready?

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Are you ready?

VICE PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Are you ready?

(Applause.)

VOICES: Nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Celebrate everybody. Happy birthday.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Woo-hoo. Happy birthday. So everyone thank you for coming to our 100th National Convention. We will see you at 1:30 today in this room as we install the next century of service officer. Have a great afternoon. Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, the above meeting recessed at 10:49 a.m.)

**INSTALLATION OF 2021-2022 NATIONAL OFFICERS
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Good afternoon. This meeting of the 100th Annual National Convention of the ALA will now reconvene.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: We are assembled this afternoon for the installation of the 2021/22 newly elected officers.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: What a special day and time it is for the Department of Kentucky --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: -- and of course for our organization as we get ready to add to our history. It is now my honor to introduce the installing officer for the ceremony, Past National President Virginia Hobbs from the Department of Kentucky. Jenny?

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Madam President and good afternoon, everyone.

VOICES: Good afternoon.

MS. HOBBS: Today marks a day of extreme pride for the Department of Kentucky as we witness the installation of the third member of our Department, Kathy Daudistel, to the highest office within the American Legion Auxiliary, that of National President.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: It was in Portland, Oregon in 1932 that the first member of the Department of Kentucky, Mrs. S. Alford Blackburn, Laura, ascended to the position of National President of the American Legion Auxiliary. While probably none of us attended that convention some 89 years ago, I trust that some of you were present at the 1998 convention in New Orleans when I had the honor of becoming National President and then today it is a great pleasure and privilege to serve as the installing officer to install Kentucky's third national president, Kathy.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: We also recognize our neighbor from the Department of Indiana, Vickie Koutz, as our National Vice President; the other national officers and Department presidents who will serve this upcoming year with Kathy and Vickie. Participants in today's installation are Sergeant at Arms, Diane Spencer and Alica Buser; Department of Kentucky Color Bearers, Bonita Robey and Marie Shouse; installing chaplain is Past National President Peggy Thomas from Virginia; and Past National President Diane Duscheck from the Department of Wisconsin will be sharing a special reading with us. The MC for remarks from the members of the Department of Kentucky American Legion Family will be incoming Department President, Karen Toll, Kathy's sister.

Will the Sergeant at Arms please escort the '21/'22 Department Presidents to their seats.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Please join me in welcoming, President Elect Kathy's family and friends followed by the distinguished guest who will be seated on the platform.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Please join me now in welcoming the National Officers Elect escorted by their predecessors.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Please join me in welcoming the National Vice President Elect Vickie Koutz from the Department of Indiana escorted by her husband, Jim.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Please remain standing for the advancement of the Colors of the Department of Kentucky which will be followed by the lady of the hour, our incoming National President Kathy Daudistel escorted by her mother, Nancy Kaelin, and her daughters Stephanie Rice and Beth Concepcion.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Please remain standing and I'll ask Past National President Peggy Thomas to offer a prayer which will be followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Kamryn Rice, Kailin and Karmen Concepcion; Kathy's three beautiful grandchildren.

MS. THOMAS: Let us bow our heads. Our Heavenly Father, we ask thy blessing may (indiscernible) upon us as we gather here for this installation of new leaders. We ask that you protect them and guide them in the days to come, to rededicate ourselves and our organization to the advancement of our sacred ideals ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary's principal service is for God and country. We pray this be done in harmony and love for our mission. We ask this in your most holy name, amen.

VOICES: Amen.

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. HOBBS: Please be seated. Thank you, Peggy, for opening prayer and Kamryn, Kailin, and Karmen, thank you for leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. I know grandma's very proud.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: After what seems to be an incredibly long ride through this pandemic and the loss of many good people and dedicated members of The American Legion family including our friend, Randy Fisher, the world does seem to be coming alive again. A new day is beginning. In honor of all who lost their lives and those who have endured these tough times, Kathy's sons-in-law Chuck and Marlon along with her grandson Keegan will light three candles here to my left. The first candle is lit as a sign of renewed faith. The second candle is lit as a service of never-ending hope -- sign of never-ending hope. Excuse me. And the third candle as a sign of always there is love. Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: We will now have a reading by Past National President Diane Duscheck.

MS. DUSCHECK: This reading is from the words of John Maxwell in his book, "The Power of Your Leadership." "If you want to tap into the true power of your leadership, then you need to become intentional about getting beyond yourself and putting other people first. I realized that if I changed then put other people's needs above my own, I could make an impact. But the key change is not just in our experiences or our decisions. What really needs to change are our hearts. What we must transformed are our attitudes. What must be purified are our motives. We can't allow our lives to be all about us. That's not the way to do something that makes a difference. It's not the way to lead others. If we want to choose significance to be effective leaders, we must put other people first. If you want to be significant and lead in a way that matters, you must add value to others, build them up, make them feel valued and important. When we live our lives intentionally for others as leaders, we begin to see the world through eyes of others rather than our own and that inspires us to do more than belong. We participate. We do more than care, we help. We go beyond being fair. We are kind. We go beyond dreaming. We work. Why? Because we want to make a difference. Life isn't made by what we can accomplish. It's made by what we can accomplish with others."

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you very much, Diane, for those insightful words. 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 probably 100 women before you. You're committing your efforts to further the program so the American Legion Auxiliary and to perpetuating the legacy upon which it has been built. At this time, would the newly elected national officers please rise to take your oath of office? Madam President, that includes you and the Vice President.

(Laughter.)

MS. HOBBS: I think you're still qualified as officers. The members of the American Legion Auxiliary have entrusted you with a great responsibility. You've been elected to provide guidance in the activities of our organization. You will familiarize yourself with the duties of your respected offices. Always remember that the welfare and success of this organization depends upon you. Every American Legion Auxiliary members 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 organizations. Please raise your right hand and repeat after me giving your name where I give mine.

I, Virginia Hobbs --

VOICES: I --

MS. HOBBS: -- promise to perform faithfully --

VOICES: -- promise to perform faithfully --

MS. HOBBS: -- all the duties of the office --

VOICES: -- all the duties of the office --

MS. HOBBS: -- I'm about to assume --

VOICES: -- I'm about to assume --

MS. HOBBS: -- and I further pledge --

VOICES: -- and I further pledge --

MS. HOBBS: -- that I am not a member of --

VOICES: -- that I am not a member of --

MS. HOBBS: -- and do not subscribe to --

VOICES: -- and do not subscribe to --

MS. HOBBS: -- the principles of any group --

VOICES: -- the principles of any group --

MS. HOBBS: -- opposed to our form of government.

VOICES: -- opposed to our form of government.

MS. HOBBS: Thank you. You may lower your hand and be seated.

Madam President --

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLAPP: Yes?

MS. HOBBS: Come here.

PRESIDENT CLAPP: You told me to sit down.

MS. HOBBS: Well, no. Everybody, but you got to sit down.

Remember, I'm still older. I can whip you.

(Cross-talk.)

MS. HOBBS: All right. Madam President, would you like to confer the oath of office to your Department presidents?

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: I would.

MS. HOBBS: All right. Department Presidents, would you please stand?

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Please raise your right hands and repeat after me putting your name where I put mine. I, Kathy Daudistel --

VOICES: I --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- promise to perform faithfully --

VOICES: -- promise to perform faithfully --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- all the duties of the office --

VOICES: -- all the duties of the office --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- I'm about to assume --

VOICES: -- I'm about to assume --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- and I further pledge --

VOICES: -- and I further pledge --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- that I am not a member of --

VOICES: -- that I am not a member of --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- and do not subscribe to --

VOICES: -- and do not subscribe to --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- the principles of any group --

VOICES: -- the principles of any group --

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- opposed to our form of government.

VOICES: -- opposed to our form of government.

MS. DAUDISTEL: You may lower your hands and congratulations, ladies and sister.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Madam President. You, the members of the American Legion Auxiliary, have chosen outstanding officers to lead us through the coming year. I've charged them with a serious responsibility and likewise charge you. Would all members of the American Legion Auxiliary please stand, raise your right hand and repeat after me? I solemnly promise --

VOICES: I solemnly promise --

MS. HOBBS: -- to renew my pledge of service --

VOICES: -- to renew my pledge of service --

MS. HOBBS: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary --

VOICES: -- to the American Legion Auxiliary --

MS. HOBBS: -- and to give wholehearted support --

VOICES: -- and to give wholehearted support --

MS. HOBBS: -- to these newly elected officers.

VOICES: -- to these newly elected officers.

MS. HOBBS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Would -- excuse me, would everybody please stand for a prayer by our Installing Chaplain?

MS. THOMAS: Please join me in prayer. Our most holy Father, we ask your blessing on our newly elected national officers and we ask that you guide them and provide them with wisdom, knowledge, and leadership so we continue our work that we provide to our veterans, our military, their families, and our communities. Holy Father, we ask that you protect our National President, Kathy, as she travels throughout our great land and beyond. Keep her in good health and safe so she can impart upon others the principles and ideals of the American Legion Auxiliary. Help her to motivate our members to be proud to be part of this great organization. We also ask that you keep everyone safe as they travel back home. Be with those who could not join with us today. Holy Father, thank you for allowing us to meet here and accomplish so much this week. May our words and actions reflect our commitment of patriotism and good citizenship in practicing just and free democracy, loyalty, and love for one another. This we pray in your name, amen.

VOICES: Amen.

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Peggy. Everyone please be seated. We also have two members I need to mention as appointed officers at the American Legion Auxiliary. These ladies serve behind the scenes and will hopefully be ratified at the National Executive Committee meeting tomorrow morning. These are our National Secretary, Coral May Grout of Massachusetts --

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: -- and the National Treasurer, Marybeth Revoir from the Department of Illinois.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: At this time, I would ask the retiring officers to transfer their pins and ribbons of their office to their successor and that the retiring officers come forward and present the newly elected officers to the assembly. As the outgoing officers return to their seat, Past National President Nicole

Clapp assisted by Past National President Sharon Conaster and Mary Davis will present them with their pins and ribbons. We will begin with the National Chaplain, please.

MS. THOMAS: It is my pleasure to introduce to you the newly Chaplain for 2021/2022, my friend -- I'm sorry, I --

MS. ROBINSON: -- Carol T. Robinson.

MS. THOMAS: -- Carol T. Robinson. She's telling me her name. I know her name.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

MS. THOMAS: Carol T. Robinson from the Department of Ohio.

(Applause.)

MS. ROBINSON: Department of Ohio, thank you and God bless you. To all of you out there, I ask God's blessing upon you and together we will make this year great. Thank you.

MS. HOBBS: We'll now have the National Historian.

MS. MONROE: It is my privilege to introduce your newly elected National Historian, Carol Campbell from the Department of Virginia.

(Applause.)

MS. CAMPBELL: Thank you. I'd like to thank the Department of Virginia for their endorsement and support, and I'd also like to thank my husband and my daughter for joining me today and my sons that are viewing live stream. Thank you. I promise to do my best.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: We'll now have the National Central Division Vice President.

MS. GOTT: It is my pleasure to introduce to you from the Department of Indiana your new Central Division Vice President, Denise Delaney-Wrolen.

(Applause.)

MS. DELANEY-WROLEN: As a proud member of the Department of Indiana and Central Division, I look forward to this next year and serving to the best of my ability. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Next we will have the Eastern Division National Vice President.

MS. BARANOWSKI: I'd like to introduce Marie Pytko.

MS. PYTKA: Pytko.

MS. BARANOWSKI: Pytko, from the Department of Rhode Island.

(Applause.)

MS. PYTKA: I would just like to say thank you to The American Legion and the Auxiliary of the Department of Rhode Island and I will do my best for the Eastern Division. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Now we will have the Northwestern Division National Vice President.

MS. LARKOWSKI: It is my pleasure to introduce you to the 2021/2022 National Northwest Division Vice President, Dee Dee Buckley from the

Department of Minnesota.

MS. BUCKLEY: Thank you, darling.

(Applause.)

MS. BUCKLEY: First of all, I'd like to thank the wonderful Minnesota American Legion family for their support and I know that the Northwestern Division is anxious to work wonders with our wonderful president next year and we will have a great year with your leadership. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: And last we'll have the Western Division National Vice President.

MS. PARK: It is my distinct honor to introduce the newly elected Western Division National Vice President, Toni Gimpel from the Department of Idaho.

(Applause.)

MS. GIMPEL: Thank you, Cheryl. I want to thank the Department of Idaho and Western Division for this great honor to be the first Western Division National Vice President for the second century of the American Legion Auxiliary and we look forward to proving the west is the best. Thank you, ladies.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Please join me in congratulating all of our retiring officers for the outstanding job they've done in these two years.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Now, will the National Vice President and our new National President please join me?

(Cross-talk.)

MS. HOBBS: Uh-oh. I think I just got disowned. We will have the Southern Division National Vice President.

(Laughter.)

MS. BURGOS DE PANETO: It's my great honor to present the Southern Division National Vice President, Gabriele Barnett for 2021/2022.

(Applause.)

MS. BARNETT: Thank you. I would like to thank the Department of Georgia and the Southern Division for entrusting me with this office of Southern Division National Vice President. It's greatly an honor and I will do it to the best of my ability and Southern Division, we're going to rock.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Well, now as I try to dig my way out of the dog house -- you know, in my defense, you know, they're not seated alphabetically, so just a defense. Would the National Vice President -- new National Vice President and the new National President please come forward to change their pin and ribbon?

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

(Cross-talk.)

MS. KOUTZ: Okay. Thank you for electing me as your National Vice President. What an honor this is. A special thanks to my husband Jim for

being here today, to our son Michael who is traveling overseas for his job and to the rest of my family who couldn't be with us. At this time, I would like for the Indiana Department American Legion family to please stand and be recognized.

(Applause.)

MS. KOUTZ: Thanks to all of you in the audience and the ones watching from home for all your love and support. You are all very special to me. I pledge to all of you that I will always hold the organization to it's highest standard and support our mission. I feel so lucky because I have gained a best friend for life. President Kathy and I share the same values and ideas. We've laughed and cried together. We've gotten lost a few times together. We've been roommates several times. We've done some shopping and if you know Kathy very well, you know how she loves to shop, and that list just goes on and on. Kathy, I promise to always take your phone calls and listen whenever you need to talk. I am so proud of you and all that you have accomplished, and I know you are going to have an amazing year. Ecclesiastes states, "There's a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens. A time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep, and a time to laugh. A time to mourn and a time to dance." Well, National President Kathy, this is your time to dance. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you very much, Vickie, and sorry it seemed like you got surprised there. Will Past President Nicole and National President Kathy please come to the podium so that you may exchange the ribbon and pin?

(Laughter.)

(Cross-talk.)

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: National President Kathy, I present to you this gavel, your symbol of authority. May you use it in a favor manner always remember that justice is a cornerstone of our organization and fairness is a premise upon which our nation was founded. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my extreme pleasure and privilege to present to you our National President, Kathy Daudistel. Madam President?

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: Thanks, Past National President Ginny. Thank you all. Wow, what a whirlwind day. Congratulations and thank you to President Nicole for leading us through two really long years. I know you had some disappointments, but you lead us graciously and proudly. I will miss our talks, but don't think you're rid of me yet. Job well done. Congratulations to my friend, Vickie, on your new role as National Vice President. I am so glad that we have become great friends in the last few years and I'm looking forward to working together in our new roles. Congratulations also to all the new Department presidents. I know you will do well and together we will have a fantastic year, including you.

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: I would not be here today if it weren't for all the

people who took me under their wings and mentored me because you cannot succeed on this journey alone and I really had lots of support, even from the beginning. Friend Sis Corbin who introduced me to the ALA through a community service project benefitting local orphans that I wanted to belong to. My great friend Elisa "B.C." Buser who always shared my passion for the mission and my love of new adventures. My family, most of whom are here today, except for my brother Chris and his family. My amazing daughters, Stephanie and Beth and their incredibly awesome families. My mom, Nancy; my sister, Karen, who is now the Department of Kentucky President and I'm her boss again.

(Laughter.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: Doug McGuire, event coordinator extraordinaire and his mom, Charlotte. The amazing and hard working members of Latonia Unit 203 and all the members of our 203 family, Legionnaires, Sons, and Riders included. If you guys will stand up, please?

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: And all of my -- you can stay standing for a minute if you needed a stretch. And all of my Department of Kentucky family who are the most wonderful, wonderful group of dedicated people you will ever meet. Will you guys please stand?

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: Thank you. You can sit. My first mentor, Past Department President Betty Hammond who didn't like me at first, but she finally warmed up to me. I still remember her look of indignity when I said, "Why do we always do it that way?" But I also remember the look of love and pride on her face when I was installed as a Department of Kentucky President. Some huge supporters and my heroes who are no longer here today. My number one hero, my dad, Bill Kaelin, whose service in the U.S. Army during Korea deemed me eligible to join this great organization. He taught us patriotism at an early age and along with my mom, Nancy, we learned that service not self was a way of life. My uncle, Mark Reilman, U.S. Navy who was deployed to Vietnam when I was just a little kid. Though I didn't realize it until later in life, he shared some of his experiences with me that really made me understand what families go through when your loved one is deployed. My uncle, Ron Reilman, U.S. Air Force. My uncle, Vern Harden, U.S. Air Force. My uncle, Charlie, who served in World War I and with the 156th Depot Brigade during World War I and we just recently saw some really cool pictures including the one that -- that one. Not that one. And I have to mention -- yeah, that one. Sorry. And I have to mention my Great Aunt Laura, the sweetest little lady ever who always, always lived her life for others. I'm confident that they are all looking down on us today smiling and knowing that we are carrying on their legacy. I want to recognize my current family members who are serving or are retired. Danny Kaelin, retired U.S. Navy who my sister will mention later. Thanks for coming, Danny. Colonel Matthew Reilman, Air Force, whose mom, Barb, is sitting right next to my Uncle Danny representing their family. PFC McGraw, Ohio National Guard.

I also want to give thanks to Past National President Jenny Hobbs for seeing something in me that I didn't even see and for believing in me and for recommending me way back in 2007 to be part of the National Strategic Planning team. Past National President Peggy Thomas for taking a leap of faith and giving my first chairmanship, Leadership. Past National President Nancy Brown-Park for taking a crazy risk in naming me as her Membership Chairman. Past National President Diane Duscheck for going out on a limb and giving me the chance to do something I never even dreamed I wanted to do when she named me as Children and Youth Chairman. And to all the other PNPs who willingly give me advice and tips along the way as well as your continued friendship and mentorships. I really can't say enough about this group of ladies. Please stand. So I want to know that I love you all and I really appreciate you past national presidents. You guys can stand too. They're an amazing group of women with a lot of experience. Thank you, very much. I have met so many incredible people along the way.

Grassroots members, family members, chairman, staff, so many incredible people. You all inspire me to be a better person. The special focus for the upcoming year is care giving; caring for those who care for others. A few years ago a good friend and a Kentucky Past Department Commander who was diagnosed with service-related ALS or Lou Gehring's disease. Within 18 months, this incredibly intelligent, active, and very independent man progressed from never asking anyone for help to being completely depending on people for everything. I was really amazed at the strength of his caregivers. About a year after my friend passed, I attended my first National Veterans Creative Arts Festival where I met many wonderful veterans and some amazing caregivers. While there, the ALA hosted a special workshop for caregivers. The room was filled, but only because we bribed them with free coffee and free donuts. None of the people in the room considered themselves caregivers. One of the speakers was a caregiver to a severely injured veteran. By the end of this workshop and by the end of her talk, a lot of people in that room identified as caregivers. I started to realize then that we have caregivers all around us and we don't even know it. Spouses, parents, grandchildren, siblings, and even children. Many people don't identify as caregivers because they are family members just taking care of family, doing what we're supposed to do or we want to do. Shortly after I arrived home from VCAF, my dad had a major health scare and was hospitalized for a week or so. As soon as he was released, my mom was hospitalized. This went on for a few months with both of them until my dad passed away in February of 2019. My mom's very independent, so when dad was in the hospital, mom came and went as she pleased. She could -- you know, she went home, she could come and visit. But when mom was in the hospital, we realized how much she was really doing for dad. His eyesight was failing so he could no longer drive. We would take him to and from the hospital whenever he wanted to go. We'd take him home, we'd make sure he ate and we even gave him eye drops at night. We had no idea how much he depended on mom. She never really said anything. She was just doing what families do. That, to me, was a huge aha moment. I think then I realized that

my mom was a care giver and they really were all around us and I even still think to this day that she would not say that she was a care giver to my dad. According to a recent Rand Corporation Military Care Giver Research Study, there are approximately 5.2 million military and veteran caregivers in the U.S. Of that 5.2 million, approximately 1.1 million are caring for veterans and service members who served after 9/11. These caregivers are not just wives and mothers. They are also fathers, husbands, children, grandparents, and even neighbors who are checking in on them. These voluntary and uncompensated caregivers provide \$14 Billion in service for wounded warriors each year. 5.2 million military and veteran caregivers. Wow, what an eyeopener. And to realize that many of these caregivers are already members of our Auxiliary. Our mission to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of veterans, military, and their families. One of the ways we can honor that sacrifice is by recognizing these unsung heroes and help to make sure they have the resources and the support they need to take care of their veteran. Many of our members are already doing just this, and most of them without even thinking about it. What better way to carry out our mission than caring for those who care for others. This year through our VA and our program, we plan to recognize a deserving military or veteran non-paid caregiver in every Department and hopefully when I visit your Department, I can also personally recognize them. So please be on the lookout for announcements and webinars coming this fall centered around the care giving focus. There's already one webinar available online the ALA Academy, Mission Delivery Through Caregiver Support. When you have a moment, I highly recommend you watch it. You won't be disappointed. The membership theme this year is Together We Serve. Chairman Michelle and her team have come -- have some great things planned and they include a special Together We Serve award, so check out the membership page on ALAforVeterans.org for more information. For our Junior and our young SAL members, a new junior caregiver patch is rolling out so check out the junior activities page on ALAforVeterans.org for details. In the works too is live and in-person mission trainings --

(Applause.)

MS. DAUDISTEL: -- fingers crossed, as well as a reintroduction of some Department trainings. I look forward to meeting with all of you, to hearing your stories, and to seeing and participating in the great things that you are doing. We are a unique organization and we cannot be successful with each one of you. Thank you for your faith and trust in me. I will do all I can to help the American Legion Auxiliary remain the great organization that it is. Thank you all so much for the wonderful opportunity to serve as your National President. God bless you, God bless our troops, and God bless America.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Madam President, for sharing with us your personal view for -- of the caregivers and for sharing with us your plans and some of the new features that we're going to be seeing this year. The American Legion Auxiliary has some counterparts in the family. We talk

about The American Legion family and we with that we generally think of the three organizations at the top; The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion. Joining us today is a gentleman who is the leading candidate for National Commander who hails from the Department of Texas.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: It's my pleasure to introduce to you for remarks, Paul Dillard, from the Department of Texas and his lovely wife, Donna.

(Applause.)

(Cross-talk.)

MR. DILLARD: Howdy, folks. First, before I start I'd just like to thank National President Nicole for a great year, two years in this organization. But no, job well done and naturally we come here today for a great day for the American Legion Auxiliary, the national organization, the Department of Kentucky and Kathy's family who are going to turn the page and start a new chapter. Hopefully, we won't have to go through what we've done the last 18 months and we can get back to our job and seeing each other, visiting. This has been a great week to see people face-to-face and not on that blue tube they call Zoom.

(Applause.)

MR. DILLARD: But really, I'm looking forward, if it happens tomorrow, to working side-by-side with Kathy and Michael and we're going to continue to build a foundation for the future to ensure that no veteran is left behind. Thank you. God bless all of you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you very much soon-to-be National Commander Dillard. We appreciate very much the great relationship we have with The American Legion and particularly the work that goes on behind the scenes when our President and Commander are working together to get something done. Sunday the Sons of The American Legion elected an outstanding member of the detachment of California to serve as its National Commander. It is my pleasure to introduce to you the National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion, Michael Fox and he has with him his fiancé, Crystal. Michael?

(Applause.)

MR. FOX: Thank you for that warm welcome and congratulations to all the newly elected officers. I can tell you that the Sons of The American Legion will be right with you side-by-side this year. You know, it's a little funny for me. You know, a guy waits two years to walk into a convention hall after a pandemic to address a beautiful group of ladies and I think I'm the lucky win up here right now, but we've all lived through one of the worst pandemics in the world. We've all known people and families that have been hit hard, but we as the Legion family are beginning to not only rise, we're going to start to begin to thrive. The Sons of The American Legion are doing fantastic things in your communities to help the entire Legion family recover and move into a positive new fundraising direction. The Sons of The American Legion like to put action into words to make our communities a

better place. As we are looking at further challenges that COVID, how can we start to build on the success of ideas that we have had over the last two years? The answer is simple. We must work together to conquer even the smallest hurdle. Now, next year the Sons are ready, willing, and able to work closely with all of you to care for those who care for others. The American Legion Auxiliary is the group that always has our back, to lift us up with love and support telling us no matter what as long as we stick together there's nothing we can't accomplish. Our goals as an organization this year is to not only continue to support the child welfare foundation, but also to step up to be a champion for another program, Veteran and Children's Foundation. In addition, we are launching a special project to place 1 million flags on the graves of veterans in local cemeteries this year.

(Applause.)

MR. FOX: I am humbled and honored to be here to represent and speak on behalf of the 350,000 plus members of the Sons of The American Legion. There is no limit to the amount of good we can do. We are the American Legion family. We are American Legion family strong. God bless our veterans, God bless our military in harm's way and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Michael, for joining us today. With the leadership that you, Kathy, and Paul will provide us during the upcoming year, we know it's going to be a fantastic year for our collective American Legion family. Thank you so much for joining us today. Well, we've had the bigwigs now. I guess it's time for us to get down to us regular folks. Kathy has so many friends from the Department of Kentucky who would love to give her all kinds of great wishes today, but the -- I know you don't want to take that long, so on behalf of the Department of Kentucky, we have Karen Toll who will be introducing those individuals who are representing the Department today and those that will be speaking. Karen?

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Thank you, Virginia. Yes, this is going to be a very exciting and busy year for the entire Department of Kentucky as well as myself and Kathy, and yes, she will be my boss still.

(Laughter.)

MS. TOLL: We've had that extra year of anticipation to prepare, but we're ready to go. So on behalf of the entire family, I would like to say thank you for attending today. This is a very special day and I know that you know how proud we are of Kathy. She's worked so hard for so many years and I think she fits perfectly in this leadership role. I would like to just take a minute to introduce you to her family, family and then her Department family. Our father, Bill, is up in heaven leading cheers with Randy Fisher, Phil Davis, Uncle Mark, Betty Hammonds, and a few other of Kathy's favorites. But the very special people who have made this trip with us today and when I call your name, if you would please stand and wave to be recognized, our wonderful mother, Nancy Kaelin.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: There she is. Thank you. Kathy's daughter, Stephanie Rice.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: And Stephanie, people always ask, "Is this the sister from Seattle?" So Stephanie is known in the Auxiliary world as the daughter not from Seattle.

(Laughter.)

MS. TOLL: Stephanie's husband, Chuck Rice.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Thank you, Chuck. Kathy's youngest daughter, Beth Concepcion, who is the daughter from Seattle.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Thank you. And her husband, Marlin Concepcion.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Kathy's grandchildren, Keegan Rice.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Smile. Good. He doesn't smile much. And Kamryn Rice who is the smiler.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Kailin Concepcion.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: And Karmen Concepcion.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Also, we have Etta Rice --

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: -- who is a family friend and Chuck's mother. Kathy's aunt, Barb Reilman, who by the way is the mother of an Air Force Colonel.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: And Kathy's dad's brother, Danny Kaelin who is retired from the Navy and, obviously, a Legionnaire.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: We have Alica "B.C." Buser.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: There she is. And a very good friend who has been tagged the event coordinator, Doug McGuire and he is the son of Charlotte McGuire.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Now, I would like to introduce some Kentucky distinguished guests. You already know Past National President Virginia Hobbs.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Please recognize Past National Southern Division Vice President, Diane Spencer.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Our Department of Kentucky American Legion outgoing president, Bonita Robey, who is also our newly elected National Executive Committee member.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Please welcome National Executive Committee for The

American Legion, William "Bill" Moore.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Our Department of Kentucky American Legion
Commander, John Costigan.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Department of Kentucky Detachment Adjutant and Past
National Vice Commander, Steve Curry.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Past National Commander of the Sons of The American
Legion, John Dietz, and John has some remarks for us.

(Applause.)

MR. DIETZ: Good afternoon. I am so excited and honored and proud to
be here today because I'm here for Kathy because of Kathy. She may not
remember when we first met. It was in a parking lot at the Continental Inn in
Lexington. We were having a campaign event. It was 104 degrees with 98
percent humidity and she was out there serving watermelons for my
campaign. So I'm here because of her and people like her, people like Betty
Hammonds, people like John and Nancy Adams, people like Jenny Hobbs.
You see our family is not just a cliché. That is a very real term. We care for
each other like brothers, and sisters, and parents should. So she was there for
me and I hope over the years that I've been there for her like a good brother
should showing some form of love, support, and guidance and we are all so
very proud of Kathy today. Our hearts are busting. Kathy, congratulations.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Thank you, John. And last, but not least is The American
Legion National Vice Commander, David King, who also has some remarks
this afternoon.

MR. KING: Good afternoon.

VOICES: Good afternoon.

MR. KING: Madam Kathy, past national presidents, past and future
officers of the National American Legion family and all of our American
Legion family, hello.

VOICES: Hi.

MR. KING: First off, I want to congratulate Kathy. We are so proud in
Kentucky of her. And I want to congratulate the Auxiliary over the last
hundred years, you have picked so many outstanding young ladies to run this
organization. You are to be commended.

(Applause.)

MR. KING: I have known -- yes.

(Applause.)

MR. KING: I have known Kathy for 25 years or so. I have seen first
hand her hard work for our veterans. I've seen her devotion to children and
youth. I have seen her dedication to the defense of this nation and I have seen
her love of being an American in all of our Americanism projects. When I
think of Kathy and when I think of the Auxiliary one word comes to mind,
million, because Kathy is one in a million. She really is. But when I think of
all the Auxiliary, I think of the millions of hours that you put in for this nation

for our America. I think of the millions of dollars that you all have raised for all of the programs.

I think of the millions of prayers that you have said for all of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and I think of all the millions of tears that all of you have shed waiting for one to come home and those millions of tears that we have shed for the ones that didn't.

But Kathy, we are so proud of you from Kentucky and I know that right now, up in heaven, your dad, Randy, Randall, and Phil, and a whole bunch of other past Kentucky Legionnaires, and Auxiliary, they're standing up there smiling so much, so proud. Congratulations, best wishes and if there's anything I can do, you just holler. Thank y'all.

(Applause.)

MS. TOLL: Thank you, David and thank you to everyone who has joined us here today whether on the platform or in the audience to celebrate Kathy's special day. I also want to personally invite you to join us to Kathy's homecoming celebration to be held October 7th to the 9th headquartered at the Cincinnati Marriott River Center which is located in Covington, Kentucky. Join us for the whole weekend or just for a particular event as we enjoy the unique traditions of Kentucky; learn how bourbon is made, partake in some Kentucky-made barbeque, visit the world famous Kentucky Horse Park and learn more about the horses and the racing, sit back and relax on a riverboat tour and a unique, antique, privately owned automobile collection. In true Kentucky fashion, there will be a Kentucky Derby theme banquet in Kathy's honor on Saturday evening complete with a derby hat contest. You can find all this information in the brochure on your seat. Please send your reservations in as soon as possible and there is also an email address on the flier in case you would have any questions. Past National President Virginia, thank you for the opportunity to speak this afternoon and to introducing our families and friends.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: Thank you, Karen and all the members of the Kentucky delegation who have shared their well wishes with Kathy today. I know that we are proud of Kathy and we look forward to her leading us to a memorable year for the American Legion Auxiliary.

Past President Nicole, would you come over here with me, please? You know, there has been a little bit of discussion.

MS. CLAPP: Oh.

MS. HOBBS: Remember, we kept telling you, "You're not there yet."

MS. CLAPP: That's right.

MS. HOBBS: "You're not there yet." We haven't made a decision --

MS. CLAPP: Oh.

MS. HOBBS: -- so am I correct in saying that we did decide to accept Nicole as a past national president?

VOICES: Yes.

MS. HOBBS: Okay.

FEMALE VOICE: As long as she pays you too.

MS. HOBBS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. That'll be \$10, please.

MS. CLAPP: Oh. Okay.

MS. HOBBS: Yeah. Nicole, you have served us very, very well with extraordinary service as a result of not having one year to serve, but two. I know I could have never made it. I went to work the Monday after a convention. Extraordinary.

You have been savvy in learning to meet virtually and encouraging us to keep our programs afloat with the use of Facebook, online fundraising and, of course, Zoom has become our good friend. This term of office has been one of challenge, one which has left its mark on our history as the 100th Anniversary of The American Legion, it required that we developed ingenuity to carry on our programs in memories of what has been a unique, scary period of our history not only as an organization, but as a nation. Past National President Nicole, there are some people here to give some very special presentations to you at this time. Presenting Past National President Nicole with her Past National President's pin will be Past National President Kris Nelson's husband, Terry, and daughter, Sarah Nelson-Swenson from the Department of Minnesota and Wendy Riggle, the daughter of Past National President Sherry McLaughlin of Iowa.

(Applause.)

MS. RIGGLE: In 2012, I stood on a stage very similar to this in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I was there at the request of my mother, the late Sherry McLaughlin, to do a special presentation. In her final days, she said to me -- okay. Let's be honest. She strongly told me that her Past National President's pin was to go to her good friend, Kris Nelson from Minnesota. If you live in the State of Iowa, you know that you can't get anywhere in the nation very often direct. So many times mom would fly through Minneapolis and Kris and her would meet up, and so they became very good friends. But God had bigger and better plans for Kris, and I can only imagine the reunion in heaven when mom and Kris met. I'm sure they included many laughs and chuckles as they continued their friendship through infinity. And so my dear friend, Nicole, who would have ever thought this moment would happen. My mom, Sherry, knew you since you were a little girl as a member of the Junior Auxiliary which was my mom's passion. Living in the same district back in Iowa, she watched you grow into the leader you have become and she would be quite proud. Ironically, both of you were elected National Presidents in San Antonio, Texas different years apart; she of the ALA and you as Honorary National Junior President. She was the one who encouraged you to submit your resume, to get involved and volunteer in the National Organization. You two worked together to further the mission of the ALA in Iowa and on the national level. I know she would be saying, "Way to go, Nic," and she would be so proud that you will wear her Past National President's pin and that it's made its way back home to Iowa.

(Applause.)

MS. NELSON-SWENSON: I'm so thankful that Nicole invited my dad, and myself, my husband, and my kids here. I'm feeling a little emotional, so just bear with me. This Past National President's pin was very sentimental to my mom, Kris. Wendy presented it to her at the close of her 2012 National

Convention. Many in the audience may not know that when Sherry was National President, she gave her my mom her very first national chairmanship. Well, life sure does come full circle. My mom, Nicole, gave -- or my gave Nicole her very first National Chairmanship 10 years ago today and it's also a day that my first son was born. That's crazy. So he's 10 today right down there.

(Applause.)

MS. NELSON-SWENSON: So my mom took a very calculated risk. She was a risk taker and was willing to challenge the traditional course of leadership by choosing a non-past national president to oversee the finance committee for the future benefit of this great organization that she loved so dearly. You've flourished in the role and have made her very proud. I'm sure she's looking down smiling right now. So now is the time to close that circle by bringing the Past National President's pin back to Iowa.

(Applause.)

MR. NELSON-SWENSON: It is a distinct pleasure and honor for all of us to place this beautiful pin above your heart. This pin with diamonds and sapphires with a red wing -- ring encircling the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary says it all beautifully. Wear it with pride and honor for it represents what a wonderful two years you had leading the organization representing service not self. Thank you, Nicole, for giving us the extended time in your busy life to lead us through the centennial year. Keep the memories and successes close to your heart. I have opted to let Wendy put the pin on Nicole.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: To present Nic with her ribbon is Past National President Mary Davis from the Department of Washington. Mary?

(Cross-talk.)

MS. WASHINGTON: Nicole, it is with great honor and pride that I present to you the ceremonial ribbon as an expression of the conclusion of a tremendous two years of service to our organization. You will wear this ribbon proudly and with confidence in the years to come with the knowledge that you made a difference in the lives of those we serve.

(Cross-talk.)

(Applause.)

MS. DAVIS: Congratulations, Nicole. Past National President Sharon will conduct the presentation of Colors.

(Cross-talk.)

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: Would the audience please remain seated during the presentation of flags? Will the Iowa pages please present the retiring national colors and would her parents, Darrell and Jeanne, please join Nicole between the Colors? Nicole, on August 28th, 2019, you took the oath of office to be our national president. It is both an honor and a privilege to represent the members of the American Legion Auxiliary in presenting these colors to you and your parents.

Nicole, Darrell, and Jeanne, as you stand together between these standards that you have served so faithfully and so well during these past two years, may they always symbolize for you the spirit of America and the spirit of the American Legion Auxiliary. These Colors welcomed you to our National Headquarters to begin your year as our national president. You noticed I said "year" at that point? As you traveled these last two years, the lives of all were filled with many challenges and successes. When you returned to Gladbrook, Iowa in March of 2020, no one thought our world would change so much and your trouble would be complete for the 2020 administrative year. You all persevered by making temporary backgrounds for Zoom meetings, had internet challenges, and by finding innovative ways to communicate with our members to keep our ALA moving forward. With strong convictions you have challenged our members to stop the decline in membership by strengthening our American Legion family. You have touched the hearts of our veterans, children, our military, and our communities that you visited. You have served us with honor and distinction. You reminded us that assisting in the health and well-being of our veterans and our military requires many different approaches and we should always be prepared to assist in any way needed and that there are numerous paths in which to serve. And thank you, Nicole, for all you have done for this organization. Nicole, to your right stands the flag of the United States of America, the symbol of hope, freedom, and justice for all. A beacon of hope around the world. Of all signs and symbols, there is none that surpasses the Star-Spangled Banner of red, white, and blue. To your left is the vibrant red banner of our American Legion Auxiliary on which shines the emblem of our noble organization. The high ideals of justice, freedom, democracy, and loyalty and our members who have been touched by your leadership and spirit of service know that so well.

With these Colors, you will be taking home precious memories of what you have witnessed and accomplished and the lasting friendships you have made. Your goal was to move the organization forward, and through the leadership that has been accomplished. Congratulations. And now, Nicole, your Colors are entrusted to you, and mom, and dad who have encouraged you, been your greatest cheerleaders and stood by you throughout the last two years. It is with deep pride that I present the Stand of Colors, the flag of our country and the beautiful banner of our American Legion Auxiliary. They're yours to take home to Iowa where they will always have a special place in your heart. Honor and cherish them always. Now will the Iowa pages please return the colors to their standards? Nicole, Jeanne, and Darrell, please return to your seats knowing that you take the love and respect of our members with you. Congratulations with love and friendship always.

(Applause.)

MS. HOBBS: There are a few announcements before we conclude this installation. Please remain in your seats until the close of the convention and recessional of Past President Nicole and her Colors. The Department of Kentucky American Legion Auxiliary members will hand out the National President's pin at the back of the convention hall. National President Kathy,

Vice President Vickie along with the other newly installed officers will be outside the convention hall to say thank you for your support and confidence. Madam President Kathy, would you please come and return the gavel to President Nicole so that she may be able to close her convention?

(Cross-talk.)

(Laughter.)

MS. CLAPP: Sergeant at Arms and Department Color bearers, please retire the Department of Kentucky Colors followed by the installing officers, platform guests, Kathy's family, and the newly installed officers. Then National President Kathy will be escorted by her mothers and sisters. And daughters, sorry.

(Ringing of the bell.)

(Applause.)

MS. CLAPP: For a girl from a small town in Iowa at age 4 who fell in love with a poppy to having two opportunities of a lifetime, one at age 16 to be our Honorary National Junior President to serve with Jay Comer and Pearl Behrend and now to have life come full circle, 32 now 34 years later, just add the extra year, to have served your -- our organizations together will Bill Oxford and Clint Bolt, it has been an honor of a lifetime. Iowa you have always been there for me, Central Division, and the entire American Legion family. You are my extended family and now it is my time to ask Rosemarie Hauck to please give our benediction to close the 2021 National Convention. Thank you.

MS. HAUCK: Let us bow in prayer, please. Dear God, we thank you for your guidance in the American Legion Auxiliary as well as The American Legion family. We thank you for the officers and members who have contributed to making the important decisions for our organization. We thank you for our servicemen and women and ask that you protect them as they protect us. As we go forth, let us remember the reason we are a part of this organization and continue to keep all of our brothers and sisters in service in your thoughts and prayers. Please be with all of those present as they go out, enjoy fellowship together and take them safely back to their homes, oh, God. So now I say may the Lord bless you and keep you in your laying down and in your going out, in your sorrow and your happiness. May he keep you is my prayer. Amen.

VOICES: Amen.

MS. CLAPP: If the National Pages would please come forward to retire the Colors? It is my honor and privilege to conclude and adjourn the 2021 National Convention of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(Ringing of the bell.)

(Applause.)

(Whereupon, the national convention was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.)

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**POST-CONVENTION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2021**

MEMBERS PRESENT

National Officers

National President Kathy Daudistel
National Vice President Vickie Koutz
Central Division National Vice President Denise Delaney-Wrolen
Eastern Division National Vice President Marie Pytka
Northwestern Division National Vice President Dee Dee Buckley
Southern Division National Vice President Gabriele Barnett
Western Division National Vice President Toni Gimpel
National Chaplain Carol T. Robinson
National Historian Carol Campbell
National Secretary Coral May Grout
National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir

Guests: Executive Director Kelly Circle; ALA NHQ Director of Finance Gary Ward, ALA NHQ Compliance Officer Sara Riegel

Past National Presidents

Carlene Ashworth
Nancy Brown-Park
Sharon Conatser
Mary E. Davis
Diane Duscheck
Virginia Hobbs
Rita Navarreté
Linda Newsome
Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan
Desireé Stoy
Peggy Thomas
Kristine West

National Executive Committee members

Alabama..... ALT Sharon Atkins
Alaska Penelope Mazonna
Arizona Patricia Lugo
Arkansas Nancy French
California..... Joan Cannon
Colorado Laurie Kuntz
Connecticut..... Debra Knickerbocker
Delaware Deborah Guenther
District of Columbia Lauren Lloyd
Florida Ann King-Smith

Georgia	Valerie Brown-Debro
Hawaii	<i>Absent</i>
Idaho	Carol Dalton
Illinois	Sue Cunniff Coughlin
Indiana	<i>Absent</i>
Iowa	Kelly Elliott
Kansas	Paula Sellens
Kentucky	Bonita Robey
Louisiana	ALT Ethel Theriot
Maine	Joan Caron
Maryland	Alta Glotfelty
Massachusetts	Donna Blattenberger
Michigan	Georgia Downs
Minnesota	Raleen Tolzmann
Mississippi	Mary Smith-Ried
Missouri	Marsha Mooney
Montana	Susan Davidson
Nebraska	Kathleen Mazur
Nevada	Glynis Seeley
New Hampshire	Linda Dupont
New Jersey	Lynda Stadtler
New Mexico	Cecilia Martinez
New York	Patricia Hennessy
North Carolina	Janice MacLeod
North Dakota	Tammy Ryberg
Ohio	Kristen McLaughlin
Oklahoma	Jody Chisholm
Oregon	Krisann Owens
Pennsylvania	Lisa Boyer
Puerto Rico	<i>Absent</i>
Rhode Island	Cathleen Camire
South Carolina	Roberta Sinner
South Dakota	Laura “Susie” Clyde
Tennessee	Rhonda Davidson
Texas	Christine Trahan
Utah	Judy Daybell
Vermont.....	Corinna Colson
Virginia	Lisa Chaplin
Washington	Laura Bondurant
West Virginia	<i>Absent</i>
Wisconsin	Bonnie Jakubczyk
Wyoming	Vicki Paddock

**POST-CONVENTION
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2021**

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Good morning, everybody. Good morning. It's 8:45, let's get this thing started. If you guys will have your seats back there. Okay. This National Executive Committee will now come to order.
(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Please disable all electronic devices or place them in the silent mode, and please rise and remain standing for the opening ceremonies.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: National Chaplain Carol T. Robinson will lead us in our invocation. Following the prayer, Americanism Chairman Norma Tramm will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem, followed by the Constitution and Bylaw Chairman Pam Ray leading us in the preamble to the constitution. Carol T.?

CHAPLAIN ROBINSON: Good morning.

(A chorus of good morning.)

CHAPLAIN ROBINSON: Our verse this morning is, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." Shall we bow our heads. Almighty God, whose blessings are numberless and whose power is infinite, we are grateful for the rich heritage that is ours in this Nation of free people. We give You thanks for Your manifold gifts to us as we meet for this NEC meeting to carry out the business and work of the American Legion Auxiliary. May we be open and honest in all our dealings as we seek to serve You, our veterans, active-duty military, and their families in our communities. May the programs we undertake and support inspire a love of this Nation; a desire that we continue to be strong and resourceful people; and a deep respect for those who have paid the ultimate price for freedom we all enjoy. We ask that You keep watch over and comfort those in The American Legion family, those that may be suffering from virus, mental issues or physical disabilities, or the loss of a loved one. May they know the blessings of health and happiness again. In Your Holy Name we pray. Amen.

(A chorus of Amen.)

MS. TRAMM: With nothing in your hands and your hand over your heart.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

(Singing of the National Anthem led by
Americanism Chairman Norma Tramm.)

(Reading of the Preamble to the ALA Constitution led by Constitution and Bylaw Chairman Pam Ray:)

MS. RAY: 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 one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during all 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 accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

(Ring of the bell.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: This meeting of the National Executive Committee is now convened. Before we begin our business, I want to take a few minutes to welcome you in your new role as a 2021/2022 National Executive Committee. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: What a great group of women, right? Those present who are eligible to vote today and at the subsequent NEC meetings are the NEC members. NEC members include, and are limited to, National Executive Committee person from each department, the five National Division Vice Presidents, the National Chaplain and National Historian, National Treasurer, National Secretary, National Vice President, and the National President. Those present at the NEC meeting with voice, but no vote, are the past National Presidents. 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. That's a mouthful. 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 again receive information in advance and you will be expected to have read these materials in preparation for your next meeting. This is a very important role, and we appreciate your diligence in attending to your duties thoughtfully and responsibly on behalf of the National organization. Now, to get to the business at hand, the Chair asks that those of you wishing to address the meeting make your way to the microphone -- there is one here and one there -- 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 be sure that in making any remarks you address the Chair. Attendance 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 by note cards.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: So make sure you fill out the little note card you found on your seats and we will then input it electronically and it will electronically be recorded. But there is a dual purpose for your note cards, if you fill them out and turn them in outside the door, you will get a little gift.

(A chorus of oh.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: It's incentive for filling out your cards.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Past National Presidents, you must fill out your cards too because you're going to get a little gift, as well as the new officers. Serving as parliamentarian for this meeting is Chris Dickey, professional registered parliamentarian. For this meeting and future NEC meetings, the minutes will be approved by a Minutes Approval Committee. This Chair, the Chair appoints the NECs from Iowa, Indiana, and Maine as the Minutes Approval Committee responsible for approving the minutes for this year's NEC meetings. Information about the consent agenda and how it works was circulated in advance, along with the following items listed on the consent agenda: National Presidents appointments. Does anyone wish to remove anything from the consent agenda? The Chair will now assume a motion to adopt the consent agenda.

MS. TRAHAN: Madam President, Christine Trahan, Department of Texas, I move to adopt the consent agenda.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: There's a motion on the floor to adopt the consent agenda. May I have a second?

(A chorus of second.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: The motion was -- there's no -- is there no -
VOICE: No discussion on a consent agenda.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Okay, thank you. There's no discussion on a consent agenda. I'm a little mixed up here. Okay. All those in favor of adopting the consent agenda, please say aye.

(A chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Those opposed, please say no.

(No response.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Okay. Now that everyone is confirmed, let's introduce the head table. It has you, Nicole, doing all this, so it's kind of funny. Okay. It's my pleasure to announce the head table. Vickie Koutz, National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: In my extended head table over here, Denise Delaney-Wrolen, Central Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Marie Pytka, Eastern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Dee Dee Buckley, Northwestern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: And not to forget Gabrielle Barnett, Southern Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: And Toni Gimpel, Western Division National Vice President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Carol Campbell, National Historian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Carol T. Robinson, National Chaplain.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Coral May Grout, National Secretary.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Marybeth Revoir, National Treasurer.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Kelly Circle, Executive Director.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: And Chris Dickey, our Convention
Parliamentarian.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: The Chair now calls on Executive Director
Kelly Circle to give her report.

MS. CIRCLE: Welcome to our new NEC members and congratulations on your new position. Your head may be swimming a little bit from all the information you just received at the orientation, but I do want to talk briefly about one of your most important duties as senior leadership in your department. And, yes, you are considered senior leadership now. Members will be looking to you for guidance. Set a good example for your members and up-and-coming leadership. Take time to read your governing documents, bring them with you as needed, learn the basics of parliamentary procedure. Model good behavior and support new leaders, and allow other voices to be heard. We also need you to facilitate communication between National and department and unit levels. Make sure your members are informed and be willing to answer questions. If you don't know an answer, that's okay. The staff and your fellow NEC members are here to help. So don't just try to fake it. Tell the person you'll get back with them, do your research, and then get back with them. I gave a strategic and updated our pre-con NEC meeting. And for those of you who weren't there, don't worry, I'll be compiling a year-end report and you'll get the full update in October, but some of the things that we will be focusing on for the next administrative, slash, fiscal year include hiring a grant writer and a marketing director; meeting with the Legion to discuss joint print communications; marketing and membership initiatives; continuing our technology upgrades to ensure we can host hybrid meetings where all can participate equally, whether in person or online; develop more online educational opportunities for our members, including training in diversity, equity and inclusion; and learning to create online surveys and developing member surveys to establish a baseline of where we are and get feedback on where we want to be. I'm looking forward to getting to know our NEC members better and working together to advance the ALA's mission. So, thank you very much for your time, to make this short and sweet.

And, Madam President, this concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you, Kelly. And I just wanted to mention, if you look through your appointment list, you'll see that there is no

longer a volunteer strategic plan committee. It is really because Linda Boone and her team did such a fine job and it was more focused on the National staff level, and I think we've got commend Linda and her team for doing such a wonderful job in working it out that way. So, thank you.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: That's the only reason we don't have it at that level. All right. The chair now calls on Leslie Rist to give a report from Special Committee on -- the new name -- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

VOICE: I'm sorry, that's Yvonne Oliver.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: I am so sorry, it is Yvonne Oliver. Thank you.

MS. OLIVER: Good morning.

(A chorus of good morning.)

MS. OLIVER: Madam President and officers, I say good morning, and good morning to the family. The Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Committee was created to; one, establish goals and strategies for inclusion and diversity in the ALA; two, provide opportunities for our members to participate in discussions on inclusion and diversity topics; three, address policies or practices affecting inclusion and diversity; four, establish mechanisms in measuring success; five, identify areas of concern, and improve inclusion and diversity efforts. We drafted a vision statement, honoring tradition, valuing every voice. The statement is to make our commitment clear. This speaks to the American Legion Auxiliary's history and our commitment to everyone today and for the future. The graphic will be a landing page for the DE&I's statement and collateral use for social media, and other communication and marketing tools. Over the past five months, our nine-person committee has been meeting biweekly to review the 2015 member survey and identify areas of concern; to share knowledge of best practices in the area of D&I; and draft a vision statement and develop recommendations to fulfill the objectives our committee was charged with. Working with the National Headquarters staff, we have a contract with Qualtrics. It's a cloud-based platform that will be creating and distributing web-based surveys, to develop an assessment survey, and establish baseline demographics for our organization. In addition, National Headquarters has contracted to develop a self-paced online DEI training and webinar. This will be an introduction to DEI and is the foundation from which training can be created. A survey from ALA Girls' State and Boys in the Legion, Boys' State alumni has been created and we are pursuing a method to distribute. This will allow us to hear feedback regarding the program and work on engaging efforts to attract members from this program. Our first recommendation is to change the name of the committee to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Initially, we wanted to emphasize the importance of Inclusion, but we found that it has caused some confusion because most people were familiar with the acronym DEI. We feel "Equity" needs to be stated because it's fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. While identifying and eliminating potential barriers that may prevent participation.

DEI is the diversity of people and ideas, practices and policies, and

including all throughout the organization.

Our next recommendation is to either the National President or Executive Director sign the CEO Action in Diversity and Inclusion. The pledge outlines a specific set of actions that can be taken to cultivate a trusting environment where all ideas are welcome and all people are comfortable and empowered to have discussions about the D&I. Nearly 2,000 CEOs have taken the pledge, which also includes non-profit organizations. Utilizing surveys will track out progress and show our commitment to continuous improvement. National Headquarters staff are working with Qualtrics to learn to create valid surveys, so that we can further benchmark and focus on areas of development and strategies and initiatives. And this tool can be used to gather necessary data. Staff are also working with Brilljent, the company that we use for the ALA Academy course development, so that we can create online DEI training modules and webinars. The committee will review the training and we anticipate distributing this fall. We are also developing a standardized new member orientation packet, creating a mentorship program that will involve training, program growth, leadership reach and skill development. Lastly, we are creating a communication and marketing plan to increase DEI awareness, which to make our website and trainings fully accessible to create membership reporting procedure and address concerns and reviewing organizational processes to ensure fairness in line with our goals. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve on this committee to improve our organization for the next hundred years of service. As we implement our DEI plans and gather data and listen to the voices and experiences of our members, we will continue to review our strategies and tactics to make improvements and deliver recommendations. We respectfully request this committee be reappointed for the coming year, so that we can continue our efforts and all recommendations be considered for approval.

Madam President, this concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: So, before you take off, I just want you to know that we just approved that committee, so --

MS. OLIVER: Yay! Thank you.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you for all your work.

MS. OLIVER: Thank you.

MS. LLOYD: Hi, Madam President.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Yes.

MS. LLOYD: I'm Lauren Lloyd from the District of Columbia. I have a request for information.

(A chorus of oh.)

MS. LLOYD: Thank you, Chris Dickey, for teaching us something new in the NEC organization.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: You did good in training today.

MS. LLOYD: She did an amazing job.

(Laughter.)

MS. LLOYD: I do have a request for information. For this new

committee, the things that you're recommending, and especially with the surveys to establish baseline data, will that be something implemented in each of the programs and each of the committees, or are you just looking at the organization as a whole? Is this going to be a trickle-down effect or a bottoms-up effect, is what I'm asking.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Great question and I believe Kelly will answer that for us.

(Laughter.)

MS. LLOYD: Thank you.

MS. CIRCLE: So this will -- these surveys -- that's why I was hammering so hard for everybody to get an email address on file -- so it will go directly to each member and we will ask for those responses back, and it will be tabulated from there. So we're wanting to do a baseline demographics, so if anybody -- we're going to send out a demographic survey, so that -- and you can answer or not answer, and then further surveys are going to be more about interests and how we're going to do our program. So a little bit of both, I guess. So if a committee chair would like to utilize a survey to get more information about say what people want to do for Americanism, for example, then we can do that. So does that answer your question?

MS. LLOYD: Yes.

MS. CIRCLE: Good deal.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you, Kelly, and great job, Chris, on teaching them.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: I love it. Okay. As we move into our financials, the chair now calls on the National Treasurer to give her report. Oh, I am so sorry. I totally skipped a whole section. So the chair will now call on Trish Ward --

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: -- to report for the Code of Ethical Conduct Committee. I am so sorry.

MS. WARD: Thank you, Madam President. Look, everyone, it's the last tab in the book.

(Laughter.)

MS. WARD: Would the event staff please launch the PowerPoint?

(Pause.)

MS. WARD: Good morning, everyone.

(A chorus of good morning.)

MS. WARD: I am pleased to provide comments to the NEC on behalf of Chairman Jacqui Hood from the Department of Vermont who couldn't be with us today. As articulated at the pre-convention NEC meeting, the Code of Ethical Conduct Special Committee was specifically tasked to evaluate, review and revise the Code of Ethical Conduct, as outlined in the standing rules of the American Legion Auxiliary's national governing documents. The committee is comprised of nine members who retain various legal, compliance, ethics, and investigative process expertise, along with three members who have core institutional knowledge about the American Legion

Auxiliary and its structure. During the 2020-2021 administration, the committee met regularly, generally weekly, via a virtual platform, with three subcommittees formed to address and review the following area: Indiana Non-Profit Code 23-17, ethics inquiry/complaint and process, and Outcomes, to include possible penalties, censure, suspension, and removal from the board. Additionally, the work has focused on understanding the composition, gaps and structure of the existing code; identifying to whom the code should apply; developing a process for intake of complaints, investigation of violations, and suitable outcomes which may require formulation of additional standing committees to address complaints; communication structure and notification guidelines; recommendations for NEC consideration to mitigate organizational risk; align the American Legion Auxiliary to current and applicable non-profit ethics and behavior standards. The committee has determined that there are gaps present in the existing code that will likely require governing document revisions and possibly revisions to the articles of incorporation. Upon review, it was discovered that the American Legion Auxiliary's articles of incorporation have not been revised since 1934. Current law and various items relating to standard business and operating practices and procedures have determined that, at minimum, a review of the articles for possible amendment is warranted. Other recommendations include, but are not limited to, consideration of the ALA to retain outside legal counsel for a full review of the articles of incorporation and to potentially serve as an independent investigative source when certain named individuals are involved in a complaint or investigation; ALA National Whistleblower Policy expansion to include complaints other than fraud; consideration of establishment of a continuously serving ethics committee comprised of seven members who potentially serve on two subcommittees, Inquiry and Investigation, three members, and Outcomes, three members, with a chairman who would serve in an ex officio capacity. These committees would be responsible for receiving, reviewing and investigating complaints, along with determining appropriate outcomes and disciplinary action, if necessary. Work that has been completed: research on other non-profit ethics code and process; research on Indiana non-profit code; draft version of flow chart and step process for complaint receipt, review, investigation, trial, and penalty phases. Next steps: create formal proposal to leadership and Finance to outline the rationale and secure funding for retaining outside legal counsel, the fall of 2021; prepare formal proposal to NEC for consideration of recommendations, February of 2022; review governing documents and prepare formal amendments as required for presentation to the appropriate entities, 2021-2022 administrative year. The expectation is the committee will proceed with formal recommendations in the 2021-2022 administration to the NEC. The proposal will include a comprehensive outline of required items to formalize the new Code of Ethical Conduct, articulating its scope and process, along with appropriate integration into the ALA's governing documents.

Madam President, this concludes my report.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you very much, Trish. I think I can

speak on behalf of all of us that we appreciate the clear, detailed path that you have for moving forward on this committee. Thank you. Now as we move into our financials, the chair calls on the National Treasurer to give her report.

MS. REVOIR: Madam National President, good morning, ladies.

(A chorus of good morning.)

MS. REVOIR: Today, we start another year in the storied history of the American Legion Auxiliary. We are now on to our second hundred years. At the beginning of each administration, we set forth a financial budget of anticipated income and expenditures. This morning, I'd like to turn a small spotlight onto the behind-the-scenes workings of this massive undertaking. The budget you receive is all nicely detailed on one piece of paper; I just want you to know what goes behind the scenes to get everything on that one piece of paper. The budget is distributed over 22 sections which cover key programs, major events, and each division of the National Organization. A sampling of some of the sections are National Convention, Training Sessions for Department Leadership and National Chairmen, American Legion Auxiliary Girls' Nation, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Membership Support Services, Veterans Creative Arts Festival, and of course the ALA Foundation, to name just a few.

In each of the 22 sections of the budget, personnel and related benefits are allocated. This overall cost of our national staff is spread out throughout the budget to reflect their areas of responsibility that each member is involved with. Other costs such as travel, printing, publicity, awards, professional services and fees are also allocated into these 22 sections. This gives us a more realistic view of what each event, internal division and program costs us and the income they generate, if that is applicable.

I feel it's very important for each of you to know something that I learned this past year, that many hours and an extreme amount of brain power goes into finalizing the budget that is to be presented to you today.

After each division lead and department head prepares a proposed line-by-line estimate of their annual expenses and, if applicable, the expected revenue, the information is combined into an almost 30-page document with hundreds of lines of data and calculations. It is then on to review by a collaboration between national leadership, National Headquarters, the Finance Division, and the members, hard-working members of the Finance Committee. Their task is massive as they review and analyze each line item, always mindful of the importance of member services and mission delivery.

With membership dues now only covering 60 percent of the operating budget, alternative revenue sources were explored to help fill the deficit. We were able to utilize revenue that was in a reserve, accumulated from decreased spending over the last two years with what we have endured with COVID, but this solution will not continue to be available. Please know that the group that is tasked with preparing our budget each year, including the National Organization Financial Division, who are represented here today, and the numerous volunteer leaders, take their responsibility very, very seriously and always work with the best interests of our organization in their hearts and their minds.

Non-profits are held to a strict standard by the Internal Revenue when it comes to operational expense versus mission delivery expense. To maintain our status as a non-profit, we must demonstrate our emphasis is always on our mission delivery, care for veterans' children in our community, and not spending heavily on operational items. The American Legion Auxiliary continues to be a model for non-profit organizations with its operations always living up to the true meaning of service. That concludes my report, Madam President.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you, Marybeth. Please now welcome Finance Committee Chairman -- oh, hello.

MS. LLOYD: Good morning. This is Lauren Lloyd, again, from the District of Columbia. I had coffee this morning, so I am hopefully awake. I do have a request for information regarding Activity 132 on page 2 of the finance documents that were presented.

VOICE: That comes under Budget.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Lauren --

MS. LLOYD: That's under Budget? Sorry --

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Yes.

MS. LLOYD: -- I'm ahead of you.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: No, it's okay.

MS. LLOYD: My apologies. I did have coffee this morning.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: It's quite all right. We're glad to see that you're using your new learnings to express yourself.

(Laughter.)

VOICE: Just let her ask and Marybeth can answer.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Okay. So Sharon will now present the FYI 2022 budget of the American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. Sharon?

(Pause.)

MS. CONATSER: While they are preparing that, on the appointment sheet, when you go to the Finance Committee, you need to add one year after everybody's name because of COVID. We served two years, so they moved the Finance Committee and all the committees up one year. So add, like I think mine says '21, so mine should say '22, and just on down the line, please. So when you get your appointment sheet and if Harley is in -- is Harley in the room? Kelly, will you make sure Harley gets that information to add the numbers? The years are wrong on the Finance Committee. Thank you. And, while they're prepping this, Gary and Sara are going to be up here to help me, any questions that we have at the end. So, Madam President, good morning.

(A chorus of good morning.)

MS. CONATSER: As your National Finance Committee chair, I am proud to have the opportunity to serve this organization and present the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget. Your consideration of the budget as an NEC is vital to the success of our organization.

I am presenting this on behalf of the Finance Committee, which includes -- and, if they're in the room, please stand -- Vice Chairman Virginia Hobbs, committee member and Past National President Nicole Clapp, Paula Raney, and Past National President Nancy Brown-Park. Thank you, ladies, for your diligent work for our finances.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: I must start off by thanking Headquarters staff and the National Chairmen for their input, their guidance and ideas, to be sure we were able to develop and present a comprehensive budget. We hope that you liked having more time to look over the budget before attending National Convention since you received the post-NEC packet, hopefully, before you left home. We need to continue to meet our goals, our obligations, and our expectations of providing services for you, the members, while continuing to do our mission, the reason we were formed. Before getting to the budget, there's a few people I do need to thank: Sara Regal, Marybeth Revoir, Gary Ward, Linda Boone, and Kelly Circle, for their countless hours putting this budget together, for their review, and answering of my questions and other questions. Let's begin with the budget narrative. This is a summary document to help you understand, hopefully, the budget. You should have had that in front of you, NECs, that was on your chairs, plus it was sent to you, and that has not changed. The different versions you got post-NEC, none of that changed from the very first one, if you sent it out -- if you printed that one. So I just wanted to make that clear that we didn't change anything on that for you. Do you have any questions on the budget narrative? Whenever you want to go, sure, honey. You can do it whenever you want to do it.

(Laughter.)

MS. CONATSER: I have backup.

(Laughter.)

MS. LLOYD: I don't think you want to tell me I can do whatever I want to do.

(Laughter.)

MS. CONATSER: I trust you'll do the right thing, how about that, Lauren?

MS. LLOYD: I am from DC.

(Laughter.)

MS. LLOYD: I do have a request for information regarding Activity 132 listed on page 2, employee benefit reductions for the potential savings of \$96,080. Is that because you found a better deal for them or a more competitive package?

(Pause.)

MS. REVOIR: We reviewed all of the employee benefits. So it's a conglomeration of several things. One is the 401(k) by -- the way it's set up is a contribution that is at the discretion of the Finance Committee when there's funds available. So that was reviewed.

MS. LLOYD: Okay.

MS. REVOIR: The proportion that an employee pays, which we all know how that goes, the employee pays a certain portion, the company or, in

this case, our organization pays a certain portion, that was altered a little bit to save some money. We had two types of disability insurance, so we have determined that -- we had a long-term and a short-term disability that we paid 100 percent for our employees, it was determined that we would offer both, but we would ask the employee if they cared for, you know, the long-term to pay for it and we would pay for the short-term.

We did not make a determination -- cost of both were about the same annually, so we didn't make a determination of which we were going to not offer paid for. And they were going to survey the employees and it was going to go based on -- as long as the budget was approved -- based on which the majority of the employees wanted. They all wanted the short term, and then the Auxiliary would continue to pay for that, and if they wanted the long-term, they could elect, electively do that.

So, when you add all of those things together, that's where we were able to get that much of a reduction because we needed to balance the bottom line on the budget as close as we could.

Does that help?

MS. LLOYD: Yes, thank you. I just wanted to make sure we're taking care of the employees.

MS. REVOIR: Yes, yes, yes.

MS. LLOYD: Thank you very much for those answers.

MS. CONATSER: Great question. You will see in the first section talks about the good news of finishing FY '21 strong. Listening to you, the members' National President Kathy will be returning to five in-person mission trainings and five junior meetings. We have budgeted for those and hope COVID stays away. Right?

VOICE: Yes, yes.

MS. CONATSER: Okay, on to the budget. You will see that we are presenting a deficit budget. One statistic that really stands out is that our membership is declining. Now, ladies you listen to these numbers. From 2014 to July 31st, 2021, our membership has decreased by over 130,000 members, which equals over a \$1 million revenue loss. If we would just retain our membership, we would not be in a deficit budget. You have heard others say it and we will continue to say it: we need to be nice to each other, be welcoming, and remember that we have all the same eligibility to belong to our American Legion Auxiliary. You don't have to be best friends, you just need to work together for our mission, which involves your eligibility, your veteran, any veteran. Any other questions on the narrative explanation before I move on? Okay. Forward thinking, bringing in revenue, supporting the mission. You can't ask for more than that. The next piece we're going to discuss is the budget you have in front of you and it's on the screen. I want to assure you that your Finance Committee vetted this information line by line. Our due diligence in representing you is taken very seriously. In the detail of the budget, you will see that we have scholarships, our publications, and normal costs of doing business. A few years ago, a finance chairman said in reference to our strategic plan of growing membership, and I quote, "So we're committed to this and we hope you are as well, and we know where we want

to be by 2020." So here we are. Are we where we wanted to be? Are we where we should be in membership?

(A chorus of no.)

MS. CONATSER: No, we are not, and we are not close to where we wanted to be. Your national team is once again asking you to recommit yourselves to the ALA, help yourself as a member of the organization, and help the organization retain members and grow membership. With the new opportunities in membership, with the new dates, the new eligibility, that should help our cause. Engaging new members early in their membership is the best way to keep an active, interested member in your organization, but that does not mean make them president the first meeting.

(Laughter.)

MS. CONATSER: Madam President, I move on behalf of the Finance Committee the adoption of the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget for your approval.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Since the motion comes from a committee, a second is not required. The question is on the approval of the proposed FY 2022 budgets as presented. Is there any discussion?

(No verbal response.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Are you ready for the question? The question is on the approval of the proposed FY 2022 budgets as presented. All those in favor, say aye.

(A chorus of aye.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Those opposed, say no.

(No verbal response.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: The motion to adopt the budget has passed. Thank you, Chairman.

(Applause.)

MS. CONATSER: The next piece we will look at is the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget. We want to thank the Foundation board for their dedication to the ALA by going back and assisting with our budget. Does anyone have any questions on the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget? They present this budget to us for review only.

(No verbal response.)

MS. CONATSER: If not, Madam President, on behalf of the Finance Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation Board, I move the acceptance of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget for FY '22.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Once again, since the motion comes from a committee, a second is not required. The question is on the approval of the proposed FY 2022 American Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget. Are you ready for the question? The question is on the approval of the proposed FY 2022 American Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget as presented. All those in favor, say aye.

(A chorus of aye.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Those opposed, say no.

(No verbal response.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: The motion to adopt the FY 2022 American

Legion Auxiliary Foundation budget has passed. Thank you.

MS. CONATSER: The National Finance Committee and the national staff have worked to explore opportunities for alternative income streams other than membership. Investment income has been the stream the organization has relied on for a number of years, but that is no longer enough. Significant discussions have resulted in reducing a number of expenses, but we are still in a deficit budget, as you know. For most of our hundred years, we have been able to rely on membership dues to balance the budget with occasional moderate dues increases. It is now time to realize that our organization has been decreasing in membership for over 30 years while the expectations to provide the same level of program and services has increased. Before the last dues increase was passed in 2017, we had gone 16 years with no national increases. This is to notify the departments and NECs -- it is your job to help us support this and ask questions, please -- this is your notification that the FY '22 year, the Finance Committee and staff will be developing a dues increase proposal for action at the 2022 National Convention. The intent is to provide a detailed plan with enough time for the departments to discuss it and be prepared for a dues increase in the 2024 year. And if you have suggestions or ideas you would like to share with this chairman, I am more than willing to have those emailed to me and take those to the committee. Madam President, this concludes my report.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you very much, Sharon. Thank you, Sharon. I appreciate all the hard work you and the committee do. Before we go on to new business, I just want to take a moment to recognize all the past National Presidents. If you will please stand?

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Including our immediate past National President Nicole. Have you been accepted into the Past National Presidents Club?

MS. CLAPP: Well, I think National President wanted to make sure she had a job, she paid my \$10 dues last night, I'm told.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: I'd also like to recognize the past -- not the past, the National Chairmen, the current National -- ingoing National -- you guys are current, you're ratified, the current National Chairmen, if you'll please stand for a moment.

(Applause.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Thank you for agreeing to serve. Is there any other business to come before this NEC meeting? New business.

(No verbal response.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: Hearing none, we will move on to the next item. If there is no objection, we will now go into an executive session to consider an item of business. The chair would like to include the following guests in the executive session: former Code of Ethical Conduct Committee Chairman, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman, the Executive Director, and the Convention Parliamentarian. Are there any objections?

(No verbal response.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: If there are no objections, we need to take a vote -- we do not need to take a vote? Oh, okay. Thank you. Never mind, I'm just practicing.

(Laughter.)

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: There being no objections, we will go into executive session. Executive session will include only voting members of the NEC and invited guests. All others are asked to leave at this time, but before you go I want to remind you to fill out your little cards. And, National Chairmen, you are included as well. So fill out your cards.

VOICE: I'll get them to you.

PRESIDENT DAUDISTEL: She will get them to you.

(Whereupon, the National Executive Committee adjourned into executive session at 9:37 a.m.)

###

Appendix A



SUMMARY OF MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

**2019-2021 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
CONVENED AUGUST 28, 2021
IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

**2021 NATIONAL CONVENTION
CONVENED AUGUST 30 – SEPTEMBER 1, 2021
IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

**2021-2022 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
CONVENED SEPTEMBER 2, 2021
IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

**2019-2021 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD PRE-NATIONAL CONVENTION
IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

August 28, 2021

Summary of Motions/Resolutions Adopted

M/S/C = Moved/Seconded/Carried/Failed

- M/S/C Motion by NEC (NV) Glynis Seeley to approve the items on the consent agenda:
- Unit charter cancellations with the addition of Toppenish Unit 4 (WA) and Sequim Unit 62 (WA)
 - HR Special Committee formed earlier in the year by National President Nicole Clapp consisting of National Treasurer Marybeth Revoir, NHQ Director of Human Resources Shannon Hitchcock, Coral May Grout, National President Nicole Clapp and National Vice President Kathy Daudistel to review NHQ staff compensation, benefits, and human resources policies.
- M/S/C Motion by NEC (NY) Deborah Morris to approve the recommendation from the Special Committee on Inclusion & Diversity to change the name of the special committee to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Special Committee.

National Secretary Linda Boone

<u>Minutes Approval Committee</u>	<u>Approved</u>
NEC Michelle DeGennaro (FL)	12/2/2021
NEC Tina Hurst (MS)	12/2/2021
NEC Jerilynn Kabel (KY)	12/2/2021

###

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL CONVENTION 2021
CONVENED IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA
AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

Summary of Motions/Resolutions Adopted

M/S/C = Moved/Seconded/Carried/Failed

- M/C Motion from Committee on Credentials Chairman Sandy Deacon to adopt the report on convention credentials.
- M/C Motion from Committee on Convention Standing Rules to adopt National Convention Standing Rules as distributed in advance.
- M/C Motion from National Secretary Linda Boone to adopt the convention program with any changes printed.
- M/C **Amendment 1:** Motion from National Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chairman Trish Ward to amend ALA National Constitution Article IV, Section 2, Paragraph 2, National Executive Committee.

Amend: by striking and **adding** to Bylaws Article IV National Executive Committee, Section 2, Paragraph 2.

~~Any intermediate governing body established by National Convention action shall be subordinate to the National Executive Committee and shall report to, be accountable to, and its actions ratified by the National Executive Committee.~~

There shall be an Executive Committee to the National Executive Committee. The purpose of the Executive Committee shall be:

- 1) to review, research and make recommendations to the NEC on matters requiring NEC action; and**
- 2) to address and act on time sensitive matters subject to ratification by the NEC, except those duties reserved for the Executive Committee in the Bylaws Article V.**

Yes: 610; No: 59

M/C **Amendment 2:** Motion from National Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chairman Trish Ward on the recommendation of the Executive Committee to the NEC to amend ALA National Bylaws by adding Article V, Executive Director.

Amend: by adding Bylaws Article V. Executive Director

The Executive Director shall be responsible for implementing the policies and directives of the National Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall oversee the hiring, disciplining, and terminating of all national headquarters employees and perform such duties as provided in the Standing Rules or as assigned. The Executive Director shall be hired, disciplined, or terminated by a majority vote of the Executive Committee of the National Executive Committee, in accordance with the terms of employment established by the Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall regularly be evaluated by the Executive Committee. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Executive Director, the Executive Committee may name a person to serve in that capacity until a new Executive Director is hired.

Consequential amendments: Renumber all subsequent sections.

Yes: 601; No: 62

M/F **Amendment 3:** Motion from National Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chairman Trish Ward on the recommendation of the Executive Committee to the NEC to rename the NEC to National Board of Directors.

Amend: By striking and inserting Constitution Article V. National ~~Executive Committee~~ **Board of Directors** Section 1. Between National Conventions, the National ~~Executive Committee~~ **Board of Directors** shall serve as the governing body of the organization with fiduciary, policy, and strategic responsibility for the organization.

Consequential amendments: Strike all occurrences of “National Executive Committee” in ALA governing documents and insert “National Board of Directors.” Strike all occurrences of “National Executive Committee person” and insert “National Board Member.”

No: 507; Yes 160

M/C **Amendment 4:** Motion from National Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chairman Trish Ward on the recommendation of the National Finance Committee.

Amend: By striking and inserting Bylaws Article III. Duties of Officers. *Section 6.* National Treasurer: It shall be the duty of the National Treasurer to serve as custodian of the funds of the National Organization, to account for the same, to sign all checks in ~~dispensing~~ **disbursing** the funds of the organization; and shall perform other duties as assigned. In the absence of or in addition to the National Treasurer, the National Secretary **and the Executive Director** shall be authorized to sign checks according to policy.

Yes: 579; No: 86

M/C **Amendment 5:** Motion from National Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chairman Trish Ward on the recommendation of the National Audit Committee to amend the purpose of the National Audit Committee in ALA Standing Rule VI. Committees 6

Amend: by striking and inserting Standing Rules VI. Committees 6.

The Audit Committee shall be comprised of a chairman and two (2) members, each serving staggered three-year terms, one of whom shall be appointed each year by the National President; and two (2) liaison members, one (1) of whom shall be recommended each year by the National Finance Committee and one (1) 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 purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide oversight assistance to the National Executive Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding accounting and reporting practices, reliable systems of internal control, the corporate responsibility program, and the quality and integrity of the Auxiliary's financial reporting. Audit Committee members shall be financially literate, and the chairman shall have the necessary background to be considered an "audit committee financial expert" in matters of accounting, finance, auditing, and risk aversion.~~

The Audit Committee responsibilities are to:

- **review the integrity of financial statements and financial disclosures;**
- **ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements;**
- **engage the independent auditor and review and approve the annual financial audit and IRS Form 990;**
- **oversee the organization’s internal controls and risk-management procedures;**
- **meet periodically with management and auditors to gain an understanding of the potential significant risks and exposures facing the organization; and propose needed internal controls to reduce risks.**

Yes: 656; No: 20

M/C **Amendment 6:** Motion from National Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chairman Trish Ward on the recommendation of the National Audit Committee to change the name from Audit Committee to Risk & Compliance. Clarified that this applies only to the national committee, not to Department or Unit committees.

Amend: by striking and inserting

Bylaws Article V. Committees Section 2.

There shall be the following core National Standing Committees: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Children and Youth, Americanism, National Security, membership, Constitution & Bylaws, Finance, ~~Audit~~ **Risk & Compliance**, and such other mission and member/organizational support committees as may be provided in the Standing Rules.

Yes: 611; No: 163

M/S/F Motion from delegate Sue Diaz (AK) for a two-minute caucus before national officer elections.

M/S/
Postponed
Indefinitely Motion from Committee on Resolutions Chairman Donna Thurman on the recommendation of the National Membership Committee to adopt Resolution 1 to request The American Legion change its governing documents to allow membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for all grandparents, parents, siblings, spouse, natural and adopted descendants related to The American Legion eligible member within two degrees of consanguinity and if passed that the American Legion Auxiliary shall immediately allow into American

Legion Auxiliary membership grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, natural and adopted descendants to The American Legion eligible member within two degrees of consanguinity.

###

POSTPONED INDEFINITELY

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
NATIONAL CONVENTION RESOLUTION

SUBMITTED BY: Kathy S. Phillips, Immediate Past President,
Department of Alabama

SUBJECT: Resolution for The American Legion to change
eligibility requirements for the ALA

DATE: August 14, 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 1
(Assigned by Resolutions Committee)

Whereas, The American Legion Auxiliary mission promotes service and support to veterans, military, and their families; and

Whereas, The American Legion Auxiliary is a diverse and inclusive organization; and

Whereas, The American Legion Auxiliary seeks to be an organization inclusive of anyone who supports veterans, military, and their families; and

Whereas, Eligibility for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary is determined by The American Legion ; and

Whereas, The American Legion changed their governing documents to allow all spouses to become members of the American Legion Auxiliary in 2019; and

Whereas, The American Legion Auxiliary changed its Constitution in 2019 to update without American Legion Auxiliary governing board action should The American Legion further change its Constitution regarding eligibility for the American Legion Auxiliary; and

Whereas, the most recently revised IRS regulation for 501(c)(19) organizations states <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/other-non-profits/veterans-organizations>: **A veterans' post or organization must meet the following requirements to be exempt under section 501(c)(19):**

1. It must be organized in the United States or any of Its possessions
2. At least 75 percent of its members must be past or present members of the United States Armed Forces
3. At least 97.5 percent of its members must be:
 - o present or former members of the United States Armed Forces,

- cadets (including only students in college or university ROTC programs or at Armed Services academies) or
 - spouses, widows, widowers, ancestors, or lineal descendants of individuals referred to in the first or second bullet
4. It must be operated exclusively for one or more of the following purposes:
- to promote the social welfare of the community (e.g., to promote the common good and general welfare of the people of the community)
 - to assist disabled and needy war veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces and their dependents - and the widows and orphans of deceased veterans
 - to provide entertainment, care, and assistance to hospitalized veterans or members of the United States Armed Forces
 - to carry on programs to perpetuate the memory of deceased veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces and comfort their survivors
 - to conduct programs for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes
 - to sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature
 - to provide insurance benefits for members or their dependents or
 - to provide social and recreational activities for members
5. No part of its net earnings may inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; and

Whereas, the most recently revised IRS regulation for 501 (c) (19) organizations states <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/other-non-profits/veterans-organizations>: **An organization may be exempt under section 501(c)(19) as an auxiliary unit or society of a veterans' post or organization if it meets the following requirements:**

1. It is affiliated with, and organized in accordance with the bylaws and regulations of, a veterans' post or organization described above
2. At least 75 percent of its members are veterans, spouses of veterans, or related to a veteran within two degrees of consanguinity (i.e., grandparent, brother, sister, grandchild represent the most distant allowable relationships)
3. All members are either members of a veterans' post or organizations described above, or spouses of a member of such post or

organization, or are related to a member of such post or organization within two degrees of consanguinity

4. No part of its net earning inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; and

now therefore, be it

Resolved, The American Legion Auxiliary requests The American Legion change its governing documents to allow membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for all grandparents, parents, siblings, spouse, natural and adopted descendants related to The American Legion eligible member within two degrees of consanguinity ; and be it finally

Resolved, Should The American Legion change its governing documents to allow membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for all grandparents, parents, siblings, spouse, natural and adopted descendants related to a The American Legion eligible member, the American Legion Auxiliary shall immediately allow into American Legion Auxiliary membership grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, natural and adopted descendants to The American Legion eligible member within two degrees of consanguinity.

Rationale: There has been much confusion with membership eligibility and IRS regulations, especially in the last decade as the IRS has continually amended regulations and conducted more audits of non-profit organizations. Previously, protecting traditions and the non-profit status of our organization, the American Legion Family membership chose to maintain strict eligibility rules above the minimum requirements of the IRS regulations. While this adherence to strict enforcement of the regulations remains an important priority, creating an inclusive and diverse environment to execute our mission is significant to increasing our membership. Following the IRS regulations and expanding the eligibility of our membership eliminates previously identified barriers that will make our organization better and stronger to ultimately enhance our support for our veterans, the military, and their families.

Routing:

Committee Chairman Name and Signature

_____ Pam Ray

Recommend Not Recommend
Recommend with Amendment

###

National Secretary Linda Boone

Minutes Approval Committee
NEC Michelle DeGennaro (FL)
NEC Tina Hurst (MS)
NEC Jerilynn Kabel (KY)

Approved
12/2/2021
12/2/2021
12/2/2021

**2021-2022 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD POST-NATIONAL CONVENTION
IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA
SEPTEMBER 2, 2021**

Summary of Motions/Resolutions Adopted

M/S/C = Moved/Seconded/Carried/Failed

- M/S/C Motion by NEC (TX) Christine Trahan to adopt the items on the consent agenda:
- National President Kathy Daudistel's National Appointments
 - NEC Minutes Approval Committee Appointments: NECs from the Departments of Iowa, Indiana, Maine
- M/C Motion by National Finance Chairman Sharon Conatser on behalf of the National Finance Committee to adopt the FY 2022 ALA Budget.
- M/C Motion by National Finance Chairman Sharon Conatser on behalf of the National Finance Committee to adopt the FY 2022 ALA Foundation Budget.
- M/C Motion from the Chair to go into executive session of the voting members of the NEC with invited guests: former Code of Ethical Conduct Committee Chairman Trish Ward, Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman Pam Ray, Executive Director Kelly Circle, and Convention Parliamentarian Chris Dickey.

National Secretary Coral May Grout

<u>Minutes Approval Committee</u>	<u>Approved</u>
NEC Joan Caron (ME)	12/2/2021
NEC Kelly Elliott (IA)	12/2/2021

###

Appendix B



**AWARDS PRESENTED
DURING NATIONAL CONVENTION
August 30 – September 1, 2021**

*Visit www.ALAforVeterans.org
to see a full listing of 2019-2021 awards.*