



**Department of California  
District 28**

**Minutes  
General Membership Meeting  
September 17, 2023**

A District 28 general membership meeting was called to order by President Rebecca Glenny (694) at 9:05 AM on Sunday, September 17, 2023, at the Post 593 Senior Center. Rituals were recited.

President Glenny announced that Chaplain Lisa Casarez had tendered her resignation and that Connie Raya was appointed to serve as the D28 Chaplain for the remainder of the year.

Fifteen officers, seventeen chairmen, seven Past District Presidents, and eight Unit presidents answered roll call.

The minutes of the May 21, 2023 general membership meeting were approved as emailed and the minutes of the August 20, 2023 Executive Committee meeting were accepted. There were no communications.

**Treasurer** Sherryl Panek (694) gave the Treasurer's report noting that a total of \$392 was received for deposit during July and August, with an additional \$148.50 to be deposited during September. Checkbook balance on 9/17/23 was \$15,283.74. Units were reminded that their District per capita and assessment fees are due and payable. Sherryl advised that the District taxes had been filed and copies shared with the District President and Department. The year-to-date income/expense report was also shared with members.

On a motion by Sherryl Panek and seconded members approved the proposed 2023-24 budget as previously amended at the first reading on August 20, 2023. It was noted that the District will once again be operating with a budget deficit in the amount of \$1,242.00.

Robin Falkenberg (512) advised that the **District 28 audit** was conducted on August 20<sup>th</sup> and that the Treasurer's books were in good order.

There were no bills submitted for approval/payment.

**Reports:**

**Secretary** Susan Baker (694) distributed updated copies of the **2023-24 D28 Roster** to members and reminded everyone that the roster is for Auxiliary member use only.

Copies of the **2023-24 Officer/Chair Telephone List** were distributed to members, as well.



**Membership** Chairman Kimberly Stuhler (41) provided a Unit list of Paid/Unpaid members as of September 15. She asked to be notified by the Unit Membership chairs if any of their members recruit a Junior member. Recruiters' names will be entered into a raffle and a prize will be awarded to the lucky winner at the end of the 2023-24 year.

**Poppy** Chairman Linda Lara-Guzman (81) reminded members that the Poppy orders must be submitted by October 1, 2023. Units that fail to order will be sent a minimum order and charged. Linda asked members to remember to include Juniors in Poppy activities whenever possible. It was also noted that we are now allowed to offer Poppies all year long.

**Chaplain** Connie Raya (694) reported that Unit packets contain information on The Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation, the In Loving Tribute Form, Member Data Form, information on the Duties of an American Legion Auxiliary Chaplain, and instructions for the Chaplain's Prayer Book. Unit Chaplains should make sure they are serving the needs of their members.

**Historian** Rosemary Barron (31) reported that she is researching and collecting photos for the Historian's Book, and she welcomes member contributions.

**Americanism** Chairman Liz Doidge (593) was absent and her report was read by Robin Falkenberg. The report reviewed the purpose of the Americanism program, noted some of the key components, touched on the Star Spangled Kids, and listed the National and Department Americanism Awards. The 2023-24 Americanism Essay Contest Titles are as follows:

- Group I – Grades 4 & 5: Why do we honor the flag?
- Group II – Grades 6 & 7: Why is voting important?
- Group III – Grades 8 & 9: Who is responsible to keep our country safe?
- Group IV – Grades 10, 11, & 12: Is service to the country important?
- Group V – Special Needs: How should the flag be disposed of?

**Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF)** Chairman Robyn Huber (593) was absent and Rebecca Glenny read the report, giving a brief overview of the program and noting the importance of donating to AEF. The AEF collection amounted to \$58.03; it will be donated to AEF National at the end of the 2023-24 year.

**Children and Youth** Chairman Kimberly Stuhler (41) advised that she hopes to work this program in tandem with the Education and Americanism programs, to provide opportunities for children and youth in our communities.

**Community Service** Chairman Sherryl Panek (694) reported that Unit chairmen are being encouraged to work as one within their communities to assist homeless veterans, participate in public park cleanup or adopt-a-highway projects, promote anti-bullying programs at local schools, and attend City Council meetings, to name a few.

**Constitution and Bylaws, Standing Rules** Chairman Susan Baker (694) reviewed Rules 5 and 6, Department Code – Constitution and Bylaws with members and urged members to re-read those sections of Code if they are planning to work on Unit



re-writes or amendments to their C/B's this year. Members reviewed the Model District Bylaws for District 28. It was noted that the document was last amended in 2019 to conform with National mandates. Upon review, members concurred that the document is in good order and no changes are necessary at this time.

Members then reviewed the **District 28 Standing Rules**, last revised August 20, 2023.

The following changes/additions were approved:

**S/R 9.** District Officers shall wear their Badge of Office (if one is available); all others shall wear Auxiliary pins to all District Meetings. Members will pay **\$1.00** if badge or pin is not worn, and credited to the General Fund. The Sgt.-At-Arms is responsible for collecting the fine. **(September 2023)**

Change approved by members on a motion by Molly Smith and seconded. (MSC)

**S/R 12.** New District Const/Bylaws and Standing Rules shall be provided to the President, Parliamentarian, Const/Bylaws Chairman and each Unit (cost borne by the District). Others desiring copies shall pay a fee of **\$1.00** for Const/Bylaws and **\$1.00** for a copy of the Standing Rules. **(September 2023)**

Change approved by members on a motion by Karen Cabael and seconded. (MSC)

**S/R 26.** **In the event a member's cell phone rings during a meeting the member shall be assessed a fine of \$5.00. (September 2023)**

On a motion by Robin Falkenberg and seconded S/R Rule 26 was approved by members. (MSC)

**Distinguished Guest Chairman** Marguerite Blum (512) introduced Past American Legion Department Commander Jerry Romano and wife, Martha, who serves as the ALA Department Junior Activities Chairman. Both Jerry and Martha brought greetings to members.

**Education** Co-chairs Molly Smith (589) and Holly Darsch (41) advised that for Education, Units should be focusing on donating school supplies, scanning Box Tops for Education, purchasing Poppy Seals, and donating to the District and Department Education programs. Units should also consider giving a scholarship, if they don't already do so. New this year – National Headquarters will award each state/department winner a \$1,000 Spirit of Youth scholarship!!! Application forms for all scholarships will be found online. Molly noted that the District 28 Education fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, February 17, 2024 at Post 694, 12 Noon to 4 PM. More details will be available at the November meeting.

**Girls State** Chairman Linda Lara-Guzman (81) reported that October 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for schools to reserve the school(s) they will sponsor for the 2024 Girls State session. Unit chairmen are urged to participate in the monthly Zoom meetings with Girls State Chairman Allyn Kau to learn valuable information about this program. Contact Linda directly for the link information and instructions on how to log-on.



**Junior Activities** Chairman Marguerite Blum (512) gave an overview of this program, noting that while Junior Activities may not seem to be the most important program for the Auxiliary, it is certainly the future of our Auxiliary. Members are encouraged to recruit Juniors for membership, and include them in Unit functions and events. Juniors should always feel that they are part of the Auxiliary. Marguerite advised that Unit Presidents should see her after the meeting for their Junior Conference tickets.

**Leadership** Chairman Robin Falkenberg (512) advised that she is available to assist Units, whether it be holding a workshop for members, being a sounding board, or information on how to locate specific information. Members were reminded that we are ALL leaders.

**Legislative** Chairman Kimberly Stuhler (41) encouraged members to sign up for VoterVoice.net, The Dispatch and E-News, for the latest in veterans legislation at all levels of government. Members can visit [www.votervoicenet.com/AmericanLegion/Bills](http://www.votervoicenet.com/AmericanLegion/Bills), click on the red box at the top "Sign Up for Alerts" – it's that easy.

**Music** Chairman Molly Smith (589) advised that she plans to bring Music back to the Auxiliary meetings in a big way. She has created a Music Book for each unit to use in their meetings and functions, and she will provide additional songs for the book at each meeting. Music will be a part of our District 28 meetings this year, so get ready to sing!

**National Security** Chairman Connie Raya (694) shared information received from Department National Security Chair Liz Doidge which included things to do and projects to complete for disaster preparedness. Also provided was information on activities and events surrounding POW/MIA Day. Connie included a flyer on Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), a virus that can be life-threatening to all high-risk groups.

**Parliamentarian** Robin Falkenberg (512) shared the August 2023 Bulletin from Department Parliamentarian Anita Biggs. Emphasis was placed on the similarities between Attorneys General and Parliamentarians such as issuing formal opinions, acting as public advocates on areas that uphold our mission, proposing legislation (bylaws, standing rules, codes), enforcing laws (rules), providing advice upon request from the President, and upholding general membership interests. Parliamentarians are urged to familiarize themselves with Robert's Rule of Order.

**Past Presidents Parley (PPP)** Chairman Esther Le Pore (69) gave a brief overview of the PPP program and announced that the annual Fall PPP meeting will be held on Sunday, October 8, 2023, Post 694, 1:30 PM. All past Unit and District Presidents are invited to attend.

**Public Relations** Chairman Robyn Huber (593) was absent and Rebecca Glenny gave the report which focused on the many ways we can educate everyone about the American Legion Auxiliary. The new ALA brand marks are available for download at <https://www.legion.org/brand/aux>. A guidebook is also available for download, and includes information on specifically how the new brand mark can be utilized.



**Resolutions** Chairman Esther Le Pore (69) provided members with a sample of a laudatory resolution that could be used to acknowledge a good deed or express thanks.

Members were challenged to write a resolution and submit it to Esther before the November District meeting.

**Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VAR)** Chairman Robin Falkenberg (512) reported that this year the VAR program will be focusing on homeless veterans, suicide awareness, and the National Creative Arts Festival. Units are encouraged to schedule one activity or event that will draw attention to each of the three areas. Robin advised that District 28 will be hosting the Project Hero riders for dinner at Post 512 on Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. Units are asked to provide desserts, green salad and dressings, potato salad, macaroni salad, chicken quarters and pork roasts for pulled pork. Additionally, volunteers are needed to prepare the chili and French bread. The District is also responsible for providing the Tuesday bag lunches for the riders, including ham and/or turkey, and PBJ, as well as pickles, desserts, water and Gatorade. It is anticipated that there will be a total of 60 people to feed. Anyone who can assist with food should contact Robin directly ASAP; volunteers who plan to work the event on the 16<sup>th</sup> should be at Post 512 by 3 PM. Also, buses are needed to transport the riders from the Carmel River Inn to Post 512 and back. Anyone who can assist with transportation should contact Robin.

On a motion by Molly Smith and seconded, members approved an expenditure of up to \$350 in advance funds to purchase needed food and related supplies for Project Hero. On a motion by Molly Smith and seconded, members approved amending the original motion to include that 'all receipts for purchases must be submitted to the District 28 Treasurer.' (MSC)

Karol Adams advised that we should ask the District 28 Honor Guard to do the cooking, and Gloria Galli suggested that members should solicit food donations from local merchants.

Robin also shared information on the Monterey County Veterans Standdown, a 501c (3) public charity organization whose sole mission is to provide services to our veterans. Donations will go far to assist those who have served.

**VA Hospital Representative** Connie Raya (694) advised that the Palo Alto VA is slowly opening their doors to veterans groups, however events would need to take place on Sundays. New rules ban the use of chafing dishes to warm food as they pose a fire hazard. The ban makes it very difficult to keep food warm. Discussion was held on how best to handle this situation and still be able to provide the veterans with some sort of

Thanksgiving and Christmas meal. On a motion by Sherryl Panek and seconded, members approved the allocation of \$450 in gift cards from Costco and/or In-and-Out Burgers to cover Thanksgiving, and an additional \$450 in gift cards from Costco and/or In-and-Out Burgers for the Christmas meal c(total expenditure \$900). MSC



Connie also advised that the District is still able to do the 50 holiday gift bags for the Spinal Cord Ward, however there is a ban on sweets of any kind, including cookies. Gift bag donations could include puzzle books, coloring books, crayons, colored pencils, knit or crochet caps and scarves, Christmas cards, playing cards, hygiene items, etc. Wish Lists for Palo Alto/Menlo Park VA, Spinal Cord Ward, Defenders Lodge and Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS) were put in Unit packets.

The meeting was recessed at 12:15 PM for lunch and reconvened at 1:00 PM.

**President** Rebecca Glenny (594) gave her report noting that she has met with several Unit Presidents and spoken with others since taking office. Members are urged to be respectful of others at all times, keeping the ALA mission a priority, and adapting to the changes created by new Unit leadership, which often brings new ideas and new approaches to how our work is accomplished. Members working together in a respectful manner can generally find a solution that is mutually agreeable to all parties. Rebecca also provided information on her special project – donations to the KIA Honor Flag Organization.

**Unit Reports** were given by Presidents or representatives of 31, 41, 69, 81, 512, 589, 593, 694. No report was received from 591.

### **Unfinished Business**

- **2022-23 Department Awards** – Junior Past President Esther Le Pore presented the awards earned by District 28 members at the Convention in June of this year:
  - **Americanism** – Essay Contest, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Group II, Luciana Paz - \$50
  - **AEF** – 100% Reporting and Supplemental Reporting (District) – Deniece Clay
  - **AEF** – Largest District Monetary Donation – District 28
  - **Children & Youth** – Citation, Good Deed Award Winner, Sondra Castillo, U81
  - **Community Service** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Unit Supplemental, Connie Arellano, Unit 81
  - **Constitution & Bylaws** – 1005 Reporting – Ruby Kapsalis
  - **Education** – Supplemental Recognition – Molly Smith
  - **Education** – Elana Glenny – Department Scholarship
  - **Jr. Activities** – 100% Reporting – Rebecca Glenny
  - **Jr. Activities** – Hayley and Mckayla Doidge – Patch Program
  - **Leadership** – 100% Reporting – Robin Falkenberg
  - **Leadership** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Unit Supplemental – Susan Baker, Unit 694
  - **Legislative** – Supplemental Recognition, Kimberly Stuhler
  - **Membership** – Unit 31 – 95%, 100%, 102%; Unit 81 – 95%, 100%, Unit 69 – 95%, 100%, 102%
  - **National Security** – Supplemental recognition – Linda Guzman, Unit 81
  - **PPP** – District Supplemental Award – Molly Smith, Unit 589
  - **PPP** – Unit Supplemental Award – Susan Baker, Unit 694
  - **Poppy** – 100% Reporting, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Supplemental – Kimberly Stuhler
  - **Poppy** – 1<sup>st</sup> Place Freestyle Poppy Display – Kimberly Stuhler, Unit 41
  - **Poppy** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Display – Esther Le Pore, Unit 69



- **Poppy** – Poster Contest Winners – 1<sup>st</sup> Place, Lacey Garden; recognition, Holly Travis, Jacqueline Church, and Michele Garden – All Unit 589
  - **Public Relations** – Supplemental recognition – Angie Mata, Unit 69
  - **VA&R** – 100% Reporting, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Supplemental, Robin Falkenberg, Unit 512
  - **VA&R** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Unit Supplemental – Rebecca Glenny, Unit 694
- Chaplain Connie Raya presented Esther Le Pore with the Prayer Book made especially for her.
  - There was group discussion on possible fundraising ideas which included an Applebee's Breakfast, Reuseable Bags/Do More Good, and a Zumba class. Molly Smith volunteered to check with Applebee's on date availability and pricing, and will report back at the November meeting.

**New Business** – There was no new business.

The next District 28 general membership meeting will be held on November 19, 2023, Post 41 at 9:00 AM.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.

Susan Baker, Secretary  
ALA District 28