



American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of California  
District 28

Draft Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
November 20, 2022

A regular meeting of the District 28 Auxiliary was called to order by President Esther Le Pore (69) at 9:02 AM on Sunday, November 20, 2022 at Marina Post 694. Several members attended via Zoom, as well. Rituals were recited.

Thirteen officers, eighteen chairmen, ten Past District Presidents and four Unit presidents answered roll call.

The minutes of the September 18, 2022, meeting were approved as emailed.

**Communications:** A letter received from the United Veterans Council was shared with members, thanking the District for the auction item valued at \$275 for the Heroes Open Golf Tournament.

**Treasurer** Sherryl Panek (694) reported that since the September meeting a total of \$1,753.19 was deposited, and there was another \$250.00 yet to be deposited into the Chase account. Expenditures for the period totaled \$695, and the ledger balance on November 18, 2022 was \$13,128.46. The Treasurer reported that Units 41 and 69 have not yet remitted for the District Assessment & Per Capita. She also noted that a \$200 donation was received from Post 512 for the District 28 General Fund. Units were again reminded that they need to provide the District President with a copy of their tax filings if they have not already done so. On a motion by Susan Baker members approved reimbursement to Sherryl Panek in the amount of \$74.15 to cover officer pins ordered from Emblem Sales.

**Membership** Chair Rebecca Glenny (694) congratulated Carmel Unit 512 for making Goal by November 11, 2022, giving them 'Early Bird' status. She advised that Department Commander Romano and wife, Martha, have donated use of a 2-bedroom suite for 7 days in Las Vegas, as the prize for the 2<sup>nd</sup> chance drawing that will take place on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Entered in this drawing are ALL members who are paid through ALAMIS by that date. Units were reminded that their mid-year Membership reports are due to her by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Poppy** Chair Kimberly Stuhler (41) thanked all Unit Poppy chairmen for ordering their poppies by the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. She urged Unit chairmen to supply their local schools with Poppy Program Coloring Books, and let teachers know about the Poppy Poster contest. Kimberly also advised that we should start thinking about Poppy Day activities now, rather than waiting until the last minute to formulate a plan of action.



**Chaplain** Connie Raya (694) announced that this meeting is dedicated to the memory of Past District President, Eunice Piffero (1964-65). Eunice was a 75-year member of Gonzales Unit 81, and also served as Department Chaplain in 1965-66. On a motion by Connie members approved a \$25 donation to the Department In Loving Tribute Fund in memory of Eunice. Members were reminded to send prayers and poems to her for Madame President's prayer book. Since the September meeting Connie has sent two sympathy cards, three get well cards, and one thinking of you card to members in need. Unit Chaplains were again reminded that a courtesy copy of the Member Data Form needs to be sent to Connie when reporting a member death to Department.

**Historian** Lisa Casarez (69) was absent and did not submit a report for this meeting.

**Americanism** Chair Liz Doidge (593) advised that Department Americanism Chair Suzanne Winters is looking for essay questions for next year and input should be submitted to her at [americanism@calegionaux.org](mailto:americanism@calegionaux.org) by November 24<sup>th</sup>. Liz shared several ways the "Star Spangled Kids" program can be used to promote it, including participation in the Americanism Essay Contest, Unit Citizenship Awards, Veterans in the Classroom, distributing patriotic coloring books for primary grade children, celebrating Constitution Day, distributing pocket copies of the U.S. Constitution, and promoting the American Legion Oratorical Contest. The Americanism Essay Contest titles for 2022-23 are as follows and should be presented to local schools ASAP:

Group I – Grades 4 & 5	Why We Pledge Allegiance to the Flag?
Group II – Grades 6 & 7	What Does it Mean to Love Your Country?
Group III – Grades 8 & 9	What Does Veterans Day Mean to Me?
Group IV – Grades 10, 11, & 12	Who can Achieve the American Dream?
Group V – Exceptional Needs	What Does Freedom of Speech Mean to Me?

**Auxiliary Emergency Fund** Chair Deniece Clay (694) reported via Zoom and gave a brief history of the program and urged members to consider donating to AEF as one never knows when a unit or district member might need assistance. The AEF Station 28 collection box was circulated and \$56.50 was generously given by members. Total year-to-date AEF donations amount to \$217.69. A brief discussion was held on possible temporary financial assistance for a District 28 member faced with unsurmountable medical bills.

**Children and Youth** Chair Sondra Castillo (81) reported that several Units host a variety of activities for children to celebrate holidays including Halloween; Veterans Day is an opportunity to teach children about what being a veteran really means; Thanksgiving is a time when children in military families may not get to see grandparents, parents or cousins because of deployment or duty assignments. On a motion by Sondra members approved a "Purple Up for Military Children" T-Shirt fundraiser. Each especially designed shirt will cost for \$25 and will be available at an online website. Funds raised will be used to purchase an increased number of gifts for the goodie bags that District 28 provides to our military children during Children and Youth Month in April. Sondra will provide finalized details at the



next District meeting. Sondra was asked to contact Emblem Sales for permission to use the Auxiliary logo on the T-shirts.

**Community Service** Chair Esther Le Pore (69) advised that copies of the Department Community Service Bulletin for October were placed in Unit packets. She urged members to visit the National website and read up on community service opportunities, and perhaps get some ideas to utilize in their Units. She reminded members that many daily activities can be counted toward community service hours. Volunteering at city or community events, assisted living or senior residences, and serving at holiday dinners are just a few of the activities that can be used for service hours. Unit chairs were reminded that their reports are due to Esther by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Constitution and Bylaws** Chair Ruby Kapsalis (591) advised that all Units except 31 have made changes to their Constitution and Bylaws, incorporating a dues change for 2024. Mid-year reports for this program are due to Ruby by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Education** Chair Molly Smith (589) reported that \$1,220.71 has been donated to the Scholarship fund. She advised that Unit packets contain the Department November Education Bulletin, a District Bulletin, the Mid-Year reporting form, and a sample donation letter to help with baskets for the Scholarship fundraiser, and three fundraiser flyers, which should be posted in Post homes the first week in January. Molly confirmed that the 2023 Scholarship Fundraiser will be held at Post 694 on Saturday, February 18 from 12-4 PM, and will feature Kona Jerry's Baked Potato with Brisket. Desserts are included in the \$20 donation. Music will be donated by DJ Mike Ward from Seaside Post 591. Gift baskets will be available and there will be a special door prize drawing. This is a District-wide fundraiser and all Units are expected to participate by donating desserts and/or gift baskets, by selling tickets, or volunteering at Post 694 on the day of the event. Molly advised that Units should contact her in December to order a supply of tickets for Unit members to sell beginning in January. Mid-year Education reports are due by December 1<sup>st</sup>. American Legion Riders District 28 Treasurer LeeAnn Gilman presented Molly with a \$250 check for the Scholarship fund, and announced that the Suicide Awareness Prevention Run originally scheduled for February 18<sup>th</sup> had been moved to February 26<sup>th</sup> so as not to be in conflict with the Scholarship Fundraiser.

**Girls State** Chair Linda Lara-Guzman (81) advised that she has attended two Zoom meetings since September, and she encouraged Unit chairs to participate in them, as well. She noted that the 2023 Girls State event will be as it always has been – for girls only. Girls who attend the co-ed program will not be eligible to attend Girls Nation. Units having difficulty with fundraising for Girls State should consider reaching out to local organizations for donations. Home-schooled students are eligible for Girls State. Linda advised that even though the Girls State program is operating with a large deficit there will be no fee increase for this year; that will occur in 2024. Unit information packets will be sent out on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The anticipated cost for bus transportation is \$200 per delegate, and will not be finalized until late March or early April.



Linda also advised that the passage of SB363 does not affect the Auxiliary. Units can have as many delegates as they wish, but there is only one student per school, so be sure that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> alternates are selected when choosing delegates. Girls who choose to interview for the coed program with The American Legion should not interview with the Auxiliary. Please let school counselors know that the Auxiliary would only like to interview girls who are in the top 3<sup>rd</sup> of their class. The GPA does not always reflect the delegate. Linda is planning to set up a Zoom meeting for District 28 Unit Chairs to discuss issues and fundraising ideas.

**Junior Activities** Chair Rebecca Glenn (694) reported that the mid-year report form for this program is available online. She noted that there have not been any recent Department bulletins for Junior Activities so there is no new information to report.

**Leadership** Chair Robin Falkenberg (512) thanked the members who attended the November 5<sup>th</sup> training. There will be another training in March to address end-of-year reporting, date and time to be determined. Members were encouraged to participate in the January Department Executive Committee meeting.

**Legislative** Chair Kimberly Stuhler (41) updated members on the results of California's 2022 election, and noted that the American Legion is currently supporting 29 bills that directly relate to veterans. Kim again urged members to sign up for Legislative Actions at [www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Bills](http://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Bills) website and get involved in supporting these bills.

**Music** Chair Angela Prak (69) was absent and no report was given.

**National Security** Chair Linda Lara-Guzman (81) advised that mid-year report forms for this program are due to her by December 1<sup>st</sup>. Some suggestions for inclusion in Unit reports would be donating blood and presenting Blue Star or Gold Star flags to families in your community. Linda shared information on the wonderful things some Auxiliary units around the country are doing in support of national security, and made some suggestions on how District 28 units might implement them. Linda also noted that the Auxiliary is celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Military Women's Memorial, which honors the service and legacy of the 3 million women who have served in the Armed Forces since the Revolutionary War. A wish list for the Blue Star Moms care packaging event on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 was placed in Unit packets.

**Parliamentarian** Michelle Soares (694) had no report for Parliamentarian.

**Past Presidents Parley** Chair Molly Smith (589) thanked members who continue to donate to the PPP Scholarship Fund, and noted that there is currently \$230 in the account. She provided members with a report of the October 2<sup>nd</sup> District PPP meeting, noting that the committee's standing rules were updated and revised; the revisions will be given to members who attend the April 2, 2023 meeting.



Copies of the updated mid-year PPP report forms and the Nursing Scholarship application were placed in Unit packets.

**Public Relations** Chair Angela Matas-Gay (69) had no report.

**Resolutions** Chair Ruby Kapsalis (591) had nothing to report for Resolutions.

**Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation** Chair Robin Falkenberg (512) thanked the members who volunteered with the Project Hero event this year. The event was a huge success, and Robin advised that the Post 512 Commander has volunteered use of his Post for Project Hero again next year. Units were encouraged to donate goods for the holiday goodie bags destined for the Palo Alto Spinal Cord Ward.

**VA Hospital Representative** Connie Raya (694) advised that she will be collecting items from Units for the holiday goodie bags on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Contributing Units should contact Connie to schedule a pick-up time. Connie reported that she and Molly Smith delivered pantry items to the Defenders Lodge on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. She also delivered food gift cards (total value \$300) for use by the patients in the Spinal Cord Ward. Connie gave a brief report on the Country Store fundraiser held at the Marina VA Clinic on November 8<sup>th</sup>, noting that five D28 members volunteered their time that day, and gift baskets were donated by D28 President Esther Le Pore and D28 Secretary Susan Baker. The wish lists for Palo Alto Recreation Therapy Services and Foundations of Recovery: 520AFOR were placed in Unit packets.

**President** Esther Le Pore (69) updated members on her activities since the September District meeting. She noted that she has had official visits with Units 41, 591, and 593. She attended and served dinner to the Project Hero riders at Post 512 on October 17<sup>th</sup> and was given a \$200 donation by the Post 512 Commander for our General Fund. She and five D28 members attended the Monterey County Veteran of the Year Award Dinner at Bayonet/Blackhorse Golf Course on October 28<sup>th</sup> and noted that District Commander Lois Flint (also an Auxiliary member) was honored. She also attended the US Marine Corps birthday celebration at Post 694 on November 10<sup>th</sup>, and on November 11<sup>th</sup> attended the Veteran of the Year Breakfast hosted by the League of United Latin American Citizens and participated in the Salinas Veterans Day Parade. Esther advised that all paid members of Unit 121 had been sent letters of instruction on how to transfer to another Unit since theirs is closing; active Units should be aware that they may be hearing from Unit 121 members wishing to transfer in. Esther shared information received from District 14 President Debbie Hurado concerning help from Units for swag bag donations for the Visalia Convention. Assistance is also needed with 'sign-ins' for flag, poppy display, and history book registration. Esther has the list of Convention Committee members and their contact information.

A recess was called at 11:45 AM and reconvened at 12:20 PM.

**Unit Reports** were given by Presidents or representatives of Units 41, 69, 81, 512, 589, 591, 593, and 694.



**Unfinished Business:**

- Discussion was held on the site for the Department President's Official Visit, originally scheduled for March 19, 2023, at Unit 69. President Esther advised that she was informed by Department President Gloria Williams that the National Auxiliary President would be making her visit to California during that week and she, Gloria, would not be able to attend our March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. After discussion members approved changing the date and place of the March 2023 meeting to Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at Post 694. Linda Guzman advised that she has a contact at the Portola Hotel in Monterey, and she would check with that person to see if the District could obtain a special rate for Madame President Gloria's stay.
- Members learned that the Wreaths Across America wreath-laying ceremony will be held at the California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery on Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM and all members are invited to participate.

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

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 PM.

The next District 28 meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2023 at the Veterans Memorial Building in Hollister, CA.

Susan Baker, Secretary  
ALA District 28