



American Legion Auxiliary
Department of California
District 28

Minutes
Regular Meeting
September 18, 2022

A regular meeting of the District 28 Auxiliary was called to order by President Esther Le Pore (69) at 9:05 AM on Sunday, September 18, 2022, in the Senior Center at Post 593. Several members attended via Zoom, as well. Rituals were recited.

Eleven officers, seventeen chairmen, nine Past District Presidents and six Unit presidents answered roll call.

The minutes of the May 15, 2022, meeting were approved as emailed, and the minutes of the August 7, 2022 executive committee meeting were accepted as emailed. There were no communications.

Treasurer Sherryl Panek (694) gave the Treasurer's report, advising that she would reissue a \$30 check written to Unit 41 in May as the original was lost. The District received \$857.30 for deposit which included \$187.50 from the See's Candy fundraiser and \$670 from the two RallyUp fundraisers. AEF donations received from the August meeting totaled \$105.00. Checks written since the August meeting totaled \$95.00. Checkbook balance on August 14, 2022, was \$11,685.27. Sherryl advised that District 28 Assessments and Per Capita statements had been emailed to all Units. Each unit is expected to pay for two President pins (\$10 total) this year. Units were reminded that copies of their federal and state tax filings were due to President Esther by September 30 per Department Code. Sherryl noted that the 2021-22 Audit had been completed and she had filed the taxes for that year; she also filed the RRF-1 and CT-NRF-1 forms for 2022-23.

The second reading of the 2022-23 proposed budget was presented. Under General Fund Expenses a \$10.00 budget line for Membership-ALAMIS was added, and Sherryl advised that the budget line for Department President Pin expenses was reduced to \$100 for this year as only two pins per Unit were received from Department. Members approved the budget as amended. It was noted that the District will operate with a **deficit** budget of **\$469.00** in 2022-23. No bills were submitted for payment.

Audit Committee Chair Robin Falkenberg (512) reported that the 2021-22 audit was completed on August 7, 2022. Deposits for the year totaled \$3,625.50, expenditures totaled \$5,492.45, with an ending balance of \$10,818.47. Robin commended Treasurer Sherryl Panek for her accurate recordkeeping and noted that all accounts were in balance.

Membership Chair Rebecca Glenny (694) reported that the District was at 26.91% of goal for 2022-23. Members learned that National approved a \$6 dues increase effective in 2023-24, and that Units will



need to remit \$28 per member beginning next year. Rebecca urged Units to consider a dues increase to ensure that they will have sufficient funds per member to operate in 2024. Now would be a good time for older members to consider becoming a Paid Up for Life (PUFL) member to avoid future dues increases. Membership chairmen were asked to update their Unit Leadership Information on ALAMIS. Chairs were also asked to send Rebecca copies of their transmittals and/or ALAMIS receipts for District recordkeeping. The 2023 Early Bird Goal date is November 11th, and finally, this year's Membership challenge is "10 Plus 3 in 2023", that is 10 new seniors and 3 juniors.

Poppy Chair Kimberly Stuhler (41) reminded members that Poppy orders are due October 1st and noted that there are many resources available to promote the Poppy program. She suggested that Poppy Coloring Books could be given to schools, along with information on the Poppy Poster Contest. Kimberly advised that the September Unit packets contained sample media letters for Poppy Day events, which should be sent to TV and radio stations and posted on social media.

Chaplain Connie Raya (694) advised that guidelines for this program are available on the National ALA website. The ALA is a nonsectarian, interfaith group that respects all expressions of faith, and Chaplains must be respectful to all, regardless of personal beliefs. Connie reminded Units that they need to send her a courtesy copy of the Member Data Form used when reporting a member's death to ensure that the deceased member will be honored at the yearend District AND Department memorial services. It is not too early to send Connie prayers, poems, and devotional thoughts for both the District and Department Chaplains' prayer books. Also, please let Connie know when cards are sent to Legion Family members and be sure to include those numbers on the mid-year Chaplain report.

Historian Lisa Casarez (69) was absent; her report was read by the Secretary. Lisa asked that District members email to her pics of their Unit and community events for inclusion in Madame President's History Book.

Americanism Chair Liz Doidge (593) reported on the various components of the Americanism program, including flag etiquette, Military Family Month, patriotic holidays, the Americanism Essay Contest, and Star Spangled Kids. Liz reminded members that November is Military Family Month and urged Units to support our veterans, active-duty military and families throughout the district. Members were also reminded that we need to include our children (particularly junior members) in our meetings and events. New information is generally available on the Department website and members should check there regularly for updates.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chair Deniece Clay (694) reported via Zoom and asked that the District 28 collection station be circulated for donations. Deniece reviewed the two types of applications - Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) for members, and TFA for members affected by disaster. Forms and instructions will be found on the Department website.

Children and Youth Chair Sondra Castillo (81) asked Units to concentrate on finding deserving youngsters in our communities and reward them with a Youth Hero/Good Deed Award. Work with



local schools to identify children who meet the criteria for these awards. Sondra advised that she has reached out to “For Kids Foundation, Monterey” to see if we can partner with them to provide basic assistance in education, health, and well-being. She has also contacted “Teddy Bears with Heart” to assist with the distribution of teddy bears to children with chronic illnesses. Sondra also noted that the District 28’s Day of the Military Child event was featured on the big screen during the National C/Y Chairman’s report during the National Convention in Milwaukee!

Community Service Chair Esther Le Pore (69) reminded members that the purpose of this program is to be aware of the needs in our community and to share resources to assist members through community projects that bring awareness to the ALA mission of helping veterans and families, or through the California Disaster Fund.

Constitution and Bylaws Chair Ruby Kapsalis (591) advised that San Benito Unit 69 and Gonzales Unit 81 still need to provide her with signed copies of the revisions made to their Standing Rules. Paperwork for all other Units is in order. Ruby also noted that Units need to be aware of the upcoming Membership dues increase in 2023-24 and make certain that their Unit dues are enough to cover the costs; dues changes must be recorded either in their Unit Standing Rules or Constitution and Bylaws.

Education Chair Molly Smith (589) thanked everyone for their continued support and love during her bout with cancer. She advised that she is now on her way to recovery! Molly reviewed the contents of the Education materials she put in Unit packets and asked that each Unit Education Chair place it in their Procedure Books. She reminded members that the Give 10 to Education program can be worked all year long as schools are always in need of school supplies.

Girls State Chair Linda Lara-Guzman (81) reminded Units that the October 1st deadline to submit reservations for Girls State is just around the corner. Linda reported that she regularly attends the monthly Girls State Zoom meetings and has learned a great deal about the program by doing so. Units that sent a delegate to the 2022 Girls State session should contact her to receive a Girls State pin. The dates for the 2023 Girls State session will be June 26 through July 1, 2023, and the event will be held in Sacramento. There has been much discussion about separating from the Boys and Girls State dual luncheon, but no final decision has yet been made. Linda suggested that District 28 Units hold monthly Zoom meetings to ensure that all Units are fully aware of the issues at hand. She will follow up with Unit Chairs.

Junior Activities Chair Rebecca Glenny (694) reviewed the key program goals established by National. She advised that Unit packets included information about the Junior Activities Patch Program. Units were also encouraged to include Junior members in their meetings, and get them actively involved, perhaps by leading the Pledge or helping to retire the colors. Older Junior members should be included whenever possible, whether it be Community Service, Education, VA&R, Blue Star Mom events, or Poppy Booth projects. They won’t learn unless the Senior members guide them.



Leadership Chair Robin Falkenberg (512) encouraged members to attend the Northern Workshop in Hayward on September 25th. Units should contact Robin directly if they are interested in planning a training. Also, members were encouraged to complete the ALA Academy courses offered on the National website.

Legislative Chair Kimberly Stuhler (41) updated members on recent legislation signed by President Biden that relates to veterans, including the Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act, the Veterans Rapid Retraining Assistance Program Restoration and Recovery Act, the Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act (MAMMO Act), the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Extension Act, and the Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act. Members were again encouraged to let their voices be heard by visiting www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Bills, and clicking on the red box at the top “Sign Up for Alerts.” Members were asked to review at their leisure all of the legislative information in the Unit packets.

Music Chair Angela Prak (69) was absent, and her report was read by President Esther. Members are encouraged to “Compose a Patriotic Ditty” for the competition created by Department Music Chair Yvonne (Yve) Evans-Hanna.

National Security Chair Linda Lara-Guzman (81) noted that POW/MIA Recognition Day was September 16, 2022. She provided a list of activities that members should consider doing to celebrate the event in 2023, including

- Asking your mayor to author a proclamation for POW/MIA Day.
- Holding a ceremony at a memorial or cemetery and invite any POWs to dinner and ask them to share their experiences. Give them a signed certificate of appreciation for their service and sacrifice.
- Have your junior members interview the individual and post it on social media.

Members are encouraged to wear red on Fridays to support the military.

Parliamentarian Michelle Soares (694) had nothing to report for Parliamentarian.

Past Presidents Parley Chair Molly Smith (589) shared with members the dates for Mid-Year and Year-End reporting, the application due dates for the Department Nursing Scholarship, and the 2023 Department PPP awards. Nursing scholarship applications were placed in Unit packets. Molly advised that the fall meeting for the District 28 PPP would be Sunday, October 2, 2022, 1:30 PM at Post 694.

Public Relations Chair Angela Matas-Gay (69) advised that the Department’s September Public Relations Bulletin was in the Unit packets, and that the ALA Public Relations guide and Branding guide with tips for volunteers can be found at www.alaforveterans.org.

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



Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chair Robin Falkenberg (512) advised that the Project Hero (formerly Ride 2 Recovery) will be in our area October 16 and 17. District 28 has responsibility for the dinner on the 17th and for the bagged lunches for the ride on the 18th when the riders depart from Carmel. This year the riders will be housed at the Carmel River Inn and will be bused to Carmel Post 512 for their dinner. The menu will include Grilled Chicken and Pulled Pork, Vegetarian Lasagna, Macaroni Salad, Green Salad, Rolls, and Desserts. Please contact Robin if your Unit would like to contribute to the meal or volunteer to help.

VA Hospital Representative Connie Raya (694) shared information on the November 8 “Country Store” event to be held at the Marina VA Clinic and asked for gift basket donations. Also, five volunteers are needed to assist with set-up, clean-up, and supervising the Silent Auction. The Marina VA Coffee Room needs coffee supplies and snacks, and donations are welcome. Anyone wishing to donate should contact Connie directly. Connie shared wish lists for the Spinal Cord Ward and Defenders Lodge and noted that Donation Valuation Sheets for items donated to the VA are in the Unit packets.

President Esther Le Pore (69) updated members on her activities to date. She thanked members for their continued involvement at District level and welcomed new chairmen and officers. Esther’s special project will be the GI Josie organization and Unit donations are encouraged. Several Units still need to schedule official visits with her. She thanked Rebecca Glenny for creating the new District 28 website which will now be found at www.d28weebly.com.

Unit Reports were given by Presidents or representatives of 31, 41, 69, 81, 512, 589, 591, 593, and 694, and will be found in their entirety on the District28 website.

Unfinished Business:

- Treasurer Sherryl Panek (694) provided information on filing the IRS Raffle Form CT-NRP-1.
- Junior Past President Liz Doidge (593) presented the 2021-22 Department Awards received at Convention in June:
 - Americanism – District 1st Place Supplemental – Liz Doidge (593)
 - Auxiliary Emergency Fund – District 1st Place Supplemental – Susan Baker (694)
 - Chaplain - District 2nd Place Supplemental – Connie Raya (694)
 - Chaplain’s Prayer Book – 1st Place – Connie Raya (694)
 - Historian – Unit 3rd Place Supplemental – Lupe Covarrubias Martinez (694)
 - Membership – 100% Goal Ribbon, Jose Melgard Award – Unit 41
 - Membership – Perfect 10 Award, 100% Goal Ribbon, Josie Melgard Award – Unit 69
 - Membership – Perfect 10 Award, 100% Goal Ribbon – Unit 81
 - Membership – Perfect 10 Award, 100% Goal Ribbon, Josie Melgard Award – Unit 589
 - Membership – Perfect 10 Award, 100% Goal Ribbon, Josie Melgard Award – Unit 593
 - Membership – Perfect 10 Award, 100% Goal Ribbon, Josie Melgard Award – Unit 694
 - Membership – District 28 – Perfect 10 Award, 100% Goal Ribbon
 - Music – Participation in the Music Program – Elizabeth Doidge (593)



- National Security – District 28 – 100% Reporting – Connie Raya (694)
- Past Presidents Parley – District 28 – 100% Reporting – Molly Smith (589)
- Poppy – District 28 – 3rd Place Supplemental – Rebecca Glenny
- Poppy Recognition of Outstanding Support in the Poppy Program: Units 31, 41, 69, 81, 121, 512, 589, 591, 593, 694
- After discussion members approved moving the March D28 meeting from Unit 593 to Unit 69 for the Department President’s official visit.

New Business:

- Members were encouraged to become active in the United Veterans Council. Each Unit can have 3 representatives at \$20 each. Current veteran issues and information on local veterans’ events are shared at these meetings. The Council meets the last Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM at Martinez Hall in Marina..
- Members learned that the 2022 annual Veteran of the Year Awards Dinner would be held on October 28, 2022, at the Bayonet/Black Horse Golf Course Restaurant.
- Members were advised that the 2022 Heroes Open Golf Tournament would also take place at Bayonet/Blackhorse Golf Course on October 29. Gift baskets are needed for the silent auction.
- Members learned that the Monterey County Stand Down is undergoing some big changes. They now have non-profit status and are working in collaboration with the Veterans Transition Center. They are currently exploring the possibility of holding two 1-day events every year. More info to come.
- Michelle Soares asked if anyone who does quilting would be willing to assist her 93 year old aunt who still does quilting but can no longer do the batting.
- Molly Smith asked if members are still on board to support a D28 Education Scholarship fundraiser. Members approved the event which will be held at Post 694 on February 18, 2023, from 12-4 PM. The menu will include Kona Jerry’s Baked Potato with Brisket and Dessert for \$20. Gift baskets are needed. More information will be provided at the November District 28 meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Susan Baker, Secretary
ALA District 28