



# THE SOUTH DAKOTA *LEGIONETTE*

*Serving Veterans, their Families and their Communities*

## A Word from the President

by Jane Benzel, Department President



*"Joining Together for Our Veterans"*

I hope you are all joining together with the other entities of the Legion family heading into spring to work for our veterans. It is so nice to have the days getting longer--time to get out and do some community services. It is time for the Spring District meetings. Each unit should strive to send at least one member to your District meeting. I look forward to seeing many of you and hearing the wonderful reports of all your accomplishments. Your end-of-the-year reports are due to the District Presidents April 15<sup>th</sup>, so your report at District meeting should be easy. April 15 is also "Purple Up for Military Kids".

April is also Children and Youth month. Your unit should have chosen your Girls Starters and are choosing scholarship winners if you give a local scholarship. It is not too late to remember to "Give 10", to volunteer to help with school projects, and to get involved in the "Beads of Hope" project Elvira Moen has endorsed as her project this year.

I attended the Washington DC Conference in February. What an amazing experience. I was privileged to attend the laying of a wreath by the National President at the Korean War Memorial. We learned more about the programs of our organization and how some of them are changing. I attended breakout sessions on the proper process of gaining admittance to a military facility and on applying for a grant from the Auxiliary Foundation. We were able to visit with our three congressional representatives and hear the National Commander speak to the joint council on military affairs. (Cont. page 2)



## Children & Youth by Elvira Moen Dept. Chairman

April is the time to focus on our Children and Youth programs. These programs emphasize protecting, caring for, and supporting children and youth. There are many ways your units can show their support. I am hoping that each unit is able to honor and promote the children in their area through a program or event. Your unit could visit a school to help with a lunch program, reading program, or participate with afterschool activities.

The Beads of Courage program helps children tell their stories of courage through the use of colorful beads. The mission of the program is to give supportive care to children coping with serious illness. Beads are given to children determined by the one of the different tests, treatments, or procedure they are enduring. A different color of bead will be given for different criteria. For example, a red bead is for a blood transfusion, a yellow bead is for a night in the hospital, a white bead is for chemotherapy, etc.

My goal for April is to support this program by selling 100 "Carry a Bead Kits." The kit contains 2 beads; 1 for you to carry and wear and the second one is re-

turned to the Beads of Courage to be given to a child or teen. Along with the bead, you write a short note to the child about where the bead has been. The kit costs \$15.00 and is tax deductible. I will have a supply of kits with me at all of the district meetings.

There are also two national awards nominated by the auxiliary units given to children and youth. The Youth Hero Award is for youth that performs a heroic act of physical bravery. The Good Deed Award is for those who are a great example of community service but do not meet the criteria of the Youth Hero Award. Units, please continue to submit nominations of your youth and children for these awards.

Finally, the temporary financial assistance (TFA) program allows your post to provide cash assistance to veteran's families with children needing help maintaining their basic needs. These cash grants can be used for shelter, utilities, and/or medical expenses. All applications for this assistance must originate at the post level.

Helping children  
**RECORD, TELL and  
OWN their stories  
of COURAGE**



## April Guide Children & Youth

**Registrations for Girls State due no later than April 1**

**Dime Showers: \$.15 per member—sent to Headquarters**

**April 15: Annual reports due to District President**

**April 15: Purple Up for Military Kids**

**April 15: District Legionette to Past President Parley**

### *Did you know:*

April 6: US enters WWII (1917)

April 11: Persian Gulf Official Cease Fire (1991)

April 22: Earth Day

April 27: Administrative Professionals Day

April 29: Arbor Day

April 29: US Forces Evacuate Vietnam (1975)

## DISTRICT MEETINGS

**District 1** – Saturday, April 2 – Piedmont Post Home, Joint District Meeting 10:30 a.m., Lunch 11:15 a.m. Meeting 12:30 p.m. Auxiliary will meet at the Piedmont Post Home.

**District 2** Sunday, April 3 - Hot Springs Post Home, Social 11:00 a.m., Meeting 12:00 noon, Lunch following the Meeting. Auxiliary will meet at the Hot Springs Post Home.

**District 3** – Saturday, April 9 – Fort Pierre – Moose Club (910 Deadwood Ave), Social 1:00 p.m., Meeting 2:00 p.m., Lunch following the Meeting. Auxiliary will meet at the Senior Center (21 East Main) in Fort Pierre. Everyone attend social at Moose Club and will meet at 2:00 p.m. at the Senior Center.

**District 4** – Friday, April 8 – Bowdle Post Home, Social 5:00 p.m., Meal 6:00 p.m., Meeting 7:00 p.m. Auxiliary will meet in he Multi Purpose Room.

**District 5** – Sunday, April 17 – New Effington Post Home, Social 1:00 p.m., Meeting 1:30 p.m.. No lunch. Auxiliary will meet at the Post Home.

**District 6** - Saturday, April 16 – Wessington Springs Post Home. Meal 12:00, Social 1:00, Meeting 2:00 pm. Auxiliary will meet in the Community Room in the Courthouse

**District 7** – Friday, April 15 – Baltic Post Home, Social 6:00 p.m., Meeting 7:00 p.m., Lunch following the meeting. In the new High School (**note change of location**)

**District 8** – Sunday, April 10 – Menno Post Home, Social 1:00 p.m., Meeting at 2:00 p.m., Meal after the Meeting. Auxiliary will meet at the Senior Citizens Center

## Women Veterans - Resources *By Helen Riedlinger*

According to the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs, in 2015, the total veteran population in the United States was 21M of which 2M were women veterans. South Dakota has close to 6,500 women veterans. Among women veterans returning from OEF/OIF/OND, 77.3% are age 40 and below and 50% are age 30 or younger.

There are some resources specifically related to women veterans. SD American Legion Dept. Commander Hanson appointed me as the SD American Legion Women Veterans Coordinator for this year. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has two Women Veterans Program Managers: Jessica Drenning at the VA Black Hills Health Care System, and Charlotte McGrath at the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center. The Regional Office has Veterans Service Representative Women Veterans Coordinator: Kate Frantzen. On the national level, the Center for Women Veterans (CWV) collaborates with other federal departments on issues related to women veterans, develops materials on VA benefits, programs and health care services, and conducts outreach to make women veterans aware of these services. Women veterans are eligible for the same VA benefits as male veterans. Eligibility for health benefits is determined by completion and submission of Department of Veterans Affairs Form 10-10EZ. Military sexual trauma is the exception to needing full eligibility. At the VA, services and benefits for women veterans are gender-specific, such as general reproductive healthcare services. Preventative health care includes counseling, rehab, and treatment and care to help women overcome psychological trauma. Referrals are made for services that the VA is unable to provide.

There is a new Women's Health Clinic at the Sioux Falls VA. The Sioux Falls VA holds two one-day retreats a year for women veterans. During February "heart" month, there is a wellness retreat. Coming up on October 14, 2016, is a retreat which focuses on networking and is a celebratory event with guest speaker, educational information and lunch. The VA system in South Dakota serves over 3,000 women veterans. Along with the above resources, we have The American Legion family, who support all veterans. Through the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, each county and tribe has a Veterans Service Officer. Thank you for the opportunity to share information on resources available to women veterans and thank you for all you do for our veterans. I have a Point of Contact list for everyone I have mentioned in this report. Just let me know and I will provide it to you and your units. My contact information is: Helen Riedlinger, South Dakota American Legion Women Veterans Coordinator, 9485 Astoria Lane, Summerset, SD 57718: 605-787-5449: [drriedlinger@rap.midco.net](mailto:drriedlinger@rap.midco.net).

## A Word from the President *by Jane Benzel (CONT. FROM P.1)*

The Committee was encouraged to consider not closing the Hot Springs VA Hospital.

Please remember if you are planning on writing a resolution, or, if because of the change in our NEC being a voted position, if you have thoughts on recommendations of Policies for the NEC and Junior Past Department President, be sure to let someone on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee know. The resolutions will be coming out with the April mailings.

State Convention will be here before we know it. Something new I want to make you aware of is the National Commander's Walk. National Commander Dale Barnett of Georgia has requested all Departments do a Walk For Veterans when he comes into the Department for his official visit. The National Commander's walk will begin at the Watertown Zoo and ends at the Ramkota Hotel. The walk is a little over 1 mile. Buses will take everyone to the Zoo for the Walk. Water Stations will be every 4 blocks. Golf carts will be available if someone can't finish the walk. It sounds like a lot of fun and a great way to honor our veterans.

In the Spirit of a Culture of Good Will



Annual Mitchell Unit#18 American Legion Auxiliary St. Patrick's Day Luncheon What Fun Event May God bless all attending members Veterans families for helping out to make it huge success.



Teresa Huntimer had the honor of presenting each member of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade that will be deploying to Kuwait with a pillowcase made by American Legion Auxiliary members from Dell Rapids.



## In Memorial



**Unit 1 Vermillion** – Erna M Carlson, February 2016; **Unit 3 Chamberlain** – Roberta Pingrey, February 2016; Alice Schochmaier, February; **Unit 12 Yankton** – Phyllis Skalberg, February 2016; **Unit 17 Watertown** - Linda Davey, 2015; Marjorie (Jean) Lundy, 2016; **Unit 23 Garretson** – Kimberly Ramse, March 2016; **Unit 71 Hot Springs** – Zabie Pudwill, February 2016; **Unit 76 Veblen** – Leona Lindell, February 2016; **Unit 79 Onida** – Eleanor Brown, December 2015; Charlotte Lieser, December 2015; **Unit 122 Trent** – Shirley DeZotell, July 2015; Frances Kittelson, February 2016; **Unit 132 Springfield** – Dolores McMillan, March 2016; **Unit 137 Warner** – Marilyn Littrell, February 2016; **Unit 183 Tabor** – JoAnn Reif, February 2016; **Unit 194 Parkson** – Charlotte Boehmer, August 2015; **Unit 213 Cresbard** – Loreve Deiter, February 2016; **Unit 216 Ramona** – Marvella Henrichs, February 2016; **Unit 276 Long Lake** – Laverna Schumacher, February 2016; **Unit 292 Tulare** – Mildred Otto, February 2016; **Unit 303 Hermosa** – Shirley Butler, March 2016; Shirley Tripet, December 2015

**Corrections from March: Elaine Hayes belongs to Unit 21, Hurley ; Name change: Mary Ann Florey from Unit 56, Geddes**

## New Endorsements

We, the members of Codington County American Legion Auxiliary Unit 17 of Watertown, SD proudly endorse **Elvira Moen** for South Dakota Department 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President for the 2016-2017 term.

Please consider this the endorsement of **Sharon Brogammer** for the office of Historian of American Legion Auxiliary State of South Dakota. The item was discussed and voted on at the March meeting and approved that Post 18 of Mitchell SD, endorse this nomination.

## Previous Endorsements

**Laura 'Susie' Clyde** as a candidate for the newly created elected office of National Executive Committeewoman

**Melanie Martens** for South Dakota Department President for the 2016-2017 term.

**Jeannine Loesch** as candidate for Department of SD 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President for the 2016-2017 year.

**Shelley Dragoo** as a candidate for South Dakota Department Chaplain for the 2016-2017 term.

**Elaine Ekle** for the term 2016-2017 as Historian.

*April Prayer*

By Sharon Broghammer -  
Dept. Chaplain

*Psalm 108 Versus 1-5*

*My heart, O God is steadfast; I will sing and make music with all my soul. Awake, harp, and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.*

I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, higher than the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

It is season of Spring, new beginnings birds are singing tulips spring flowers are starting to bloom all over. Let's renew ourselves to helping veterans, active servicemen in area, families and children. As we do so it'll come back to us through increased membership and more children volunteering in our activities.

**Poems & Essays**

Left: Donna Sherwood, a retired teacher who loves the project helps Unit 4, Mobridge make the final decision on the winners.

Below: SD ALA Unit 311 members Mary Wranek, Golda Galyen, and Helen Riedlinger at Piedmont Valley Elementary School - awarding Poem and Essay Contest Winners



***Did you remember to send a prayer to Dept. Chaplain Sharon Broghammer for the President's Prayers' Book? Do you have pictures for "Jane's Scrapbook?"***

**MEMBERSHIP PROMISE for APRIL:**

**April: I promise to plant the seed of membership**

**Watch our Membership Grow:** Plant the seed in your community by starting a new unit. Is there a post in your area? Attach a new unit to it and watch the community thrive!

**Promise Date:** Earth Day, April 22, 2016 – 85%



The Smith Wright Post 120 American Legion Auxiliary made St. Patrick Day cards and shamrock pins for the Veterans at Ft. Meade.

Several of the Unit 4 members filled 4000 plastic Easter Eggs with candy for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sat. March 26th in Mobridge City Park

**Need Information?**

Department Headquarters, Secretary: Laurel Stringer  
129 North Main, Hartford, SD 57033 Phone: 605-461-3389 or email at [southdakotaala@gmail.com](mailto:southdakotaala@gmail.com)

Visit the SD ALA Website at [www.sdlegionaux.org](http://www.sdlegionaux.org) - for questions or to send information for the website including "Thinking of You" - contact Alice Upshaw by phone at 605-553-4452 or email her at [pr.sdala@gmail.com](mailto:pr.sdala@gmail.com)

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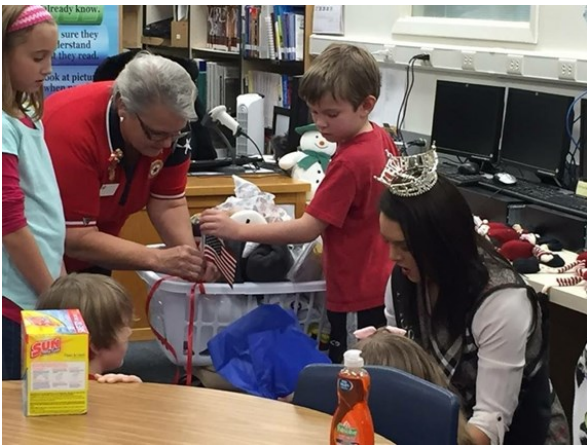
Top L-R **Memno** High School Student Council; **Howard** High School District.

Left: The Auxiliary members of **Rapid City** Unit 22 delivered baskets to the Mission Cornerstone in Rapid City.

The **Mitchell** High School collected supplies for the Buddy baskets and delivered them to the American Legion Post.

Bottom: **Iroquois** Elementary Student Council





Top row: **Black Hawk** Elementary School prepared Buddy Basket with Miss South Dakota Autumn Simunek and SD Dept. President Jane Benzel.

Middle row: **Pinedale** Elementary School, Rapid City with Miss South Dakota Attending the school assembly. Right, **Sturgis Brown** High School.

Bottom row: **Pinedale** Buddy Baskets are ready to be delivered. **Harding County** High School students collected boxes of toiletries supplies for the Holiday Homeless Veterans' Project.

# Supporting The American Legion



The Spearfish Unit 164 supported two American Legion Family Post 164 events in March. The Optimist Club Home Show brings visibility in the community and grows membership. Pictured are Jelsie Dean, Sandra Dean, Micheline Nelson, Charlene Kain and Lynn Pohlman—Decorating: Lynn Pohlman.

On March 18th, The American Legion Family from Spearfish celebrated the 97th American Legion Birthday with a formal dinner and ball. Many guests were in attendance.



President of Mitchell Unit#18 Maureen Sunderland welcoming people to the St. Patrick's Day Luncheon



March Community Service project. Several of Mobridge Unit 4 members filled 4000 plastic Easter Eggs w/ candy for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sat March 26th in Mobridge City Park.



Happy Easter from the American Legion Post 71! Shiann Moir, Jr. Miss Poppy helping the Little Miss & Junior Miss Hot Springs' titleholders bring smiles to kids at the Hot Springs Easter Egg Hunt at the State Home - sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and Legion Riders Post 71.