

## 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President - March 2019 Bulletin

Greetings!

As we prepare for our Department Convention, I want to remind all of you of something you already know: our membership is the driving force behind our Auxiliary. Our membership is our future. Every year we lose a few members, we gain a few members and, if we're lucky at the end of the membership renewal drive (or soon after), we end up breaking even or maybe a bit on the plus side. However, what we do as officers locally, at District, and at Department can make all the difference in how our members view our organization and whether they want to continue their affiliation.

Are we reaching out to those who seem appropriate to mentor them and groom them for leadership positions? When we have a new event or project, do we call a few ladies who have not yet been involved and asked for their help? Do we make that extra effort to have activities that are appropriate and inclusive for all members? Do we promote a positive atmosphere that encourages member participation? If only the same ladies can be counted on to volunteer for any given activity, have you discussed ways to draw in others to these events?

We are always asking for input for new and innovative ideas from our members as to what we can do to appeal to more of our members. So far this year, I have not received any ideas to share and that is discouraging. I know you all have wonderful ideas, but you need to be willing to put them forward for consideration and discussion. Your members have great ideas but are they sharing them with your local leadership? If we are to remain a viable and energetic organization going into the future, we need ideas and input from all our members.

Remember: While our officers are the ones who provide leadership and who have the historical and organizational knowledge to keep our Auxiliary on the right track, it is the members who must approve the decisions we make. If they do not participate in Convention, their voice goes unheard. If they do not participate in our Fall Conference, they are not being trained to take over the reins of leadership for our future. What can we do to increase attendance at these critical meetings?

Membership is the backbone of any organization. I ask District Presidents to reach out to each local auxiliary under your purview and request representation at Convention. And, I ask you all to personally invite one lady who has never previously attended to come to our Convention in June. If even one "newbie" from each local Auxiliary attends this meeting, it may plant a seed of interest for the future.

Yours in Service to Veterans and their Families,

*Bert Lema*

*"Having a positive mental attitude is asking how something can be done rather than saying it can't be done."*

**Bo Bennett**