



**DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN
HEAD DELEGATE REPORT OF 2023 NATIONAL CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PA**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22

I attended the following:

Community Service meeting chaired by 3rd Vice President Mary Lanphere. The discussion points were:

- Although the donation for Paws With a Cause was down, the total evaluations of the service reports was up from 2022.
- There was a discussion about volunteers who do animal transport from areas affected by a disaster to safer areas and what could be taken on the report. The consensus was to take the miles and time.
- Fund raisers were brought up and the most unusual mentioned was a Chicken Mull dinner. Most in attendance had never heard of it. It is popular in the South and consists of chicken broth and crackers mixed together.
- The National disasters around the country were discussed and feedback from those who were affected or had family/friends affected shared some stories.

Membership meeting chaired by 1st Vice President Amy Stopyra. We had discussion on the following items:

- Amy had received an email about some suggested changes to the Ladies Auxiliary application which included adding checkboxes for information regarding if the veteran sponsor is Living or Deceased. A motion was made, seconded and carried to send a recommendation to the National Parliamentarian to adjust a couple of lines and add a checkbox for Living or Deceased. This would help in deciding what eligibility paperwork is needed from the applicant.
- There was a proposal from Amy to raise the cost for Honorary members to \$20 since they are allowed the same clubroom benefits as eligible members. After some discussion, a motion was made, seconded and carried to send a recommendation to the National Parliamentarian to raise the Honorary dues to \$15 which is the same as all annual members pay to National; as well as have it automatic in the future to align with the annual member dues to National whenever they may be raised.

- Amy brought up having a moratorium for Life members beginning 9/1/2023 through 12/31/2023 and going forward for each year. A motion was made, seconded and carried to send a recommendation to the National Parliamentarian for the moratorium.
- Amy proposed we set a sliding scale for Life members such as the AMVETS have to be: ages up to 55 would pay \$500, age 56-65 would pay \$400 and age 66 and up would pay \$300. A motion was made, seconded and carried to send a recommendation to the National Parliamentarian to adopt this sliding scale for the Life member dues to National.
- The subject was brought up from a member in attendance that she was having an issue with a lady who wanted to sign up under her great grandfather who served in WWI because the application did not specify any timeline. After discussion and checking the National Constitution which does have a date mentioned (9/14/1940), a motion was made, seconded and carried to send a recommendation to the National Parliamentarian to add to our application wording of when we were chartered which would hopefully take care of this issue in the future.

Carol King stopped into the meeting and informed us the membership cards are being printed as she speaks. There is a change in the layout of the cards this year which will make them easier when tearing apart each section. The rosters will be run when she and Sonya get back to the office, unpack and are settled. Barring any problems, her hope is to have them (cards & rosters) to the Departments by mid-September. They will arrive in 2 separate mailings from different carriers.

Training session led by PNP Linda McGriff and PNP Leslie Wunderlee.

- The first session explained what a caucus is and what type of questions should be asked of the candidates. At the end of the presentation, we were informed that this year ALL candidates running for a National office will be questioned during a general caucus on the convention floor.
- The second session was on local and Department reporting which included a handout of forms to help a service officer with calculating reports for the mid-year and final reports.

The Council of NEC meeting. I enjoyed the meeting much more this year due to how the NEC President, Linda Bonin (NC), ran the meeting. She was efficient and followed the proper meeting procedure. Our NEC Woman, PDP Nancy Middleton, will be making a report on the information given during this meeting.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

The first business session of the Convention began at 8:00 AM. Due to illness, our NEC Woman was unable to be on the floor so our Department Alternate Delegate/NEC, President Pat Michalski, sat in for her.

Following the adoption of the Convention rules, agenda and appointment of a timekeeper, the National Parliamentarian presented a resolution received from the Department of Florida. The resolution is asking that Fisher House be a Community Service project and NOT an Americanism project. It will be voted on when the other committee referrals, changes for the Constitution, bylaws and manual are voted on.

PERTINANT INFORMATION FROM NATIONAL OFFICER REPORTS

**1ST Vice President Amy Stopyra – Five (5) recommendations were sent to the Parliamentarian for the Bylaw/Resolution Committee meeting. The recommendation to make the Life member dues a sliding scale according to age of applicant came back to the Membership committee and they voted to withdraw this recommendation for now.

**2nd Vice President Cindy Rice – Three (3) recommendations were sent to the Parliamentarian for the Bylaw/Resolution Committee meeting.

Information was shared about a project of sending greeting cards to St. Jude Ranch. They will NOT accept cards from Hallmark, American Greetings or Disney. For more information, you can contact St. Jude Ranch by mail at: 100 St Jude St, Boulder City NV 89005 or by phone: (702) 294-7100.

Some other interesting projects reported by locals this past year are:

- Operation Shower of Appreciation – military personnel and wives who are expecting were showered with needed items. More information can be found at OSOAmil.org
- Suitcases were filled with clothing and activity items and donated to an area orphanage
- Ty 'Squishes' were donated to local Police and Fire Departments to give to children when they are involved with domestic issues or with fires in their homes

**3rd Vice President Mary Lanphere – one (1) recommendation sent to the Parliamentarian for the Bylaw/Resolution Committee meeting regarding the evaluation of blood platelet donations.

**Treasurer PNP Barbara Guth reported she had her committee meeting with 26 in attendance. The proposed income and expense budget for 2023/2024 was passed out and will be voted on during the Saturday session.

**Americanism Officer Laura Bugaj reported there are funds available to send extra student to Freedoms Foundation. Contact her if you know of a 9th grader who might be interested. During her committee meeting one (1) recommendation was voted to be sent to the Parliamentarian for the Bylaw/Resolution Committee meeting.

**Scholarship Officer Debra Gass reported her committee sent four (4) recommendations to the Parliamentarian for the Bylaw/Resolution Committee meeting. One of the recommendations is to start a new scholarship for Trade/Skills Schools.

****Hospital Officer** Laurie Shea reported her committee sent one (1) recommendation to the Parliamentarian for the Bylaw/Resolution Committee meeting.

****Chaplain** Alice Delzer reported we lost five (5) Past National Presidents this past year. (NOTE: The charter was draped at the beginning of the convention session.)

****Parliamentarian** Heidi Dineen-Serpis had the handout with the items from her Bylaw/Resolution meeting which we will need to vote on.

****IPNP** Joan Sirek aka Raffle Queen reported the Department to sell the most 50/50 tickets was Alaska. Two (2) winners were drawn \$963 to each winner. Tuesday winner was Jim Meyers from Indiana and Wednesday winner was Krista Foley from Alaska #963.

At this time, news was brought to the floor that the Department of Alabama AMVETS has presented a resolution to remove the word "Ladies" from our name. Needless to say, this did not go over well. It was suggested when the National President makes her visit to the AMVET floor the Auxiliary recess so those who wish can go with her.

****VAVS** Marie Rorio reported five (5) Parke Youth scholarships were given out and another 8 scholarships for youth volunteers for the summer program were given out.

****Council of NEC President** Linda Bonin reported they had no recommendations and the new NEC President will be Debbie Beck from Florida.

****National Executive Director** Carol King reported on the updated data base which only works on one of the Headquarters computers. There are numerous issues which the current programmer is not working to solve for us. We have paid \$900 for maintenance, \$300 for the website and have a monthly charge we are paying. Carol stated we need to find a way out to recoup our money and sue for breach of contract if needed. She asked if anyone knows a lawyer who would look into this pro bono. A suggestion to form a committee to help since Carol does not have the time to devote to the additional time this would take – possibility of the trustees to look into this.

First session adjourned approximately 11:40 AM.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 24

The second session was opened at 8:00 AM and began with reports/recommendations of the NEC Women & unchartered States.

****Parliamentarian** Heidi Dineen-Serpis did the second reading of the resolution from Florida recommending Fisher House be re-categorized as a Community Service program because it benefits the families and not the military or veterans. *It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the resolution from Florida.*

A referral from the Board of Trustees was presented to add the following paragraph under the section 'Committees – Board of Trustees' in the National Constitution: "The Board of Trustees will act as the long-range planners to ensure our history is maintained and the goals of our organization are adhered to. The Board will provide strategic action steps to promote the growth, financial support and operation of AMVETS National Ladies Auxiliary." *It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the referral from the Board of Trustees regarding the addition to the National Constitution.*

Proposed Changes from the Bylaw/Resolution Committee were presented and all were approved as follows:

- **In the Bylaws:**
 - Article V Standing Committees – Section 1-H will now read: "The President shall appoint a Training Chairman. Other members will be used to provide training as needed by the Chairman. This Committee shall be responsible for conducting seminars and workshops at National Convention and the NEC meeting. An annual seminar may be offered. Training will be provided upon request."
- **In the Constitution:**
 - Article XII Discipline – Section 2 a new 'C' will be added to read as follows: "If an accused refuses to attend the grievance hearing, her request for an appeal should not be allowed."
 - Article XII Discipline – Section 3 under National level 4th paragraph a new sentence will be added to read as follows: "Violations of the canteen rules are disciplined by AMVETS. More serious infractions such as conduct unbecoming an Auxiliary member are handled through the Auxiliary Discipline procedure."
 - NOTE: this was a recommendation from the AMVETS Judge Advocate.
- **In the Manual:**
 - On page #22; the 16th bullet point under Basic Requirements of ALL Local Auxiliaries will now read: "A local Auxiliary may grant up to two (2) Honorary Memberships a year per year, which will be reviewed annually."
 - On page 49, under Child Welfare and also on page 50 under Worchid program – this program will be deleted as a National program since we no longer have information from the AMVETS who were also to work on this program with the Ladies Auxiliary. HOWEVER, any Auxiliary which continues to support this program will continue to do so under Child Welfare.
 - Section 5 Awards – will be updated with current PNP donors
 - Under Installation for National, Departments and Locals instructions on when to bang the gavel and the number of raps of the gavel to sit and stand will be added.
 - Will be changing the term of the Council of NEC Chairman's term to run from Spring NEC to Spring NEC
- **From the History & Scrapbook Committee:**
 - There will NO LONGER be a History book for the Department. Both Department and Locals will submit "Scrapbooks" going forward with a revised criteria list.
- **From the Parliamentarian:**

- a change in the Manual page 76-77 under New Member Induction the word Chaplain will be removed so the President is the only one to give the obligation.

At this time there was discussion regarding the resolution from the AMVETS Department of Alabama to remove "Ladies" from the name of our organization. PDP Faye Richardson-Green (MI) read the email she had sent to Madam President and the Parliamentarian addressing her feelings regarding this resolution from a Department which does not have an organized Ladies Auxiliary. There was much discussion and a majority of the Convention attendees will be accompanying Madam President when she visits the AMVETS floor which they did. Word was received we have support of our SOA regarding the name change.

**Board of Trustees Report – There were 12 PNP's present at the meeting. Only thing to report was the referral which they submitted to the Parliamentarian which was passed earlier.

IPNP Joan Sirek – announced the Thursday 50/50 winner of \$1,305 – Kathy Swain #23 MI

Second session adjourned approximately 11:45 AM

****HONORS AND AWARDS PROGRAM**

The list of winners is attached to the end of this report.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25

Following roll call, a majority of the Ladies accompanied Madam President, Karen Simmons, to the AMVET Convention floor. (Oh, to have had my phone to take a picture of the expressions on their faces AND those who stood and clapped while we ALL filed in behind our President.)

Back to the Auxiliary floor, nominations were the next order of business after the reading of the Nomination rules by the National Parliamentarian.

NOMINATIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT – Cindy Rice – OH
 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT – Mary Lanphere – NY
 THIRD VICE PRESIDENT – Laura Bugaj – NY & Laurie Shea – IL
 TREASURER – PNP Barbara Guth – KY
 AMERICANISM OFFICER – Debra Gass – IN
 SCHOLARSHIP OFFICER – Teresa Adkins – KY & Allison Aldrich - MI
 HOSPITAL OFFICER – Donna Toland – MD
 CHAPLAIN – Shirley Sochia (?) – NY & Jean Porter – DE
 SGT.-AT-ARMS – Mary McKinnon – MD
 PRESIDENT – Amy Stopyra – PA

A General Caucus was held and EACH candidate was asked questions from the floor. Some of the questions were the same for each candidate but the majority of them did well in their presentation and with their answers. (Personally, I think the questions for the 2 candidates for

Chaplain got out of hand and really had NOTHING to do with what a National Auxiliary Chaplain is required to do.)

IPNP Joan Sirek announced the Friday 50/50 winner - \$1,461 – John Pittsman – OH

Third session adjourned approximately 1:00 PM.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26

The first order of business was to pass the 2023/2024 budget for income & expenses. The entire proposal was approved.

ELECTION RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT – Cindy Rice – elected by affirmation

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT – Mary Lanphere – elected by affirmation

THIRD VICE PRESIDENT – Laura Bugaj – elected by ballot

TREASURER – PNP Barbara Guth – elected by affirmation

AMERICANISM OFFICER – Debra Gass – elected by affirmation

SCHOLARSHIP OFFICER – Allison Aldrich – elected by ballot

HOSPITAL OFFICER – Donna Toland – elected by affirmation

CHAPLAIN – Laurie Shea – elected by ballot

NOTE: Laurie Shea and Rebecca Titus – MD were nominated during 2nd round

SGT.AT.ARMS – Mary McKinnon – elected by affirmation

PRESIDENT – Amy Stopyra – elected by affirmation

IPNP Joan Sirek announced the Friday 50/50 winner - \$1,334 – Wanda Bradshaw - NC

Convention adjourned approximately 12:00 PM

I attended the NEC meeting following the Convention which NEC Nancy Middleton will make a report on.

Respectfully submitted,
PDP Kathy Keizer – Head Delegate
Department of MI

2022/2023 HONORS AND AWARDS WINNERS

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

New Auxiliaries – MO #143; TX #115; NC #227; TN - #911

Highest percentage of annual (new/renew) membership by Dec 31 vs. May 31 – OH

Largest numerical gain as of May 31 – OH

Largest percentage gain as of May 31 – GA

Largest percentage of renewals as of Dec 31:

Class A: ND Class B: MD Class C: PA Class D: OH

CHILD WELFARE AWARDS

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|--|------------------|-------------------|
| PNP Cathy Fishero Award – Dept. | Winner – MI | Runner-up – AZ |
| PNP Leslie Wunderlee Award – Local | Winner – FL/1992 | Runner-up – OH/51 |
| PNP Dee Kreiling-Riley John Tracy Clinic Award – Local | Winner – FL/1992 | |

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

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|--|----------------|--------------------|
| PNP Lynda Taylor Award – Dept. | Winner – FL | Runner-up – IN |
| PNP Linda McGriff Award – Local | Winner – NY/18 | Runner-up – PA/103 |
| PAWS With a Cause Founders Award – Dept. | Winner – PA | |
| Blood Drive Award – Local | Winner – NY/18 | Runner-up NC/88 |

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| PNP Charlene Kee Award – Dept. | Winner – FL | Runner-up – IA |
| PNP Carol King Award – Local | Winner – OH/51 | Runner-up – NY/18 |

AMERICANISM AWARDS

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| PNP Heidi Dineen-Serpis Award – Dept. | Winner – IN | Runner-up – FL |
| PNP Patty Piening Award – Local | Winner – PA/59 | Runner-up – FL/1992 |
| Individual Americanism Award | Winner – Kelsey Weston – PA/59 | |
| | Runner-up – Michele Teyssier – FL/1992 | |

HOSPITAL AWARDS

| | | |
|---|----------------|---------------------|
| PNP Mary Barrow Award – Dept. | Winner – CA | Runner-up – KS |
| PNP Barbara Valley Award – Local | Winner – OH/51 | Runner-up – FL/1992 |
| PNP Barbara Guth Nursing Home Award – Local | Winner- IA/49 | Runner-up- OH/95 |

VAVS AWARDS

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| James H Parke Scholarship – Dept. | Winner – MD | Runner-up – AK |
| Local | Winner – FL/550 | Runner-up – MD/7 & AK/2 |

HISTORY & SCRAPBOOK AWARDS

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|--|----------------|-------------------|
| PNP Kathy Berning Award – Dept. | – No Winner | |
| PNP Beverly Box Award – Local | Winner – OH/95 | Runner-up – NY/18 |
| PNP Evelyn McElvin Cover Award – Dept | Winner – WI | Runner-up – NC |
| PNP Marvell Ruppel Cover Award – Local | Winner – OH/22 | Runner-up – FL/44 |

SHOW & TELL AWARD – PNP Virginia Hays, Donor

Winner – NY/18

MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Tyann Schlenker – ND

AUXILIARY OF THE YEAR

FL/88

DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR

FL