



**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, UNIT 291**  
**215 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92663**  
**GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024, from 6:00pm – 7:30pm in the Main Hall

**CALL TO ORDER** – Please Silence your cell phones. Time: 6:00pm

- ❖ **Posting of the Colors**
- ❖ **Placement of POW/MIA Cover**
- ❖ **Chaplain's Prayer** – Sharon Morgan, Chaplain
- ❖ **Pledge of Allegiance** - Janz Simmons, Sgt-at-Arms
- ❖ **Music** – Mary Ann Leonard, Music Chair – The song selection was written by Cindy Edes, Junior Past President and is a parody on *The Yellow Rose of Texas*
- ❖ **Preamble of the Constitution of the ALA** – On projection screen
- ❖ **Roll Call of Officers** – Cynthia Minucci Neal, Secretary
  - **Excused:** Laura Farr - Treasurer, Peggy Bengry – Executive Committee
- ❖ **Officer Substitutions** - None
- ❖ **Special Guests** – Greer Wilder, American Legion PR firm
- ❖ **Approval of Minutes** - The minutes dated Wednesday, January 17, 2024, were Approved as Corrected.
- ❖ **This Month Dimes for Times** – Americanism for Americanism Scholarship

**REPORTS & INFORMATION**

- ❖ **President** – Mary Beth Martin - General Announcements:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – rescind prior motion. Motion to rescind the motion made last month for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and motion carried.
    - The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President position is open. Opened up the floor for nominations. Candidate should have prior Fundraising experience. No one volunteered.
  - 2024-2025 Members Interest form - Perfect time to start thinking about one of the positions or joining a committee. Reviewed the interest form. Stacy will collect the forms at the end of the meeting.
  - Election Nominating Committee is Stacy Eickhoff (Chair), Cindy Edes, and Janz Simmons are from the E-Board.
  - Need two (2) members to volunteer for the Election Nominating Committee from the General Membership. Gail Hitchcock and Vera Rowe volunteered to join the Election Nominating Committee.
  - History – 100 years in 20 months. 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary is on October 20, 2025
    - Asking for any members with any Auxiliary history to share information. For example: Looking to complete the list of Past Presidents, photos, memorabilia, etc.

- Yacht Club Valentine quarterly cruises – auxiliary participation. The Yacht club would like to have sailing four (4) times a year. The 1<sup>st</sup> was a Valentine cruise on the Valor, Sunday February 18, 2024. We had four (4) auxiliary members win. Bob Woolford (Jan Woolford) was one of the four who won the first sailing.
  - Phyllis Helt will oversee the gifts to the winners of the sailings.
- Next District 29 meeting is on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at 9:00am at Post 295 Cypress
- Hoedown dance presented by the Board and Chairmanship presentation. Dance will be performed at the Hoedown Party.
- ❖ **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Membership – Dana Johnston**
  - Total Paid Membership is 1,768 (1,731 seniors & 37 seniors), leaving 360 members that have not paid.
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Report
      - Hoedown Party on Saturday, Feb 24, 2024. \$50 per ticket includes BBQ dinner, line dancing and 2 step dance lessons, Fireside room is being converted into a saloon. There will be a Line dance and 2 step instructor and DJ Summer for music.
      - Need volunteers help set up Saturday morning to decorate, sell raffle tickets (Jack Daniels Cowboy centerpieces and the \$10 raffle tickets) that night. See Bobbi for signing up.
      - Newport-Mesa School District, Music Department donation will be given during the party.
      - Sold 140 tickets to date for the event.
    - Quartermania – combination of raffle and auction. Lunch is included. Price: \$25 online and \$30 at door.
      - Vendors for shopping, bidding on items and a raffle item.
      - Collecting raffle items tickets are online. Raffle off beautiful baskets
- ❖ **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – OPEN**
- ❖ **Secretary – Cynthia Minucci Neal**
  - Correspondence received were read.
  - Approved Minutes July 2023 are now posted on the Auxiliary Website at <https://ala291.com>
- ❖ **Treasurer – Laura Farr – No Report**
- ❖ **Chaplain – Sharon Morgan – Updated on the February current Birthdays, get well wishes and condolences since our last meeting.**
- ❖ **Historian – Sue Lindsey – February is Love month, Membership Mondays, VA&R & Children & Youth, Girls State, Military Baby shower, and the Blood Drive.**
- ❖ **Executive Committee – Jan Woolford, Bobbi Renaghan, Cynthia Culp, Kim Philhart & Peggy Bengry – No Report**
- ❖ **Past President**
  - The Past President(s) were recognized in the audience.
  - Discussed the \$4,000 Nursing Scholarship that is available. Looking for applicants

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

- ❖ **Americanism** – Carol Markel
  - Americanism Essay Contest is due March 1, 2024. Information is on the website for the essay contest.
  - Reported on the history on several Americanism dates in February.
- ❖ **Auxiliary Emergency Fund** – Jan Woolford – No Report
- ❖ **Chair Covers** – Janz Simmons
  - Washing of chair covers from the Commadores Ball. Thanked all
  - New design of tee shirts on the back table
- ❖ **Children & Youth** – Bea Foster
  - Updates on Children & Youth activities since last meeting.
    - January 27, 2023 - San Clemente Military Baby Shower noon – 4pm. Had fifty (50) families. Donated a car seat for the event.
    - Asking for volunteers to assist Children & Youth for events.
    - Need volunteers for Children & Youth boxes to store @20 boxes left
    - April 28, 2024, is Military Childrens month on Base. Need a couple of Volunteers to help at the event.
  - Looking for a volunteer to chair or co-chair Children & Youth program
- ❖ **Community Service** – Sharon Morgan – April 22, 2024, at noon - Bags of Love Brought a sample. A list of donation items was placed on the table.
- ❖ Discussed submitting hours online on Track It Forward and gave several examples of keeping track of anything helping our veterans.
- ❖ **Constitution & Bylaws** – Janet du Monceau de Bergendal – No Report
- ❖ **Community Donations Recommended by the Board** – Heidi Sargeant, Christine Beilby, and Phyllis Helt – No Report
- ❖ **Education** – Barbara Melum - No Report
- ❖ **Girls State** – Caroline Miller – Update on activity on Girls State since last meeting
  - Interviews are completed from all 16 schools.
  - The girls will be here next month at the General Monthly Meeting on: April 17, 2024
  - April 27, 2024, Fundraiser at The Newport Rib Company.
  - Thanked the committee for the great job.
- ❖ **Juniors** – Stacy Eickhoff
  - On February 3, 2024, the Junior’s “helpers” wrote Valentine cards and filled bags of candy for our veterans. Stuffed sixty-two candy bags. Made female bags, diabetic bags, and regular bags. Heidi Maturino took the bags to hand out to our Veterans for Valentines Day.
- ❖ **Leadership** – Cindy Edes – No report
- ❖ **Legislative** – Pia Thompson – No report
- ❖ **Membership** – Kendall Madsen – No Report

- ❖ **National Security** – Susan Siever – The Auxiliary 22<sup>nd</sup> Blood drive was on Monday February 19, 2024. 34 people came in to donate blood and 32 pints were collected. That will help 96 hospital patients.
- ❖ **Past President Parley** – Cindy Edes
  - The Past President luncheon will be March 30, 2024. The Past Presidents get together to discuss and nominate Member of the Year.
- ❖ **Poppy** – Bobbie Renaghan – May is Poppy month. Poppy Envelope Stuffing is on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 10am – 5pm.
- ❖ **Public Relations** – Heidi Sargeant
  - Update on the Public Relations activity since last General meeting. Followed up with The Newport Rib Company for a Girls State Fundraiser. The Fundraiser is on April 27, 2024. The Newport Rib Company will give 20% back on all sales from people that come in with flyers or mention the Auxiliary. Spread the word.
  - Kelly (American Legion PR) is willing to help with our events. She will be helping with PR.
  - Currently posting on Facebook, Auxiliary Facebook and LinkedIn.
  - Military Service Plaque from Together We Served, TWS, is provided at no cost to all Veterans who served in the Military. Veterans can create a complimentary Military Service Plaque for deceased family members who served.
- ❖ **Salute to Service** – Jeannie Celeketic & Julie Sanborn
  - June 3, 2024 - Salute to Service for graduating high school students that are entering the military or academy.
  - Flyers and posters going to sixteen (16) high schools trying to identify students.
  - Have all the flags for all the services.
  - Ordering a step and repeat backdrop for students to take pictures. Can create two (2) one for the auxiliary and am checking one (1) with all four (4) families.
- ❖ **Troop Shipping** – Janice Flanagan & Janet du Monceau de Bergendal – Update on the activities since last general meeting. Next Troop shipping is on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Asking for addresses to send to our deployed military a care package. Accepting donations including greeting cards of all kinds. Mark the bags with Troop Shipping items and place them in Troop Shipping box.
- ❖ **VA & R** – Heidi Maturino Updated on the following Veteran Resource Centers:
  - US Vets, Costa Mesa - Replenished the food pantry, US vets for Heros.
  - Coastline College VRC, Orange County - Replenished the food pantry.
  - Coastline asked us for help for two (2) veterans in need. The Auxiliary gave them each a \$500 check.
  - Orange Coast VRC – Replenished their food pantry.
  - Long Beach VA Hospital Long Beach
    - Replenished the food pantry.
    - Gave them five (5) donated jackets, socks, and shoes for the homeless.
    - On Valentines Day went to the Long Beach VA to serve lunch to the veterans and gave them Valentine candy bags.

- Took candy bags to the P.I.E.R. program and Fisher House. There were Three (3) other Auxiliary members from District 29. Got a tour of Fisher House with one of the District 29 Auxiliary members.
- Garden Grove Elks Lodge – Helped with preparation for Veterans Stand Down on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Worked the shuttle stop at LBVA for the Stand Down in Garden Grove.
- **Veteran Visits**
  - Visited two (2) veterans at home and took specific items of food, paper goods and toiletries as requested.
  - Helped a homeless veteran that had been living in his car for several months and US Vets assisted in getting housing. He requested a tea kettle and a space heater. The auxiliary furnished the specific items.
  - Helped a female veteran with a daughter. Currently living in a hotel and transitioning to permanent housing with the help from US Vets and Cory Virgil AL 291. Provided her with gas card and Walmart gift cards.
  - Helped a veteran and his family including a baby in Buena Park. Received a baby stroller from Children & Youth for the veteran and his family. Heidi's son also donated a car seat. The baby has had medical issues since birth.

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **❖ Old Business**

- Ronald McDonald house pop tops. They get money when the pop tops are turned in.
- If you did not receive an email regarding the ALYC sailing, see Cynthia and give her your email. Or you can also go to the Auxiliary website and update your information. It will update Constant Contact.

### **New Business**

- The Executive Board proposes to adopt the following standing rule: New members must have a living American Legion Post 291 member in good standing. Only exception, the new member who lives in the area of Newport Beach and Costa Mesa, shall follow the National membership guidelines. Discussion followed. Motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and motion carried.
- The Executive Board proposes to adopt the following standing rule: The total number of Auxiliary members will be based on 25% of the total Post membership (Legion, SAL's, and Auxiliary) and will not exceed 2,000 Auxiliary members. Motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and motion carried.
- The Executive Board proposes to adopt the following standing rule: Membership transfers to the Auxiliary will not be accepted at this time, to support surrounding Auxiliaries. Motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and motion carried.

- The Executive Board proposes the following motion: To give three (3) San Clemente teenagers (ages 14, 16 & 18) \$100 each for being a Good Citizen in rescuing eleven (11) ducklings from a sinkhole and reuniting with their parents. Their name The National ALA will give them a Good Citizen certificate. Motion was made, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and motion carried.
- Debbie Schubert Tribute, Undraping of the Charter. *The undraping of Charter* will be postponed until next month's meeting due to an additional three (3) members passing.
- Celebration of Life for Debbie is on Mar 2, at 12:30pm at the Post.

❖ **Closing Prayer**– Sharon Morgan, Chaplain

❖ **Removal of POW/MIA Cover** – Sharon Morgan, Chaplain

**THE NEXT GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING** will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 6:00pm in the main Hall.

**ADJOURNMENT** Time: 8:00pm

### **IMPORTANT SITES TO VISIT**

- Auxiliary Unit 291 website for info & events [www.ala291.com](http://www.ala291.com)
- ALA 291 Facebook [ALA Unit 291 | Facebook](#) Join our Facebook page for up-to-the-minute news.
- RENEW your 2024 Auxiliary Membership online. - [www.member.legion-aux.org/member](http://www.member.legion-aux.org/member)
- Track your Volunteer time - [www.TrackItForward.com/site/american-legion-auxiliary-unit-291](http://www.TrackItForward.com/site/american-legion-auxiliary-unit-291)
- National ALA website - [www.legion-aux.org](http://www.legion-aux.org) - Create your account using your membership #.
- Department ALA News is at [www.calegionaux.com](http://www.calegionaux.com)
- District ALA News is at **D29 ALA Group Facebook**. What is happening at various ALA Units.
- American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales - [www.emblems.legion.org](http://www.emblems.legion.org)

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- *The Post/Parking Lot Access Policy* has been updated. It will be posted on the AL website. [www.AL291.com](http://www.AL291.com). A copy is available at the front table.
- Your membership/parking card is your OWN. Please show them to Gate Concierge & do not forget to sign-in your guests on the new sign-in sheet.
- Pull tabs for The Ronald McDonald House can be dropped off in the troop shipping box.