



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

UNIT 291 NEWPORT HARBOR - GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024, from 6:00pm – 8:00pm 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 is Grand Old Flag.
- ❖ **Preamble of the Constitution of the ALA** – see Projector screen
- ❖ **Roll Call of Officers** - Cynthia Minucci Neal, Secretary

X	President Mary Beth Martin	X	Chaplain Sharon Morgan	X	Executive Committee Jan Woolford
X	1 st Vice President Dana Johnston	X	Historian Sue Lindsay	X	Executive Committee Bobbi Renaghan
E	2nd Vice President Bonnie Robertson	X	Sergeant at Arms Janz Simmons	X	Executive Committee Janice Flanagan
X	Secretary Cynthia Minucci Neal	X	Asst. Sergeant at Arms Stacy Eickhoff	X	Executive Committee Mary Ann Leonard
E	Treasurer Laura Farr	X	Jr. Past President Cindy Edes	X	Executive Committee Peggy Bengry

- ❖ **Officer Substitutions** - None
- ❖ **Special Guests**
 - Dr. Pedro Antonio Casas, Colonel US Army (Retired)
- ❖ **Approval of Minutes** - The General Monthly Meeting minutes dated Wednesday, August 21, 2024. Motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion was made, 2nd, motion carried. Minutes were approved as written.
- ❖ **This Month Dimes for Times** – Constitution and Bylaws / Convention Report for VA & R

REPORTS & INFORMATION

- ❖ **Leadership - Cindy Edes**
 - Meeting Protocol - Gave a presentation on the protocols for Auxiliary meetings:
 - President raps gavel 3 times to stand up and 1 time to sit down
 - Auxiliary has been changing to a microphone on the floor instead of at the podium to speak. However, when called to the podium to speak, go to the left side of front table, face the flag and place your hand over the heart to salute. Go to the podium and when completed go back the same way.
 - The President is referred to as Madame President or The Chair.
 - When the meeting is in session do not approach the front table.
 - Once the POW cover is on the chair it is sacred ground. Do not sit anything on the chair.
 - When a meeting is in session and if you have a question, raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged by the chair. Once recognized by the chair, the Sargeant of Arms or Assistant Sargeant of Arms will bring a microphone. Stand, state your name and the question.

- Do not speak over others because it is difficult to take minutes.
- If someone ask a question and the President does not know right away, do not shout out the answer
- The Auxiliary meetings are about what is going on at the Auxiliary, and what volunteer opportunities are coming up
- Keep table chatter to a minimum.

❖ **President- Mary Beth Martin**

- Termite Tenting the Auxiliary shed on October 23rd – 25th. Will not be able to access the shed for 3 days.
- Celebrating the Auxiliary's 99th birthday with cake at the next General Monthly meeting on October 16th. Anyone here on Sunday October 20th join us on the West patio as the band to sing Happy Birthday to the Auxiliary at 3pm.
- Volunteering at the Post Front Door on Tuesdays and Sundays – Sign up on Sign up Genius to volunteer and you will receive a copy of the rules. The link on our newsletter. The rules will be posted in the Members section of the website. Training will be held on Monday Sept 23rd at 6pm – 7:00pm. We will have 1 Board/Chairman and 1 member at each shift.
- Auxiliary Holiday Party will be held on December 9th in the Main Hall from 6:00pm – 8:00pm with white elephant exchange. Cannot pay for gift – Sign up on Sign Up Genius. Party appetizers/desserts will be provided.
- Unit picture after meeting. Picture will be taken after the meeting and will be sent in our troop shipping. Thanked everyone for wearing red for the picture.
- Thanked all the members who signed up Genius and volunteered for the Welcome Home Celebration for the 40th Infantry Division.
- Slide show shown prior to meeting was our Veterans slide show. If you would like to be included and you have a picture with you and your veteran, a picture of your veteran in uniform, send to info@ala291.com or president@ala291.com to be added to the slide show. Send the Veterans name, what military service and rank, years served and how you are associated; mother, wife, daughter, granddaughter etc.
- New - Flyer table is located at the back of the room with all flyers.
- On Saturday November 9th – Art of Service – Veterans Day Celebration at Heroes Hall, Orange County Fair Event Center from noon to 3:00pm. Exhibit of Veterans expressing themselves through art, crafts, dance and music.

❖ **1st Vice President Membership - Dana Johnston**

- 2025 membership status – Membership is now closed. 1,966 + 37 new members = 2003. If you have not paid for 2025 became due on July 1st. Memberships not paid by January 10, 2025, will be turned off and will have no access to gate. 2025 cards are available to pick up. For those that have not paid, go online or pay by phone. Visit our website at ala291.com and go to membership for more details. Goal is to reach 100% paid membership dues by March 1, 2025.
- Decorating season – watch for the Newsletter for all the upcoming volunteer opportunities for the seasonal decorating for October fest, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the Christmas tree decorating party, etc.

❖ **2nd Vice President Fundraising – Bonnie Robertson – Presented by Mary Ann Leonard**

- Raffle Tickets – Sign up on Sign Up Genius
 - Ticket counting / Pre-Setup – Sunday, November 3, 2024, 4:00pm – 8:00pm in Main Hall
 - Envelope Stuffing – Monday, November 4, 2024, 9:00am – 2:00pm in Hall
 - Prizes will be given out on February 22, 2025, at the Gangsters and Flappers dinner / dance gala. Prizes are \$5,000 / \$4,000 / \$3,000 / \$2,000 / \$1,000.

❖ **Secretary - Cynthia Minucci Neal**

- Correspondence received and read at the meeting.

- ❖ **Treasurer - Laura Farr** – No Report
- ❖ **Chaplain - Sharon Morgan** No Report
- ❖ **Historian - Sue Lindsey**
 - Updated on events since the last meeting
 - Thanks to VA & R delivering to our veterans needed supplies, clothing and food items to US Vets and OCC Veterans Resource Center
 - Sal's 911 Memorial – had a wonderful event held in the park for the community, and poppies were handed out by our Poppies chair.
 - Check our Facebook or website at ala291.com for news events
- ❖ **Executive Committee - Bobbi Renaghan, Jan Woolford, Janice Flanagan, Mary Ann Leonard & Peggy Bengry** – No Report
- ❖ **Junior Past President – Cindy Edes** - No Report

STANDING COMMITTEES

- ❖ **Americanism - Carol Markel** – No Report
- ❖ **Auxiliary Emergency Fund - Jan Woolford** – No Report
- ❖ **Chair Covers – Janz Simmons** – No Report
- ❖ **Children & Youth - Bea Foster**
 - October 20, 2024 – Kids Halloween party at base – Need 2 volunteers to help at San Onofre signup sheet for volunteers.
 - October 27, 2024 – Kids Halloween Party at the Post – Need 15 volunteers for the party signup sheet for volunteers.
 - Request donations of bags of individual wrapped candy needed for 200 Halloween treat bags. Juniors will help bag the candy.
- ❖ **Community Service - Sharon Morgan** – No Report
- ❖ **Constitution & Bylaws - Janet du Monceau de Bergendal**

The following motion(s) have been approved by the Executive Board to move forward to the General Meeting for membership approval:

 - ❖ **Standing Rule Article III #2**

Needs to remain as originally written. No changes to be made.

Standing Rule reads -

Membership dues shall be \$150.00 per year for Senior members and \$10.00 per year for Junior. Dues include National, Department, and District per capita fees.
- ❖ **Community Donations Recommended by the Board - Christine Beilby, Heidi Sergeant, and Phyllis Helt**

The following motions have been approved by the Executive Board to move forward to the General Meeting for membership approval: [The following motions were not approved and will be placed on October 16, 2024, General Monthly Membership meeting for membership approval.](#)

- **Veterans Yoga Project – Proposed by Catherine Kat – Suggested Donation \$1,000.00**

Veterans Yoga Project is honored to provide a service to our military community that supports their overall health and well-being. For all of us, it is a way to continue to serve, give back, and connect with each other, even through the airwaves. No matter where you are on your journey. VYP is here to support you along the way.

Veterans Yoga Project is a national 501(c)3 on a mission to support recovery and resilience among our veterans, military families, and communities. VYP envisions a future where all those affected by trauma have access to a full range of mind-body practices and programs and is committed to providing these tools and training in Safer, Predictable and Controlled environments (SPaCe).

Founded in 2011, Veterans Yoga Project is an IAYT member school, an NBCC Approved Continuing Education Provider, and a certified Yoga Alliance Scholl (RYS-200, YACEP). Working in partnership with veterans, active-duty military personnel, student veterans' organizations, veterans' treatment courts, and other non-profit organizations, VYP-trained instructors and clinicians provide programs, resources, connections, and teach over 100 free yoga classes each week.

- **H.O.P.E. Food Bank - Proposed by Heidi Maturino - Suggested Donation: \$750.00**

Since 1976, this all volunteer organization has been dedicated to serving families in need. H.O.P.E. focuses on providing assistance to families residing within our parish boundaries with food and infant supplies. H.O.P.E. distributes these food items on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

H.O.P.E.'s programs are supported by tax deductible donations from individuals, local businesses, schools, food banks, service clubs, parish members and fundraising efforts. Approximately 72 tons of food is donated annually. Financial donations aid in making this possible, as well as helping support our Christian Service Office in being able to distribute food bags to the homeless and to provide temporary assistance with transportation, shelter, and utility bills for individuals and families in need.

If you, or someone you know, wants to learn more about H.O.P.E.'s twice monthly food distribution

RATIONAL:

They serve the local Cypress community, including Veterans, with food distribution twice a month.

Heidi Maturino, VR&R Chair, and her family donate their time to distribute food at the food bank and have firsthand experience on the benefits.

- **HB Girls Softball non-profit from Trevor Perry (former Marine) – Suggested Donation \$500.00**

Serves 350 girls & their families by providing spring & fall recreational sports programs. Through HBGS, girls age 5-16 develop important athletic skills, learn to work as a team and build lasting friendships, on and off the softball fields.

RATIONAL:

In order to continue offering these crucial developmental youth programs, HBGS looks to businesses and individuals for contributions towards uniforms and equipment. ALA 291 donated \$500 three years ago and their equipment is wearing out. They are purchasing 40 balls, 2 catch nets, 2 cradles and (fungo) bats and supporting 2 tournaments to enter.

- **Active Valor (Perry Yee, CEO) www.activevalor.com Proposed by Dana Johnston**
Suggested donation \$1,000

Active Valor is a combat run veterans 501(c)(3) dedicated to giving new purpose to veterans by pairing them as mentors to children of our nation's fallen heroes, referred to as Gold Star Children

RATIONAL:

Active Valor is hosting a huge Halloween Event on Oct 26th with 35-40 Gold Star kids that pair up with Vets to do a scavenger hunt to accomplish a mission. It costs them \$15-20k to put on this event and we are the only ALA that is contributing.

❖ **Education - Barbara Melum – No Report**

❖ **Girls State - Caroline Miller – Presented by President Mary Beth Martin**

- Girls/Boys State dinner in August
- Started recruiting Girls State 2025 session
 - Added one (1) new School – Pacifica Christian, Newport Beach

❖ **Leadership - Cindy Edes**

- October 12, 2024 – Department Southern California Workshop and Leadership workshop at the American Legion Post 496, 5938 E. Parkcrest St., Long Beach, CA 90808 RSVP dbutler49@version.net or (213) 200-0477.

❖ **Juniors – Stacy Eickhoff**

- Junior volunteer opportunities
 - September 21, 2024 – ALYC coastal clean up
 - Candy bag stuffing for Halloween party - Date TBD after collection of candy

❖ **Legislative - Pia Thompson**

- Shares newsletter from the American Legion Legislative Committee every Friday on Facebook page
- Receive calls to action – Receives notices on different Veterans of legislature to contact our congress and senators.
- Register to vote at: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration>
- Ballots will be arriving soon in the mail.

❖ **National Security - Susan Difonzo**

- Monday, October 14, 2024 - Blood Drive at the Post in the Main Hall
- Need more volunteers. We have 30 volunteer and needs 24 more.

❖ **Past President Parley - Cindy Edes**

- \$4,000 Nursing Scholarship – veteran, veteran spouse, widow , child or grandchild and sponsored by a unit.

❖ **Poppy - Bobbie Renaghan**

- gave a brief description of poppy chair
- Sal's 911 Memorial – handed out poppies and hand flags. The community is invited. Had a beautiful ceremony.

❖ **Public Relations - Heidi Sargeant – No Report**

❖ **Salute to Service - Jeannie Celeketic & Julie Sanborn – No Report**

- Salute to Service will be on Monday, May 19, 2025

❖ **Troop Shipping - Janice Flanagan & Janet du Monceau de Bergendal**

- The next Troop Shipping is on Saturday November 23, 2024, in the Main Hall
- Need addresses of active duty deployed solders
- Care packages are sent out twice a year.

- Now Troop Shipping has a QR code for Donations

❖ **VA & R- Heidi Maturino**

- Update US Vets – Visited her home veterans and took supplies and food.
- Update Helping Heroes Program
- Update Long Beach VA Food Pantry – Delivered food for the food bank and non-food supplies. For the holidays, will be collecting donations of food staples, new or lightly new clothing and jackets
- District Bingo @Long Beach VA – November 3, 2024, starts at 1:00pm. Need 5 volunteers.
- Auxiliary will be donating to Wreaths Across America. We will donate 60 wreaths and a match of 20 wreaths for 80 total wreaths.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

❖ **Old Business**

No new business

❖ **New Business**

- New Member Initiation. There were 25 new members. **Motion** to accept these candidates into unit 291. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

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

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

THE NEXT GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING will be on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at 6:00pm in the main Hall.

THE NEXT DISTRICT 29 MEETING will be October 19, 2024, at 10:30am, at ALA Unit 679 Yorba Linda. Located at the Richard Nixon Library, 18001 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda. CA 92886

ADJOURNMENT Time: 7:23pm

IMPORTANT SITES TO VISIT

- ❖ Auxiliary Unit 291 website for info & events American Legion Auxiliary Unit 291 Newport Harbor – American Legion Auxiliary Unit 291 Newport Harbor (ala291.com)
- ❖ ALA 291 Facebook ALA Unit 291 | Facebook291 Newport Harbor (ala291.com) Join our Facebook page for up-to-the-minute news.
- ❖ RENEW your 2025 online at MyAuxiliary Membership Portal - www.legion-aux.org
- ❖ Track your volunteer time - www.TrackItForward.com/site/american-legion-auxiliary-unit-291
- ❖ National ALA website – Home (legion-aux.org) - Create your account using your membership#.
- ❖ Department ALA News is at https://www.calegionaux.com
- ❖ District ALA News is at **D29 ALA Group Facebook**. What is happening at various ALA Units.
- ❖ American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales - https://emblem.legion.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ *The Post/Parking Lot Access* Policy has been updated. It is posted on the American Legion website at www.AL291.com.
- ❖ Your membership/parking card is your OWN. Please show them to the Gate Concierge & do not forget to sign in your guests on the sign-in sheet at the front door or parking lot entry.
- ❖ Pull tabs for The Ronald McDonald House can be dropped off in the troop shipping box.



For God and Country

we associate ourselves together

For the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the constitution of the United States of America;

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism;

**To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations
during all wars;**

**To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community,
state & nation;**

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and goodwill on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy;

**To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The
American Legion;**

To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.