



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, UNIT 291
215 15TH STREET, NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92663
GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

Date: October 16, 2024 Time: 6:02pm

- ❖ **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— No Report
- ❖ **Preamble of the Constitution of the ALA** – see Projector screen
- ❖ **Roll Call of Officers** - Cynthia Minucci Neal, Secretary

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

P=Present E=Excused A=Absent Quorum = 9

- ❖ **Officer Substitutions**
- ❖ **Special Guests**
 - A visitor from the 1920's came by and shared a little history of the 1920's and the start of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 291.
- ❖ **Approval of Minutes** - The General Monthly Meeting minutes dated Wednesday, September 18, 2024.
 - **Motion** to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion was read, 2nd, and motion carried. The minutes for September 18, 2024 were approved as written.
- ❖ **This Month Dimes for Times** – Education for Education Programs

REPORTS

- ❖ **President – Mary Beth Martin**
 - Sunday, October 20, 2024, at 3:00pm – Auxiliary’s 99 year Anniversary.
 - Front Door Access duty – Volunteers needed. Sign up on SignUpGenius
 - Tuesdays 4:00pm – 7:00pm and Sundays 10am – 3:00pm
 - December 9, 2024, 6:00pm – 8:00pm - Auxiliary Holiday Party for Auxiliary members only. Light appetizers, and desserts. White elephant gift exchange (cannot spend money).
 - Audit committee
 - 2 members volunteered to be on the audit committee along with the Treasurer and President.
 - Incorporation of the Auxiliary
 - Discussed the need to incorporate. A member volunteered to assist in researching requirements and filing articles of incorporation.
 - Painting inside of 3 sheds. After Thanksgiving. Need volunteers for a painting party.
 - November 9, 2024 - November District 29 meeting will be at the Post.
- ❖ **1st Vice President / Membership – Dana Johnston**
 - Current 2025 Paid Membership to date is 928.
 - 2025 Membership dues are due no later than December 31, 2024
 - At the Post on Mondays 4:30pm – 6:30pm.
 - Post decorating – Volunteers needed
 - 10/24/2024 after 4:00pm – Stage 2 Halloween decorating
 - 10/25/2024 all day – Stage 3 Halloween decorating
 - 10/26/2024 – day of final Halloween decorating tables, etc.
 - November 25, 2024 – Christmas tree decorating party

❖ **2nd Vice President / Fundraising, Bonnie Robertson**

- Raffle Ticket Envelope Stuffing
 - Sunday November 3rd 4:00pm -8:00pm Ticket packs breakdown - Need volunteers will be on SignUpGenius
 - Monday November 4th 9:00am – 2:00pm – Raffle Envelope Stuffing - Need volunteers will be on SignUpGenius
- Holiday Boutique
 - Thursday November 21, 2024, 3:00pm – 7:00pm

❖ **Secretary – Cynthia Minucci Neal**

- “Member to Member” committee – 1st meeting on October 28, 4:00pm – 5:30pm. Volunteers interested in joining committee come to the meeting.
- 100 Year Anniversary committee – 1st meeting on October 28, 2024, 5:30pm – 7:00pm. Volunteers interested in joining committee come to the meeting.
- Both meetings will be held on the 4th Monday of the month.

❖ **Treasurer – Laura Farr – No Report**

❖ **Chaplain – Sharon Morgan**

- Updated all the well wishes and condolences since our last meeting.

❖ **Historian – Susan Lindsey**

- Updated on the events since the last General Monthly Membership meeting. Gave a brief history of our auxiliary started October 20, 1925 and have been here since 1950.

❖ **Parliamentarian – Peggy Bengry – No Report**

❖ **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**

- American Essay contests go to website. Gave a brief report on the titles of this years essay contest. Due Mar 1st.
- Awarded David Hemmerling for his “Fruits for the Famished” was presented a National Youth Hero / Good Citizen Award and a check for \$100 from our Auxiliary. She gave a brief description about David and how he started the Fruits for the Famished.

❖ **Auxiliary Emergency Fund – Jan Woolford – No Report**

❖ **Chair Covers – Janz Simmons**

- November 2, 2024, at 10am in the Main Hall for Marine Corp Ball – Volunteers needed to cover the chairs with chair covers and sashes.

❖ **Children and Youth – Bea Foster**

- Thank members for helping with supplies for upcoming Children’s Halloween Party at the Post.
- October 20, 2024, Children’s Halloween party at Base San Onofre. Volunteers needed. Sign up on SignUpGenius.
- October 27, 2024, Children’s Halloween party at post – set up at 9:30am. Volunteers needed. Sign up on SignUpGenius.
- November 11, 2024 – Children’s Party at Long Beach VA Parking Lot – 8:45am – 2:00pm

❖ **Community Service – Sharon Morgan – No Report**

Community Donations – Christine Beilby, Heidi Sergeant & Phyllis Helt

1. The following motions have been approved by the Executive Board to move forward to the General Monthly Meeting for membership approval. In an effort to streamline the meeting we are bundling the following Community Donation motions into a single motion. The motions below are from the last General Monthly Meeting on September 20, 2024.

- A. **Veterans Yoga Project** – Proposed by Catherine Katz – 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.

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$1,000 to help support Veterans Yoga Project Mission in helping ill and injured military heroes through yoga. Motion has been bundled.

- B. **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.
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

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$750 in September to help the H.O.P.E. Food Bank with back to school and upcoming holiday food needs. Motion has been bundled.

- C. **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 aged 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.
Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$500 for Silver Level Sponsorship to HB Girls Softball non-profit to support updated uniforms, equipment and enrollment into tournaments. Motion has been bundled.
- D. **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.

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$1000 to Active Valor for the annual Halloween Event with Gold Star kids and Vets. Motion has been bundled.

Motion: The Executive Board moves to bundle the following donations into a single motion as follows: \$1,000 Veterans Yoga Project, \$750 H.O.P.E. Food Bank, \$500 HB Girls Softball and \$1,000 Active Valor. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

2. The following motions have been approved by the Executive Board to move forward to the General Monthly Meeting for membership approval. The single motions below are for the current General Monthly Meeting on October 16, 2024.

A. **CANINE COMPANION for Independence** Suggested donation: \$1,000

For decades, Canine Companions has been empowering veterans by providing service dogs, free of charge – strengthening their everyday lives. Their service dogs are trained to identify each veteran’s unique stressors and perform tasks that directly disrupt escalation of symptoms, enhancing their quality of life. Tasks may be performed for anxiety, hypervigilance and generalized fear. The service dog supports their handler in crowded public situations by creating barriers and distance that might provoke anxiety for an individual with PTSD. Additional tasks, such as nightmare interruption, turning on lights and retrieving items, are taught to support each veteran’s daily life. Canine Companions is the first service dog organization to be accredited by Assistance Dogs International and has provided service dogs to over 8,000 people with disabilities. For a limited time, **all donations are automatically matched, dollar for dollar, up to \$65,000.**

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$1,000 to provide food for three (3) dogs during their entire professional training period. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

B. **Infinite Hero Foundation** Proposed by Carol Markel Suggested donation: \$1,000

Infinite Hero Foundation exists to connect our military, veterans, and military family members with innovative and effective treatment programs for service related mental and physical injuries. Since our inception, Infinite Hero has awarded more than \$5.4 million dollars in funding and support to 47 different veteran service organizations. This funding has served 56,000 of our nation’s heroes and their family members at no cost to them. We believe in what’s possible, join us in breaking boundaries. The Five Pillars: Suicide Prevention, Family Support, Physical Rehabilitation, Brain health and leadership development.

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$1,000 to Infinite Hero Foundation to help support the Five Pillars for Veterans. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

C. **American Veterans Assistance Group** Proposed by Marla Oglevie (ALA 291 member) and husband (Legionnaire) Suggested donation:\$1,000

American Veterans Assistance Group (AVAG) was established to help the more than 600 veteran families in the 43 mobile home communities owned/managed by Affordable Community Living and Santiago Communities, Inc. and to administer the Veterans Affordable Housing Program www.veteransaffordablehousing.com which provides down-payment assistance, low-cost financing and space rent subsidies and has helped 280 veteran families providing more than \$535,795 in benefits. Home repairs and handicap ramps with a value of \$227,006 have been provided at NO COST to 69 veteran families. The materials are provided through AVAG while much of the labor is provided by other veteran volunteers living in our communities. AVAG has also provided veterans with FREE Furniture including new sofas, recliners, chairs, beds, and appliances donated by the manufacturers and retailers.

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$1,000 to American Assistance Group for their November 9, 2024, luncheon for 400 – 500 veterans. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

D. **Heroes Hall – OC Fair Veterans Day Event** Proposed by Janice Flanagan Suggested Donation: \$700

This is 100% Veteran Art program. This year’s theme is “Art of Service,” which will focus on the various ways that veterans express themselves through art (music, dance, photography, painting, etc.) and the ways that art is used in the military such as in recruitment posters, patches, badges, nose art on airplanes, etc. The theme corresponds well with our current exhibit featuring the combat art of Ed Bowen.

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$700 to Heroes Hall at OC Fair to support their Veterans Day Event. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

- ❖ **Constitution & Bylaws – Janet du Monceau de Bergendal – No Report**
- ❖ **Education – Barbara Melum – No Report**
- ❖ **Girls State - Caroline Miller**
 - Gave a brief description of what it's like for the girls on the trip to Sacramento.
 - Have 18 schools participating in Girls State – all 16 schools from last year plus 2 new schools. Will be 20 total.
- ❖ **Juniors – Stacy Eickhoff**
 - 2 juniors and their young women's group filled the candy bags - @ 15 girls
 - Call for volunteers for the Children Halloween party
 - Stuffing candy bags for Valentines Day
- ❖ **Leadership – Cindy Edes - No Report**
- ❖ **Legislative – Pia Thompson – No Report**
 - Register to vote at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration>
- ❖ **Music – Mary Ann Leonard – No Report**
- ❖ **National Security – Susan Difonzo**
 - Blood Drive held Monday October 14, 2024. 32 units blood received which will help 96 people in local hospitals.
 - Gave 2 Blue Star members each a Blue Star flag.
- ❖ **Past President Parley – Cindy Edes**
 - Gave a report on the \$4,000 Nurses Scholarship available.
- ❖ **Poppies Bobbi Renaghan – No Report**
- ❖ **Public Relations – Heidi Sergeant – No Report**
- ❖ **Troop Shipping – Janice Flanagan & Janet du Monceau de Bergendal**
 - November 23, 2024, at 10:00am - Troop Shipping will be held in the Main Hall. Volunteers needed
 - Need more deployed soldier's addresses
 - Sample Troop Shipping box was presented around the room.
- ❖ **Salute to Service - Jeannie Celeketic & Julie Sanborn – No Report**
- ❖ **VA & R – Heidi Maturino - Presented by Cindy Edes**
 - Long Beach VA Food Pantry – Replenished the food pantry. Also delivered non-food items toiletries, clothing and other non-food items.
 - Orange Coast College Veterans Resource Center – Replenished the food pantry items for the Costa Mesa campus.
 - US Vets "Helping Heroes Program" – Updated on the veterans she regularly visits.
 - Long Beach VA Donations – Will be collecting next month new or lightly used jackets, coats, and clothing. Items for the food pantry.
 - Dec 14, 2024 - Wreaths across America – Auxiliary will be donating 60 wreaths for Riverside National Cemetery.
 - The following motions have been approved by the Executive Board to move forward to the General Monthly Meeting for membership approval.
 - 1. Subject: Coastline Community College Veterans Resource Center Foundation**
Proposed by Heidi Maturino Suggested Donation \$2,500
Coastline College Veterans Resource Center (VRC) Foundation assist community veterans and student veterans. It is the only college in California that also that has a program serving incarcerated Veterans through their "Hope Heroes" program. The Grant will be used for Student Veteran Club meetings, food and events such as Bowling Night, Knotts day, Movie night, Veterans Art, and Resource Expo. Also, periodic groceries when we run low on items between shopping trips.

MOTION: Executive Board moves to donate \$2,500 to Coastline Community College Veterans Resource Center Foundation to veteran students in need. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried. 1 nay
 - 2. Subject: Veterans Day Memorial Campaign (VEAF) Proposed by Cory Vigil, Service Officer, American Legion Post 291 Suggested Donation \$2,500**
American Legion Post 291 Veterans Day Memorial Campaign (VEAF) request support for the legionnaires to continue to help our veterans/families during an emergency. This is a restricted fund and goes directly to the Veteran only.

Motion: Executive Board moves to donate \$2,500 to support and assist our own American Legion Post 291 with their Veterans Memorial Campaign (VEAF) program to help veterans/families during an emergency situation. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

❖ **Old Business**

None

❖ **New Business**

- Initiation of new members - 12 new members were initiated. Motion to accept the candidates into unit 291. Motion was made, 2nd, and motion carried.

- ❖ **NEXT GENERAL MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING** – The next meeting is Wednesday, November 20, 2024. It will be held in the Fireside Room at 6:00pm.

❖ **DISTRICT MEETING**

- The October District 29 meeting will be on Saturday, October 19, 2024, at 10:30am, ALA Unit 679 Yorba Linda. Located at the Richard Nixon Library, 18001 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda. CA 92886
- The November District 29 meeting will be on Saturday, November 9, 2024, at 9:30am, ALA 291 Newport Harbor. Located at 215 15th St., Newport Beach, CA 92663

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

Adjournment - 7:28pm

MEETING PROTOCOL

- ❖ 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.

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 \(legion-aux.org\)](http://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.