



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES February 18, 2026

- **Call to Order – 6:03 p.m.** Please Silence your cell phones
- **Posting of Colors**
- **Placement of POW/MIA cover and Prayer** by Chaplain
- **Pledge of Allegiance** – Led by Sgt-at-Arms
- **Preamble** Led by Membership Chair
- **Roll Call of Officers** – Excused were Leslie Dinkel, Secretary; Laura Farr, Treasurer; Janice Flanagan, Executive Board
- **Officer Substitution** - Heidi Maturino for Leslie Dinkel
- **Special Guests:** John Araganda, Historian, Post 291 - Provided information on the upcoming March Ruck from Huntington Beach Pier to Post 291 on March 21st. Explained what the Ruck was and how they are promoting Veteran Suicide Awareness. There was discussion regarding how many volunteers are needed and what they would be doing.
- **Approval of Minutes:** January minutes were approved as written.
- **This Month Dimes for Times is for Americanism**
- **Treasurer/Finance** – Laura Farr – Excused No Report
- **President Reports** – Cynthia Minucci Neal

General Announcements:

- Promoted the upcoming Stand Down at the Garden Grove Elks Lodge on Saturday, Feb. 28th. Volunteers are needed.
- Motions by Janet du Monceau de Bergendal
 - Motion made to increase the budget for Sign-up Genius to \$550 annually for their premium package. This will allow us to list unlimited events with no advertisements. This motion was seconded, and motion passed.
 - Motion made to purchase ALA291 email addresses for 10 users at a cost of \$84 each for a total of \$840 (we are currently moving our domain over to a new host). This motion was seconded, and the motion passed.
 - Motion was made to purchase batting and quilting materials for the Costa Mesa Senior Citizens Quilting Group at a cost of \$750. The quilts are all handmade by this group and are given to veterans and military children. This motion was seconded, and the motion passed.
- We will be testing our QR code at the end of the meeting which will be used to sign-in for this meeting. So far it has been successful, and this will eliminate the need for sign-in sheets.
- **1st Vice President** – Bobbi Renaghan – Seniors are 1,742 and Juniors are at 34 with a total paid membership of 1,776
- **2nd Vice President** – Bonnie Robertson – Promoted and explained the upcoming Palm Royale Party on Saturday, March 7th. We are also selling raffle tickets. Prizes are \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000 and \$5,000. Winners will be announced at the party... so buy those tickets!! Dress for this party is 60's style Palm Beach Florida. We will also have a silent auction and some of the prizes are a five-night stay in Hawaii, a Duffy boat ride for six people, a \$200 gift certificate for the Balboa Bay Club, and dinner for two including two bottles of wine at the Balboa Yacht Club. We are going to be having Quarter Mania on May 17th with lots of prizes, and a Mad Hatter Tea Party on August 22nd. This is all available on Sign-up Genius.
- **Secretary** – Leslie Dinkel - Excused
- **Chaplain** – Mary Ann Leonard – Reported that our former Chaplain, Sharon Morgan's husband recently passed. Anyone interested in sending her a personal card can see her after the meeting and obtain Sharon's address.
- **Historian** – Mary Beth Martin – No Report
- **Executive Committee** – Peggy Bengry, Janet du Monceau de Bergendal, Janice Flanagan, Dana Johnston, Jan Woolford
 - Dana Johnston explained what the Executive Committee does and the knowledge you need to serve on this committee. They primarily deal with issues of inappropriate behavior and members breaking the rules and policies at Post 291.

Standing Committees with Chairs Names:

- **Americanism** – Diane Torrence - Excused
- **Auxiliary Emergency Fund** – Jan Woolford – No Report
- **Chair Covers** – Janz Simmons – No Report
- **Children and Youth** – Myra Alvermann - Excused
- **Community Service** – Heidi Sargeant summarized the Super Bowl party at LBVA: \$1,000 donated, five volunteers sent, positive feedback received from both LBVA and the National Paralyzed Veterans organization. Event details were shared on Facebook and submitted to ALA National for potential coverage. Heidi thanked volunteers and asked members to provide plastic bags for Hope food bank via Heidi M. The committee is promoting

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MINUTES APPROVED AS WRITTEN

the March Ruck locally, with the Newport Beach mayor attending. Project "Bearable" distributed thirty bears to St. Jude's Cancer Center; more bears will be assembled on February 23rd in the Fireside Room.

- **Constitution and Bylaws** – Janet du Monceau de Bergendal – She provided information about our Constitution and Bylaws. She then gave a short quiz on our Constitution and Bylaws and provided candy to the winners.
- **Community Donations** – Christine Beilby, Heidi Sargeant, and Heidi Maturino: The Donation Committee invites suggestions for California-based charities you are interested in donating to. Please contact the committee with your recommendations.
 - Motion made to donate \$1,000 to Post 291 March Ruck for Veteran Suicide Awareness – The Ruck is from Huntington Beach Pier to Post 291, The donation will go towards paying the registration fee of \$22 for those veterans who want to participate but cannot afford the fee. It will also help with the expenses of the BBQ and ceremony at Post 291. This motion was seconded, and the motion passed.
 - Motion made to donate \$2,000 to the Newport Beach First Battalion – First Marines at Camp Pendleton Mess Night on March 12th at the Balboa Bay Resort. This will cover the cost for a table of 10 military members to attend. The First Battalion – First Marines is one of the most highly decorated and distinguished units in the Marine Corps at Camp Pendleton. This motion was seconded, and the motion passed.
 - Motion made to donate \$1,000 to Strong Families, Strong Children. Their mission is to improve the health and well-being of veteran families, military families, and their children throughout Orange County. This motion was seconded, and the motion passed.
- **Education** – Barbara Melum – Absent No Report
- **Girls State** – Caroline Miller – We have a total of 24 Orange County schools participating, and also students from Vacaville High School and Lincoln High School in Stockton for a total of 26 schools. The girls are currently submitting their applications which are due March 15th. She will introduce the delegates at the March 18th General Membership meeting. The District Orientation will be on April 26th at the Garden Grove Elks Lodge with the send-off dinner scheduled for Wednesday, June 17th for the delegates and committee members. Parents will join us for dessert. The awards banquet will be on Monday, Aug. 10th and will include the AL291 Boys and Girls State and the ALA Girls State delegates and families. Also discussed a recent article in the Auxiliary Magazine regarding Girls State. One of the girls which participated this past June has started a business which helps provide clean water to a remote country near Africa. So amazing!
- **Juniors** – Stacy Eickhoff – Juniors recently decorated and assembled 50 Valentine goody bags for veterans at the LBVA. This was done with the help of our VA & R Chairpersons who did all the shopping.
- **Leadership** – Dana Johnston – No Report
- **Legislative** – Pia Thompson - Absent
- **Music** – Mary Ann Leonard – No Report
- **National Security** – Karren Schaeffer – Discussed the recent Red Cross Blood Drive and the importance of donating blood. The day of the blood drive it was pouring rain and we still had 50 people show up! This is the highest number of donors we have ever had. We collected a total of 42 units of blood which will help 126 people. Thanked all who volunteered to help. Our next blood drive will be this coming Fall.
- **Past Presidents Parley** – Mary Beth Martin – No Report
- **Poppy** – Bobbie Renaghan – Poppy season is fast approaching. Feb. 26th will be making poppies and on March 9th we will be stuffing envelopes for our poppy fundraiser which benefits VA & R. Last year we raised approximately \$45,000 and we want to raise more this year. We will display all the remembrance cards throughout the Legion. Please use Sign-up Genius to volunteer.
- **Public Relation** – Heidi Sargeant – No Report
- **Salute To Service** – Julie Sanborn – Explained that Salute to Service celebrates graduating seniors who are choosing to enlist and serve in our military. This year the event will be on Monday, May 18th. Volunteers will be needed for setup and hosting. This will be on Sign-up Genius towards the end of March. Please contact Julie if anyone is interested in serving on the Salute to Service committee.
- **Time Keeper** – Mary Beth Martin – 15 members have already reached their 10 hours of volunteering. Discussed the various ways to earn your volunteer hours. Members were notified that only those in good standing can earn volunteer hours. In other words, your membership dues must be paid and current in order to earn volunteer hours.
- **Troop Shipping** – Maureen Madigan – She was introduced as the new chairperson. She has two sons who are currently serving active duty and her husband is a veteran. She plans to ship 20 troop boxes on March 12th. Volunteers are already signing up to help. They will begin work on a larger shipment next November. Contact her if you want to serve on her committee.
- **VA & R** – Marilyn Anania, Roseann Freilich – Last month we purchased items for the Valentines project at the LBVA. We also contributed to US Vets, the LBVA, and the VRC at Coastline Community College. We are currently looking for other veteran organizations that we can assist.
- **Announcements** – Janet du Monceau de Bergendal stated that any questions can be sent via email to info@ala291.com and the questions will be directed to the appropriate member for answers/information.
- **Old Business** – None
- **New Business** – Stacy Eickhoff discussed the upcoming election process and the need for a Nominating Committee consisting of three Executive Board members which will be Becky Cooper, Bobbi Renaghan and Stacy Eickhoff. In addition to the E-Board members, we will need two general members. She then asked for two volunteers. Vera Rowe and Shiela Tubbs raised their hands. She then explained the responsibilities of the Nominating Committee. She also explained that any member in good standing is eligible to run for office. A third general member expressed interest in serving on the Nomination Committee so there may be a need for an election for the two general members. More info to come.
- **Next General Membership Meeting** – Wednesday, March 18th at 6:00 p.m.
- **Next District Meeting** – Saturday, February 21st @ Anaheim Post #72 located at 936 N. Lemon, Anaheim
- **Removal of POW/MIA Cover & Closing Prayer** – Mary Ann Leonard
- **Adjournment** – 7:41 p.m.