

The American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Washington



Mid-Winter Reports 2010

Department President Kathy Kerr

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Washington
PO Box 5867
Lacey, WA 98509-5867
Phone: (360) 456-5995 Fax: (360) 491-7442
www.walegion-aux.org

Department Officer Reports

Department President, Kathy Kerr

Wow, I cannot believe it is time for Mid Winter already. It has been such a busy year and there is still more to do. Ladies, you have done so very much to help our Veterans and their families and I know you will continue throughout the year.

I first have to address the subject of Membership, which is still a bit low. We have not made our goals yet, but I do know we are all working very hard to get our renewals in and new members on board with us. We just need to keep going and work as hard as we can to bring our membership up. We need to try new things, change our meeting dates from evening to lunch time, alternate them each month, have a tea and have older members bring a new friend along, bring a granddaughter to a meeting and show her the ways that Juniors can help us help our Veterans. There are many ways to add new members. We have added two new Units at this time. Congratulations ...Mineral and Ridgefield; and we have a third Unit getting their paperwork in order so they will be able to join our ranks.

At the beginning of the year we started to "Energize and Connect" with as many of our members as possible in this era of technology and the computer with all the new ways communicating, sending files, photos and being able to share what we do with everyone to see. We have even been able to make donations with this new technology to programs that help serve our Veterans and their families. We are now on Facebook.com; look for us at Aux Washington. Also, please let Terri Angel know what you or your Unit or District is doing so she can post it on Facebook for the Auxiliary.

My year began as acting President at National Convention in Louisville, KY; and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Although hectic and long it was a great time. Coming home, the business end of things began. We started off with Fall Conferences (I attended 10 out of 12 of them), Area Workshops, a visit from Western Division National Vice President Peggy Brown (thank you all for making her time in Washington special) where we were able to attend the Time of Remembrance in Richland and we also got to see a special Veterans Memorial at a private home in Benton City. Next Nicole and I attended President's and Secretaries in Indianapolis where we even got a tour and lunch at National Headquarters.

The Auxiliary was very well represented at the Operation Military Kids Awareness Fair at the Tacoma Convention Center.

In November, the Auburn Parks Dept had decided to honor the American Legion Family by asking them to be Grand Marshalls in the Auburn Veterans Day Parade. Dept Commander Bob and myself led the parade in vehicles (The Commander in the Legion vehicle and I in one provided by the City of Auburn). Thank goodness, because I don't think I have seen it rain so hard.

I challenged all National Officers and Dept Presidents to sponsor a wreath for Wreaths Across America on December 12th and I took part at Tahoma National Cemetery in this event.

Many of you have had me come for District or Unit visits and I truly enjoy every one of them.

1st Vice President/Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Jane Montaney

I'm very proud of the service of our ladies in the Department of Washington, especially in giving service to our veterans. We have VA Medical Centers at American Lake, Seattle, Spokane, Walla Walla, and a Vancouver Division of the Portland VA Medical Center which includes a Liver Lodge. *There are only two Liver Lodges in the United States giving support to veterans receiving Liver and/or Kidney Transplants.* Seven Community Based Outreach Clinics extend the reach of the VA Medical Centers, along with mobile vans into the more rural areas. There are also three State Veterans Homes and three transitional housing facilities here in Washington. The American Legion Auxiliary has a presence in all of the above, as well as some of our local hospitals and veterans' homes.

Gifts Shops were set up in eight different Veteran Facilities, five VA Medical Centers and three State Veterans Homes; serving well over a thousand veterans. One of our Units also brings Christmas to the Veterans incarcerated at a State Mental Facility for Criminally Insane.

To date, we have approximately 45 more members who have received Home and Field Service Training. Our Vista Volunteer was able to arrange an offsite VAVS Training. Volunteers are needed at

locations other than VA Facilities; and, having off site training allowed our members to qualify as VAVS volunteers without a long drive. We now have 5 more VAVS volunteers because of this successful event. We are planning more such training sessions throughout the state; which will provide more volunteers for our VA Medical Centers, State Veterans Homes, Community Based Outreach Clinics, as well as in local hospitals and nursing homes. Auxiliary members were also encouraged to make volunteer opportunities known to high school students, with the intent of showing the students an opportunity of acquiring service requirements while helping those that have sacrificed for our freedom. VA Benefits books are distributed for the Auxiliary members to better acquaint themselves with Veterans Benefits and share with veterans in their communities.

I was able to make visitations to all our VA Medical Centers, two of our State Veterans Homes, and one of our Transitional Housing Facilities. Each visit was a real learning experience. Some entailed a tour of the facility, some enabled participation in a VAVS Committee meeting, and at some I was able to do both. I look forward to the rest of my visitations.

Prior to making visitations I sent out a booklet which had all the patterns we have used over the last several years, with the request that notations be made as to what was useful for the facility and what was not. I am presently processing the information to complete a booklet with information on each facility, its needs and reminders of how to donate. This booklet will be sent to each Unit to better prepare them in giving service when and where it's needed.

Information has been sent to our Units on Gift Shops, National Creative Arts Festival, Ride 2 Recovery, and the need for more volunteers in our Veterans Facilities.

With the return of the Eighty-first Brigade, our Units helped with numerous Welcome Home Events. It's a rewarding experience providing benefit information to our warriors and their families, not to mention the thrill of seeing the interaction of all the families and friends.

The American Legion Auxiliary has so many opportunities to be of service; and, I believe the Department of Washington will continue to increase their volunteers to fulfill those needs.

2nd Vice President/Children and Youth Chairman, Rose Ring

It's been a great year so far, to date I have had the opportunity to visit with both Fircrest and Lakeland Village. Information on both of these has been shared in the packets and in the Evergreen news. I hope to have more Units adopt a cottage at both. In August I was able to attend a class on Operation Military Kids, put on by Robbin Seaberger in Bellingham. It was a wonderfully informative class. It was there that I received the information on how many military children are in the state of Washington, over 63,000.

In November I attended the Military Kids Summit in Tacoma. Department President, Kathy Kerr, 1st Vice President, Jane Montaney and several others also attended the summit. We met and shared information with several other organizations while there.

Due to illness, I was unable to attend the Footprints Christmas party at Madigan. I was looking forward to this and was very disappointed to not be able to attend. I will be setting up a date with Sue Patterson to make a visit to Madigan soon.

Several Units have sent small hand held items such as Beanie Babies to the USO. This is a wonderful place to send these. The children of the military families are able to pick out something they can take with them on the airplanes.

Operation Stork is still going strong. They have a need of Crib size blankets/quilts, diapers and formula. They military families are able to go in and pick out what they need. All items used by Operation Stork are donated. More on this to follow this year.

Throughout the rest of our year, I'll be putting out information on the "School Daze" project for our Department Convention. I plan to ask the Units to bring with them a list of school supplies, beanie babies, journals, disposable cameras and more to our Children & Youth Luncheon for the Operation Military Kids program. Other items for future packets and articles include: Cyber bullying. This is a National concern with information received by our National Chairman Peggy Monroe. Also future info will include, Spinoza, Josh, Child Welfare Foundation, Temporary Financial Aid, and more. I look forward to the rest of the year. Thank you to all who have helped make this a great year.

Department Historian, Kathi Naff

I am writing this report to let you know that it is up to each member to record the history of our Veterans and our Posts.

In many Units, our meeting rituals and traditions of recording our service from year to year have seen a decline in participation. As a long time member of the American Legion Auxiliary, it concerns me that new members are not made aware of our many accomplishments—but more importantly, how we achieved them. Our annual service programs, as well as our organization's ceremonies must be practiced by all of us to ensure the strength, honor, and success of the American Legion Auxiliary. This is why I ran for the office of Department Historian so that I encourage our Auxiliaries to participate in maintaining your history each year.

In my Auxiliary, we have had two (2) Department Presidents, multiple District Presidents and now a Department Officer. Unless these facts are recorded each year, no one knows these facts. Our Installations used to be a grand affair, we had to dress up in long dresses and we had a sit down dinner. Now, we wear jeans and have hors d'oeuvres (if we even schedule a certain date for Installation).

As Department Historian, I realize that I could have taken it upon myself to record my Unit's history, as the qualifications for the book do not change from year to year. These guidelines can be found on our Department website, www.walegion-aux.org. This website was created for your information and I encourage each of you to use it. I encourage you to realize the importance of recording how our Post received its name, listing the Officers from year to year, and some historical accounts of events that were held.

I ask you to consider participating in the Veteran's History Project. The Library of Congress is asking the American Legion family to record our Veteran's history in narrative form. The Library of Congress is requesting that these be sent to them. They are now realizing the importance of documenting this information. The narratives do not have to be lengthy but please make them informative.

My goal for this year as your Department Historian is to receive 100% return of each Unit's Historian reports. I am available 24/7 for your questions. I plan to award those who have submitted their History books at Convention in July.

Department Secretary, Nicole Ross

During the President and Secretaries Conference at National this last October I was informed that we will have a new membership system coming to the Department level in May/June of this year.

The new membership program is called ALA-MIS. Although I do not have nearly as many details as I wish, I will be traveling back to National in May to get complete training on the ALA-MIS system and get all of details sorted out of how this is going to affect us. I will be reporting information as I obtain it.

Department Treasurer, Ann Bowman

The Department finance's are looking well. We have 25 Units who have not paid their Unit Bond assessment. I have sent a past due notice to the Units and will be notifying the District President next month about those who are still delinquent.

Chairmen are not sending in their donation request forms. Please ladies; this money is not going where it is needed.

Thank you for continued support.

National Executive Committeewoman, Dee Caughlin

Always remember to Support Our Troops- Don't forget our USO's need our help always- The Wounded Warriors at Ft. Lewis needs items. Please remember as Auxiliary members we need to seek out immediate family members of deployed military and provide them with the Blue Star Banner.

There is also a Gold Star Banner to show that a family member has died while serving our great country. What better way to show our appreciation for those military men and women who have given the ultimate sacrifice than to present a Gold Star Banner to the family.

And let's push Red Friday!

1st District President, Lillian Stevenson

Seattle Unit #1 with 79 members. West Seattle Unit #160 with 71 members.

		<u>Hours</u>	<u>Money</u>
Community Service	Two members volunteer at local churches	213	
	One member volunteer at a local police station	<u>50</u>	
	Totals:	263	
Citizenship, Education-Americanism	Member attended Service Officer training	<u>8</u>	
	Totals:	8	
Field Service- Touch a Veteran	35 Christmas stockings to Seattle VA Hospital		
	Spinal Cord Ward	38	496.00
	2 members volunteer at Seattle VA Hospital	526	
	Pack Out for Troops in Iraq	30	250.00
	Sponsored 3 BINGO's	12	150.00
	Donate Blood 6 pints	<u>12</u>	<u> </u>
Totals:	618	896.00	
Children and Youth	Military Children with school supplies	30	150.00
	Totals:	30	150.00
Home Service	21 Lap robes to Seattle VA Hospital	840	1,230.00
	Comfort items to Seattle VA Hospital		390.00
	11 knitted afghans to Orting	550	880.00
	29 knitted afghans to Retsil	2,000	2,030.00
	4 knitted afghans to VA hospital Christmas shop	<u>300</u>	<u>280.00</u>
Totals:	3,690	4,410.00	
VA&R Hospital – Gift Shop	Seattle VA Hospital Christmas Shop gift and donations	36	1,045.88
	Santa's Castle gift and donations at Fort Lewis	<u>400</u>	<u>700.00</u>
	Totals:	436	1,745.88

2nd District President, Lora Shanahan

The leadership of Second District has been conducting Unit visits from August 2009 to present with eighteen of the twenty six Units being completed before January 1, 2010. Second District has two goal Units before the National cutoff date. Second District Membership stands at 2051 with a goal of 2783 putting Second District second in Department at 73.70% goal.

At this time Second District would like to extend an invitation for you to attend an Officer Initiation and Installation for a new Auxiliary Unit in Marysville, on February 18, 2010 at 7pm. To be held at the American Legion Hall in Marysville.

Due to rising cost of the Girl State buses, 2nd District is conducting a raffle. The Grand Prize being a Wii bundle consisting of a Wii Console, Wii Sports, a Wii play with a second remote. Second prize is a Health Food Basket, and two separate \$50.00 gift certificates. With a \$50.00 gift certificate to Emblem Sales for Unit supplies, being awarded to the Unit selling the most raffle tickets. The raffle tickets are available for sale for \$1.00 each or \$20.00 a book. The drawing for the prizes will be held at the Second District Spring Conference April 17, 2010 in Sumas, WA.

3rd District President, Eva Wallace

Our year started out with a bang in September. Peggy Brown, National Western Division Vice President was making her official visit to our Department and was our special guest at the fall conference along with our Department President Kathy Kerr. It was a wonderful evening and we were so proud to have them as our guests.

As some of you are aware, Third District has had some difficulties the past couple of years, as a district, but not the units. My goal this year is to get them working together again, and get the district functioning as it should be. We held an ABC Training in October at the Whidbey Island Post; Barb Rutherford instructed us and we learned a lot.

As District President, I have sent out post cards and newsletters to the Units, reminding them of membership dates and goals, events coming up and other such info. There has not been any unit visits scheduled, although I have called each Unit President as well as included it in the newsletters. I will be working on the visitations this spring. Our membership, as of 1/29/10 stands at 63.53%, so have some real work ahead of us to get those numbers up. Our District Vice President, Ellen Johnston has been working with the units.

We had a very successful gift shop for the veterans at Retsil. The year ended last year with nothing left, but the ladies outdid themselves in donations and gifts for the veterans. I made it my special project that we all work together on the gift shop; Pat McCauley and Jana Hyatt did a wonderful job as the Chairman and Vice Chairman – thank you to all who helped in the District and to all the other units that donated to make it successful.

We are working on revising our District Standing Rules – a committee was assigned at the Fall Conference and we should have a report at Spring Conference.

I asked each unit to find a special way to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the ALA and am looking forward to hearing from the units. Unit 62 has an annual Veterans Day dinner for all the members and had a special birthday cake and party to celebrate.

Spring Conference was originally scheduled for a Friday night, but has been rescheduled to Sunday, March 21st, in Sequim, from 2PM to 6PM.

4th District President, Melodie Foster

I'm so happy to convey to the Department that the 4th District is truly "Working Together to Serve our Veterans". The actual report process is a little perplexing, however it is the energy that we all put forth to achieve our accomplishments. My reporting of course starts with the usual distribution of "Poppies", & of course the majority of units participated.

Although summertime means vacation-time, we at 4th District continued to forge forward. We sponsored "X-Mas in July" to raise additional funds for our "Gift Shops" (Since we have 2 in our area). Even though much planning went into this function no one had the insight to our location. Who knew a brush-fire on the I-5 would detour our supporters only to have them return back home. Couldn't blame this one on "Mother Nature". The one's who did attend enjoyed blue skies, 88 degree weather & 5 DEEP-FRIED Turkey's with all the trimmings....

August starts the school supply sales so I was hoping more of the Units got out there to promote the "10-4-10" program however I'm not sure how many Unit-Presidents checked their E-Mail.

By the time October Arrived it seemed as we all were going in many directions. The 4th District quarter's project was "Santa's Castle" & we collected "Koins-4-the Kastle" I was inspired by a 9yr. old girl stricken with leukemia--- she initiated a program for the Troops, & was collecting 1 million batteries. She did not survive to see this but the task was completed. According to our Fundraiser Manual we received last yr. --- if you collect 1,000,00 pennies, we would have raised \$10,000.00 I encouraged rolls of dimes. Fourth District supported the "Family Deployment Fair" on Ft. Lewis & my volunteers can't wait to do it again. In addition, with the help of another organization we were able to provide a Ft. Lewis Co. stationed in Iraq with 14 golf Bags; 185 clubs; tees & 500 golf balls: Two Auxiliary members also helped with a X-Mas Party at Ft. Lewis & fed over 700 family members. A few of our members devote themselves doing numerous things for the community. We all continue to forward coupons to various overseas commissaries (\$77,958 S/T to date).

All units are invited to Post #138 for our Jr. Aux. mtgs. The young ladies have supplied placemats for the Vets on "Veteran's Day; signed X-Mas cards for the McChord U.S.O. and adopted 25 male Vets & 3 Female

Vets. At the U.P. Care Ctr. They received stockings & lap robes. We're presently working on Valentine's Day cards---. Our Gift Shoppes went really well. We had 232 residents & patients combined with both--- Cookies, cookies & more cookies. It's been an incredible six months & we're looking forward to another rewarding "Girl State Program", Americanism Essay Program & Poppy Posters--- And of course our continuing services for our Vets.

5th District President, Anita Stadey

During the months of September and October visitations were done at each Unit. I was very impressed of all the changes that some of the smaller Units have done to bring the enthusiasm back to the American Legion Auxiliary. The Auxiliary and the Legion are both working together with fresh new ideas. The community is giving their full support in helping them, too.

In October we had the Area II Workshop in Centralia where we learned about the 4 Pillars. We then had our Fall Conference at Salmon Creek Post #176. There were more Auxiliary than Legion attending this Fall Conference. Yeah, Auxiliary!!

Recently we gave honor to Anna Neer from Longview Unit #155, who received a letter with a plaque from Congressman Brain Baird, to recognize and give appreciation for all the volunteer work she does. Anna, not only volunteers at the VA Hospital in Vancouver but to different other organizations, especially the nursing homes.

We finally started the process of opening a new Unit #44 from Ridgefield. The ladies are very anxious to become involved in our programs. The paperwork is being done and a special presentation of the new Charter will be presented by Department President Kathy Kerr soon.

My District Project with the Vancouver Liver/Kidney Transplant Unit has been very successful this year. I decided this year not to do a raffle, only donations, and it has been an abundance of giving this year.

I like to say a big thanks to Faye Marie Dewey for doing a Flag Etiquette Class for all of us. It was very informative and surprising. We went through all the procedures of presenting the flags for Meetings, Massing of the Flags, Memorial Services, and Flag Disposal. Thank you Faye!

VA Christmas Gift Shop in Vancouver was very successful again. We had 20 American Legion Auxiliary members, 4 American Legion members, and 1 VA Hospital member who volunteered. Altogether there was over 222 hours of serving the Veterans at the VA Hospital.

6th District President, Joan Stai

This year started with a inter-unit meeting in Yakima, eight Units were represented. We then had a Fall Conference in October in Yakima, which was well attended by Unit members and department officers, including our President Kathy Kerr.

I had a car accident in October and didn't get my car back until December, of course this slowed me down a bit. I did get to Wapato for a visit and saw all the items they had for the Christmas Gift Shop. On November 14th several Auxiliary members attended and helped serve lunch at the Women Veterans Recognition Program. Later that day Shirley Trout and I visited Grandview and celebrated Veterans Day with the Post and the Unit.

The District project is the V.I.P. House. We have prepared 4 Rubbermaid totes of household goods for two homeless vets in transition. A big thank you to all the Units in the district that collected and donated household goods! A special thank you to the Ephrata Unit that helped out with two totes and brooms and mops. Several Units donated apples, oranges, neck warmers, stuffed bears, calendars and pens, for Christmas stockings for homeless vets.

I have kept in contact with all our Units either by telephone, mail or email. Sorry to say Zilliah Unit turned in their Charter. Some members already transferred to other Units. The Post is still active, but they have sold their Post home. I have been informed by the Sunnyside Unit that they are giving up their Charter and transferring to the Grandview Unit in the spring.

Shirley Trout and I visited the Goldendale Unit February 1st and audited their books and attended their meeting. They had a problem with membership and missing paperwork. Three members jumped in and created a new paper trail and dues were sent to Department with more on the way!

Selah Unit with the help of district members donations filled four more Rubbermaid totes with household goods and supplies for homeless veterans and their families (that qualify for rent vouchers) through the Yakima County Veterans Program.

6th District Past President Parley sent Veterans Day cards to local women vets to thank them for their service to the Country. They also sent wall calendars as a Christmas gift to women Veterans at Retsil, Orting and Spokane homes. They also furnished three cans of coffee to the Vet Center every month.

The District is still sending a Birthday Cake and/or pies to the V.I.P. House every month. More visitations are being planned. GOD BLESS OUR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

7th District President, Vacant

No report.

8th District President, Eleanor Chitwood

There will be an Auxiliary ABC class held by Barbara Rutherford and Jane Montaney in Kettle Falls on March 6th, 2010. All are welcome to attend.

9th District President, Barbara Rutherford

This year I have made a few changes in the ways of doing things, I divided 9th District into 4 different areas, have ask for one member from one of the Units (only 2 to 3 Units) in those areas to help me out. The changes I have asked help for are: making visitation to Unit, making phone, fund raising, and e-mail to send bulletin out. I know has made a lot easier for me not having to make all the visitations, and only few phone calls, and saved money for the district in e-mailing the bulletin.

The second Thursday, in September, I did travel to Oroville Unit #84 and had dinner and installation of 2009-2010 officers.

On a sad note 9th District lost a Past District President and President of Brewster Unit #97 Marj Udell, she will be greatly missed. In September was a memorial for her at Brewster Post Home. On September 20th was 9th District Fall Conference held at Brewster Post Home. A joint session was held with Department Officers, chairman's and district officers and chairman's giving report for the coming year.

Oct 23rd & 24th Department President made her visitation to 9th District. First stop was Lunch with Tonasket Unit #82, great fish and chip, made a pit stop in Omak for some personnel entertainment, then on to Ephrata for their Friday night steak feed, the steak was great and lots of food; spending the night at Mike & Jane Montaney home, up Saturday morning heading for Moses Lake, Big Bend College to help with the Yellow Ribbon Event. The last stop was in Wenatchee dinner with Wenatchee Unit & Post #10, great buffet and again lots of food. After dinner, took the Department President to meet her husband to head home, as she had Area workshop the next day. We in 9th District thank her for visiting our District.

Membership (1/22/10) 9th District is at 79.92% and in first place in Department standing. With 947 and need 238 to make 100%, know that all the Units are working hard at getting memberships and am looking forward to another year of being 100%.

Plans for spring raffle are being made, and will be having Spring Conference April 25th in Ephrata. Look forward to Units reporting. I will be making some spring visitations in March and first part of April. My District project for this year is setting a fund up to help the Veterans in 9th District with medical, food, and clothing to help with their needs. I will be attending Mid Winter Executive Committee Meeting in Pasco the first weekend in February.

10th District President, Marie Johnson

No report.

11th District President, Isabel Scheid

Unit 15, Kent - During the summer, held Poppy event; VA Hospital Book drive; Cut coupons; sent care package to troops overseas; Science its to Fisher House; Christmas in July donation. Beginning in September,

had membership drive with Post and SALs. Signed up 5 new members; VA Hospital book drive; Dept President Raffle; donation to post member family for earthquake care (Samoa). In November, 5 ladies walked in Auburn Vets Parade plus 2 rode in the same parade; 1 Thanksgiving basket; Sweats for Vets; VA Hospital Gift shop for shipping, etc.; Gift Shop gifts; Christmas stockings; 2 families received Christmas gifts and Food Baskets.

Unit 19, Renton - Donated to each VA Facilities in Department; quilted lap robes, stuffing pillows; wrapping packages for Gift Shop. One member makes lap robes and wheelchair bags at home and donates them to VA facilities in area. Two baskets of food to Santos Place; Christmas stockings for eight veterans at Seattle VA Hospital; Christmas gifts for 16 Fircrest patients. Members attended Post and District meetings; Fall Conference; ABC Course; helped at Gift Shop; and prepared lunches for all members who attended District meeting held in our hall.

Unit 78, Auburn - In October hosted Girls and Boys State delegates' dinner. Helped Post with Veterans Day breakfast; Veterans Day Parade; membership dinner for District Commander and President; helped at Gift Shop. We have worked hard to reach membership goal.

Unit 79, Renton-Pickering - Our Unit donated to AEF; to Gift Shop, with 3 volunteers; Wounded Warrior Battalion with 3 volunteers attending with Post; Unit with Juniors took part in Veterans Day Parade; Make a Difference Day; Martin King Day ceremonies; donated 19 lbs Campbell soup labels to local schools along with 26 lbs coupons for Education; 319 lbs coupons for Commissaries valued at \$64,237, 3 volunteers clipping for 93 hours; \$980 value of clothes and goods for the Blind; donated to Fisher House; VA Hospital; Presidents Project; baskets for Santos Place. Unit held ABCs class 9 members getting their Field Service cards. Two members made blankets for VA and Children and Presidents Project. We held a BBQ for Veterans. Four members VA hospital at Christmas; 4 members at Senior Center; Nursing Home; local library; and museum with Girl Scouts who folded 250 pocket flags for veterans.

Unit 99, Kirkland-Bellevue - Since the Post is not active in recruiting new members, it restricts our Unit from growth. We keep our obligations by donating funds. So far this year we donated as follows: Dispatch Subscription; ALA Emergency Fund; Nat Presidents Project; USO Sea/Tac, McCord; Spirit of Youth Foundation. Ordered 3825 Poppies; and from the good return last year on our Poppy distribution, we were able to hold one Bingo Party at the VA Hospital, Seattle. We have donated to: Ward Supplies to Seattle, Orting, Retsill, Gift Shops at Retsill; Orting; Seattle; Spokane; American Lake; American Lake Canteen; Patient Rec, Fund; General Purpose Fund; Fisher House, Seattle; Creative Arts Festival' Vancouver Liver Transplant Unit; Dept General Ward Supply Fund; Basket for Santos Place, Thanksgiving; Carol Groznik Fund/Sandpoint; Sweats for Vets; Wounded Warrior Transition Fund; and American Legion Child Welfare Fund.

Unit 127, Bothell - Met with City Major suggesting Bothell becomes a Legion town, set up for 16 September as Legion Day. Unit held Bazaar; Juniors made and sold lunch along with Post; split profits made with Post; three afghans were donated and raffled; supported 3 veteran families at Thanksgiving; donated \$50 to help with Santos Place dinner; supported 3 veteran families for Christmas; donated VA Gift Shop, Seattle; decorated Bldg 24 for Christmas; donated \$590. Toward VA phone cards; 12 Christmas Stockings; Get-well and Sympathy cards sent; 4000 poppies ordered. Membership goal 156 with 116 paid.

Unit 199, Lower Snoqualmie Valley - Our membership goal was 37, which was met on 6 January 2010. The Unit has gained 2 new members. The Unit donated two baskets for Santos Place at Thanksgiving dinner. Did 10 for 10 for Education. Donated gifts for Gift Shop at VA Seattle Hospital; Ward Supplies; Child Welfare Foundation; Auxiliary Emergency Fund; Fisher House, Seattle; Department Presidents Project; and ordered 750 Poppies.

Unit 227, Starr Sutherland, Jr. - Poppies have been ordered; gifts to the VA Hospital Gift Shop; volunteers worked at the Gift Shop as needed; donations for Ward Supplies and other needs; USO, Seattle; Union Gospel Mission; Salvation Army; Times Fund for the Needy; Fisher House; Child Welfare Foundation; two cabins at Fircrest; Girls State; Special Olympics; Auxiliary Emergency Fund; and Sweats for Vets. We held our Rummage Sale and Bazaar as well held an ABC meeting presented by the ladies from the Department. We had our meeting with the District President and other guests as well as the delegate to Girls State and the delegate to Boys State. Both spoke to the amount of knowledge and friendships each felt they got at the programs.

My first beginning as District 12 President 2009-2010 began July at Convention in Spokane. My first official visit was a joint installation of Officers for Waitsburg in September.

In September, Western Division Vice President, Peggy Brown visited for the Time of Remembrance candlelight ceremony September 26th and 27th for the memorial service in Richland. Thank you to Department President Kathy Kerr, Distinguished Guest Chairman, Midge Tallman, and Americanism Chairman Emma Peoples for a great time. In route to Benton City luncheon prepaid by Unit #115 Auxiliary we stopped in Benton City to visit the newly erected Vietnam memorial at the home of Jack and Kathy Gilchrist.

12th District Fall Conference was in Walla Walla with a joint meeting.

In November, it was helping out the Walla Walla Christmas Gift Shop Chairman, Emma Peoples. Introduced District 12 Chaplain, Kathy Schuoler and Past #115 Commander, Don Parchen to the world of Gift Shop. On November 25th I was unable to go back to help Gift Shop due to being unable to leave my job.

I wrote letters to each Unit introducing myself on September. I asked Units to bring membership packets to meetings and discuss ideas for membership and share ideas we could help one another.

In December, I sent cards to each Unit and included tickets for the Presidents project from me suggesting I had more of interested. My thought was perhaps any of the prizes won could be used to raffle off to help the Unit.

To date I am preparing for the winter conference in Pasco and Spring Conference in Benton City. I hope to do more inter Unit visitations if I'm elected for the year 2010-2011. I'm looking forward to a District President and Vice President forum discussing our duties. Thank you Department President Kathy and other Department Chairman and Officers for their support and words of wisdom for me while I stumbled through each meeting.

Department Chairman Reports

ABC's Co-Chairmanship, Barbara Rutherford and Jane Montaney

We have done three (3) ABC training sessions so far this year, and have one scheduled for March 6th at Colville for 8th District.

The first one was on October 17th at Snoqualmie Unit #79, were members from the Unit and member from 11th district in attendance were 11 members in attendance.

Second was on October 31st at Shoreline Unit #227 were 12 in attendance, mostly members of the Unit and Post, was the second training in 11th district.

The third was on November 21st at Bainbridge Island Unit #172 in 3rd District, were not many in attendance, believe were 6 members and 1 junior member.

At the training session we set up display table, also have hand out, and we cover in our agenda, Proper Procedure from apparel to hats to pins, meeting procedures, programs, protocol, parliamentary. Also included is Field Service info on how to keep track of hours, and where your volunteer hours are counted in which program, we have added Service Officer material fun, games and idea exchanges.

At Mid Winter will be participating in the Chairman Roundtable.

Have sent out, 3 bulletins in the Department Packet.

We are looking forward to more Units and District having a ABC training session, might be good for incoming Unit and District Officers, chairman and members. I know that we all come away with more information then we came with even the ABC Chairman.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF), Janet Easley

I am pleased to report on this Chair's activities as the Department of Washington Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chair for 2009-2010.

I have submitted one article for our Department's newspaper, the *Evergreen News*, which was published in November. There have been articles in two monthly packets – October and November or December, and a new packet article has just been submitted for the next packet. All of the relevant information about AEF is on the Department's Website, including an application, thanks to our Department Secretary, Nicole Ross.

What are the results so far? I am pleased to report that our Department Treasurer indicates that a total of \$1,153.20 has been contributed so far by 25 Units! Last year, a total of \$610 was contributed, so this is a 47% increase, and the year is not even half over. My latest packet article asks Units which have not contributed to put out a loose change jar to try to collect 40 cents per member. I also indicate that 40 cents per member at this time would be \$2540. I hope that we can meet that goal!

I will report at our Midwinter Conference in February, and ask if there are any success stories in our Department. That will help in raising funds. I have written about the lapel pins and citations available for those members who contribute \$25 or \$100, and will include that in my next newspaper article. I'll plan to announce those who will receive these awards, if any in my last article.

It is my pleasure to serve as this year's Department Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chair.

Children and Youth – Fircrest, Rachel Dickerson

So far I haven't too much report. The monies for Fircrest are coming in and the Christmas gives seemed to have gotten to all clients (patients) they were all pleased. There was a little mix up but it got fixed. Next year hopefully you will have your list sooner.

I had a few ladies ask for tours and we had two tours of the grounds and all the facilities, it was quite nice each time I go on a tour, I am very impressed. It seems that I learn and see something different, each time I go on a tour so don't think that just because you've been on a tour of Fircrest please call me at (206) 363-9294 and we can make a date.

As far as anyone knows at this time Fircrest will stay open. They have even taken in some new younger clients (patients). They have about 185 clients (patients) plus the few new younger ones now.

They are still taking in things and as before money can be sent to Department marked for Fircrest. Any questions you have I'll be glad to answer, just give me a call.

Community Service, Kathi Naff

Our Units are busy helping our Posts and our communities. I have already received report forms from our Units using the new form. There is a lot of confusion as to what category the Unit should report under as the event falls under two and sometimes three programs. If you are unsure, choose one and notate the event under the other programs without reporting the hours and members. The main reason for the form I designed

is to help you organize monthly your reporting so when the end of the year comes, the reports will not be so difficult. A form similar to this one was first introduced in the past years by the Leadership program and the VAR program. This is not new to the reporting process and will also help you to remember what you have accomplished!

I know many of you participated in National Make A Difference Day however I have only received one report and that was from our Junior Unit! We must report our events if we are to receive recognition for what we do. We deserve recognition as we work so diligently for our Veterans!

Veterans are living in every community across this nation. We must do everything within our power to honor them, to show them how much we care for them and the sacrifices they made for our freedom!

With winter here, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, Goodwill and food banks all need help, both physically as well as financially. Remember Habitat for Humanity, nursing homes, youth centers, fire and police centers, YMCA centers, domestic violence centers, senior citizen centers are just a few ways we can serve in our community.

Schools and libraries reach our future leaders. Keep them informed and updated on our programs. The Awards that you will be receiving at Convention in July are:

- Unit Award for most outstanding single activity for Community Service in each division;
- Senior Volunteer of the Year Award for a senior member in each Division for one or more activities emphasized in the Plan of Work;
- National President Award of Excellence for the Unit with the best overall Community Service Report;
- Junior Volunteer of the Year Award for each Division for outstanding volunteer service.

I could go on and on...Keep up the good work! I look forward to hearing about your projects and events!

Education, Janet Sperry

Thank you Kathy for asking me to be the Department Education Chairman for 2009-2010. The National Chairman, Mary Davis and the Western Division Chairman, LuAnn Capazzi have sent out numerous mailings and ideas for this year.

The plan of action asked us to pinpoint our Education goals for the year and I filled out the form and returned it to them. My goals were as follows:

1. To increase the awareness of the Auxiliary scholarships available to students in our state.
2. Get additional information on the "Miles for Reading" program and distribute that information to the Units. I asked, but so far no answer regarding this program.
3. Promote "American Education Week" in November so we could have more participation in our Department.
4. Promote the "Give 10 to Education" program.

I have written articles for the monthly packet and the Evergreen News on the Scholarships. I have tried to give helpful, easy to understand information on what is available, who qualifies, and how to reach out to students in the schools, in families, and in neighborhoods so more will be able to apply for them. I have also informed all the Units about the dates that these need to be returned to me in order for them to be judged and the National ones sent on to the Western Division.

I have also written in the packets and the newspaper about American Education Week and given ideas that Units might want to use to honor teachers, staff, and/or students by either presenting a gift to the school, goodies for the staff with a Unit thank-you note for all they do, or certificates of appreciation.

Additionally, I encouraged Units to participate in the Give 10 to Education Program at the start of the school year to help provide classrooms and needy students with supplies.

With Department President Kathy's support, I updated the scholarship forms to make them consistent with the original intent of those who donated money for them. In order to do this, I contacted two Past Department Secretaries and three Past Department Presidents that had knowledge of the scholarships at the time the money was donated. I also talked with Dept. President Kathy and went over the rules and

requirements of the scholarships. These have all been revised and are now available on the Dept. website for Units and students to download. Many thanks to Nicole for taking care of this.

There is a 2010 Report Form already sent out to the Units so everyone can see what they need to track for the year and have an easier time when filling it out later.

I have moved and everything needs to be sent to my new address.

NEW ADDRESS: 11013-115th Ave NE, Lake Stevens, WA 98258

NEW PHONE #: 360-691-9811.

Evergreen News, Deana Sperry

Tell me story!

Not a Thank you and not a travel guide.

News, what you are doing or have done and what is to come.

Pictures to be in Jpeg originals, word documents are the best format.

Due date the 10th of each even number month.

If you do send by e-mail a receipt is sent back to you if you do not receive a receipt your e-mail was not received.

The more you tell the more others know about who you are and what you are doing for veterans and your communities.

Communication is a great tool if used properly. Take advantage of your Evergreen newspaper.

Committee members: Kate Sharp, Nicole Ross.

Finance, Kate Sharp

Kathy Kerr, Department President and Nicole Ross, Department Secretary attended this meeting as well as all three committee members (Terri Angell, Sue Patterson, and Myself). Ann Bowman, Department Treasurer gave the committee information concerning the finances and answered any questions we had – however she did not sit in on the meeting.

Several sections of the current Department Constitution and Bylaws pertaining to finance were reviewed and discussion on resolutions to possibly be submitted.

Once again the Girls State program was discussed as it pertains to how the program affects the finances of the Department. The committee needs clarification on Article IX, Section 1, (j).

It was brought to the attention of the committee that the Department Staff should have had a raise and review beginning August 2009. This will be further discussed at the next finance meeting – all committee members feel they certainly deserve this raise.

The next finance committee meeting is Wednesday, May 12th, 2010, beginning at 10:00am and will continue thru Thursday, May 13th, 2010. The meeting is held at the Department office as per the Department Constitution and Bylaws.

Junior Activities, Lora Shanahan

My first official meeting with the juniors was at the SAL convention in June of 2009. The juniors attended the camp out in Cle Elum. During the campout the juniors joined the SAL for meals and games. The juniors assembled several no sew blankets for the Department Presidents Project. We enjoyed a campfires, smores and meeting new friends.

The National Badge Program is a three level program for junior girls to learn and work with Senior Members in their units to earn badges that provide them with a token for their hard work. A notice will be sent following Mid Winter to all the Units that work with the badge program with the following information that was sent recently. Any unit needing to order badges must have their order forms and completed paper work to the Department Junior Chairman by May 15 of each membership year, so that the order forms can be sent to National before June 1 of each membership year. The badges are only processed one time a year due to staff shortages at the National Offices. They are processed and mailed back out in July of each membership year.

As Junior Chairman and a Member of Sumas Memorial Unit #212, I would like to move the 2010 Annual Junior meeting to Sumas, WA. The dates for the meeting would June 26, 27, and 28th. Sumas Memorial Unit

#212 will sponsor the event and provide key meals and activities for the weekend. The girls will participate in Sumas Community Days on Saturday June 27, 2010. They have been invited to march in the parade, set up a membership booth and distribute pocket flags to local Active Duty service members and Veterans. There has been an offer for them to raise funds for their Junior Program by selling bottled water along the parade route under the guidance of the Senior Members of Unit #212. The evening will be finished off with a fire work show in Sumas, and a campfire.

As Junior Chairman I'd like you to consider the above mentioned option for the Junior Girls.

Legislative, Eva Wallace

It's been my privilege to again serve as your Legislative Chairman for 2009-2010. My theme this year has been "grassroots advocacy". Each person in our Department can contact their legislators on behalf of our veterans, our military, and their families, as well as issues impacting your local communities. You are the ones who make a difference by letting them know what you are thinking – it influences their work for us. Resources have been made available to each Unit and on our Department website for each member.

We currently have 10 Auxiliary members serving on the Legislative Council, plus our Department officers serve ex-officio. Sue Patterson resigned very recently – thank you Sue for all you have done to help these past few years. Members of the council are kept informed by email of all important pending legislation as well as information on subjects to keep them advised of what is happening in other areas, such as the VA. They in turn, contact their designated legislators and advise them of our (Legion/Auxiliary) position on the issues being presented. We are currently working on bills before our state legislature as well as monitoring the status of the national health care reform and whether or not it will impact veteran's benefits (to date they say "no").

Each of the council members received a copy of the Legislative Objectives for 2009-2010, the American Legion Auxiliary "Advocacy Guide", the Team Washington Legislative Information Guide, as well as a new report form for mid-winter and spring, so their activities can be counted for our Department, in addition to the Unit activities in the annual report. A copy of the "Advocacy Guide" was sent out in the packets to each Unit. With the help of Nicole Ross, our Secretary, the "Advocacy Guide" was posted to the Department website along with a copy of the latest Team Washington Legislative Information Listing for the current legislative session – it's all available now to each Unit member, under program information - Legislative. Every US and State Legislator is listed with the information on how to contact them – thank you, Nicole.

Based on the 4 reports received, there have been 15 phone calls made, 39 letters/emails sent, 1 visit to a local official, 7 visits to national officials, 4 replies, 1 visit to a town meeting, several visits to local civic meetings, and 2 people subscribe to the Dispatch and the Auxiliary Legislative News. I am currently also serving as the National Legislative Vice Chairman and as a member of that committee, I was asked to comment on upcoming legislation impacting women veterans. 2 news articles were submitted and information was sent to Units in the Department mailings.

In September I had the opportunity to visit Washington, DC to hear the National Commander's testimony to the Senate/Congress joint meeting of Veterans Affairs. We visited with Senator Murray's office and discussed the issues of the new VA budget and left the information with our other congressmen's veteran affairs liaisons; all 9 offices were visited. It was a successful trip and the budget was passed with the advanced funding approved. We will be leaving in a few weeks to attend the Awareness Assembly and visits with our congressmen have already been scheduled. Our work as Team Washington with the Legion was recognized by the American Legion National as the top Legislative group in 2009 and received a National award for their work – a copy of my annual report to National is included with the Legion's report.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to serve.

Membership, Mary Davis

Membership means sharing ideas, implementing combined ideas and supporting other members in your Unit. Membership means a healthy Unit; one where members want to come together to work for a common goal. But working together through the American Legion Auxiliary for the betterment of veterans, children and community comes at a price. That price is little to pay for the great programs and legislative support the American Legion Auxiliary provides, and that price is the cost of membership. Consider the cost of

your dues if they are as much as \$35.00 per year then consider that there is 365 days in a year. The cost of membership then becomes less than a penny per day.

Now with the fact that membership really isn't overpriced as we consider the good that our membership supports, one wonders why it is such a challenge to get individuals to renew or join us. So it may become important to look at the health of your Unit.

How are your meetings? Boring! Wonder why you should go, maybe you don't. Don't go to meetings? How do you know what is happening? What needs to be promoted?

So I ask again, how are your meetings? Fun! You and other members look forward to going because maybe you have a pot luck and a guest speaker, maybe you have project you all work on. What makes your meetings great? I ask that you share your enthusiasm with this chairman so that I can share with other Units.

A healthy Unit is something each Unit should consider. If you feel alone in your Unit, have conflict problems, can't figure out what it means to have a fun meeting," Aren't we supposed to follow protocol? It's not fun!", then contact your District President and ask for help. In the meantime consult your Unit Membership Guide. This was sent to each Unit membership chairman with the membership cards. There is no reason any Unit should turn in a charter if that Unit hasn't asked for help, whether membership drives, membership development (UD&R), or an ABC's leadership class, and there is a protocol for surrendering a charter. Sometimes Units don't know where to go for help but help is just a request away and a Unit representative just needs to ask.

So what has happened in our Department this year so far? National has sent out one renewal notification and one post card renewal reminder to all senior members who are not VIM members. The response from those notices has yielded less renewing members than this time last year. The up side of the lack of response is that 12 Units have made goal. Thank you to those Units. To all Units who have sent in membership, thank you to the membership chairmen who have sent the renewal dues into Department right away and to the members of those Units who have not given up on working the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. No District has made goal.

Now that all planned renewal notices have been sent from National, additional renewal reminders fall directly on you, the Units. Please try dividing the names of the members who need to renew between those who come to meetings or those who have already renewed and ask for their help in contacting those who have not renewed. Also, there are many eligible women that have not been contacted and asked to join. It may be hard for eligible non members to find a Unit contact person or they may not know about the important work we do, that is why it is important for every member to accept the responsibility to recruit new members.

Past President's Parley, Venita Holthaus

Can't believe it's Mid Winter already. Time sure slips quickly away. I have prepared a bulletin for the month end mailing with the Past President's Parley "Plan of Action". This will ensure that each Unit knows the whole program. Please read this information. This program includes Unit member of the year, Nurses Scholarship, rule for saluting an active duty servicewoman and female veteran of the year.

Last year we had an application for Unit member of the year. She was a wonderful Unit member and very active in her Unit but it was disappointing to not have other applications for review in other categories.

In the packet in February beside the Plan of Work is the special memorandum from the Past President's Parley.

Each year the 11th District has a Past President's Parley Luncheon. This year's luncheon will be at Bothell Post #127's Legion home on March 6th from 11:00am to 3:00pm. Reservation information is available from Johanna Cabuag, 2704 171st SE Bothell, WA 98012 or by phone (425) 487-2636.

All active duty women and female veterans are invited to attend. The District Units will also be considering a Unit member of the year. Visitors are welcome but all need to please make reservations.

Poppy, Isabel Scheid

The Poppy Program for the Department of Washington with the National President's theme "Reconnect and Energize" and the plan from the National Committee, we are going to elevate community awareness and respect for our Veterans by educating our membership and the public about the Poppy's significance and the financial benefit realized by our Nation's Veterans as a result of its distribution.

National objectives increase the number of veteran poppy makers by 10 in each Department.

Reconnect with the poppy's significance by sharing the Flanders Field story. This I have done ever since receiving the article from a member in Eastern Washington in 1998 when I was Department President. Each Girls State citizen will receive a copy this year. It will be in each Department Packet for all Units to use.

We will be sponsoring Poppy Poster Contests: Miss Junior and Senior Poppy Contests; table arrangements; and wall hangings to be judged in each District Spring Conference.

Poppy Corsage Contest

The poppy corsage contest will be part of the awareness assembly this year. We may submit only five entries. Each corsage should have the name of the creator, their Unit and Department. They should be approximately 3-1/2 by 3-1/2 inches and fit in a standard 4 by 4 inch corsage box. These corsages will be judged at Mid-winter and the five winners will go to the awareness assembly. All others will be judged at your Spring Conferences.

Memorial Day, also wreaths will be made to place on all statues.

Proclamations will be requested in all cities to be signed by the Mayor. Your communications will be involving the media where feasible and possible.

This is an overview of my plans for this year.

Making poppies is a blessing to the veterans because it enables them to earn money. It gives them something to do and think about. It helps to pass the time in a constructive and meaningful way.

We all know how important a successful Poppy Distribution is for our VA&R Programs.

Each Unit should send to Department for the Volunteer Guide to a Successful Poppy Promotion. More information will be in the Evergreen News and by Packets from Department.

We will have a successful and beneficial year for all by starting early, getting involved and show your community our Poppy Program and the benefits derived.

President's Project, Karen Schwartz

Our Department President Kathy Kerr asked me to help raise money for Vancouver Kidney / Liver Transplant Unit, as her President's Project Chairman. I said, I'd love to. My Mother lived an extra 10 years after being diagnosed with liver cancer, they said she'd live 3 months. So I'm thankful for all we can do for cancer patients.

In turn Kathy gave me 6 prizes that had already been donated for her project to take home after Department Convention. She wanted me to take the prizes around to different events and sell raffle tickets 3 for \$1.00. The prizes will be raffled off at 2010 Department Convention. She had given each District President tickets to sell also. They were to send donations and tickets into Department.

So I took pictures of the donations and described each of them and printed the pictures and information on an 8 1/2 X 11 paper and had them published in our Department paper, first after convention.

I've taken the items around the state to Fall Conferences, and Area workshops, and different Post functions. The total dollars into Department from me and our District Presidents is \$1060.00.

We've received more prizes for this raffle. I'll be showing off all the prizes, and selling tickets at Mid-Winter, Spring Conferences and other events. If you don't want a prize, you can still donate to the Department President's Project.

VISTA Supervisor, Eva Wallace

In April of 2009, our Department was one of 20 Departments contacted by National to see if we would be interested in participating in the new VISTA Volunteer Program. After listening and participating in several conference calls, it was decided that we would become one of the "trial" states, as they assured us it would be at no cost to our Department, except to provide office space and normal to office operations support, i.e. computer, phone, and office supplies. President Kathy Kerr appointed me the VISTA Supervisor for our volunteer.

In July we began the process of hiring a VISTA Volunteer, selected from a list pre-approved by National. We found a person who fit our needs, who had had prior VISTA Volunteer service, Elaine Parker. Elaine also

had prior military service and her husband was a veteran, a fit for our organization. In August I was sent to supervisor training just before National Convention, and Elaine was sent to Louisville for her training with the rest of the volunteers during National Convention. In September, we were able to find an alternate work location for Elaine at the Everett Vet Center, convenient for the day-to-day work and supervision for both of us.

All in all, 20 volunteers were hired, 8 to work at the National office and 12 to work in various state offices. In order to qualify for the special grant from AmeriCorp, National came up with 3 expected outcomes for the volunteers to accomplish during the year, helping the departments to meet our obligations to veterans and their families. Additionally, we worked to help our military families that were in need.

The three outcomes were:

- 1) Recruit additional volunteers to help VA Volunteer Service (10 per state)
- 2) Find ways for units to provide practical support to military families living in or near-poverty (120 families)
- 3) Additional veterans and relatives of veterans become engaged in poverty-related community service projects

Working with our VA&R Chairman and the Hospital Representatives, Elaine started by setting up the first of what we hoped would be many locally provided VAVS training for units, since there are more local opportunities available for the volunteers such as, respite care for veteran's in a home, the CBOC's. 5 people attended the first training session.

We met with the National Guard and asked units to participate in food baskets and Christmas baskets for the Guard families, and to continue the support as a year-round program.

In November, National asked Elaine to put together a project for Martin Luther King Day of Service. Unfortunately, our Community Service Chairman was not planning a project that she could assist with; the project that was planned did not have enough time to incorporate it with holidays, mailing times and newspaper early notice requirements for publishing.

I am very sorry to say; in December Elaine gave us her notice to resign due to family health considerations. We were very sorry to see her leave as we had to drop out of the program for this year. I am hoping that if this program continues, our Department will reconsider having another VISTA volunteer.

American Lake Christmas Gift Shop, Rose Hodgeboom

The 2009 American Lake Veterans Gift Shop started the week after Christmas 2008. We were shopping early the next working to get a head start. We were able to get some real bargains that enabled us to purchase really good quality merchandise. By shopping after days like Mother's Day and Father's Day we managed to get ahead of this year's shop.

With the economy the way it was this year we decided to hold a couple of fund raisers. We held Cinco-de-Mayo and Christmas in July parties that generated over \$1800 each for the two Fourth District Gift Shops. I would like to thank Steve Coffchin for acting as the auctioneer for the dollar auction at the Cinco-de-Mayo party and Post 94 for allowing the use of their facilities.

Denny McHugo, Len Medlock, Roger Dube, Bill Cunningham, and John VanScoyoc spent the morning of November 25 loading the truck to insure that when volunteers arrived on the day after Thanksgiving the shop was ready to be setup. Nineteen volunteers started at eight o'clock in the morning the day after Thanksgiving unloading the truck and setting up the tables. By the time that we went to lunch at noon, the shop was totally set up.

The Tea held on November 30th was well attended. I would like to thank Ann Wilson for making and donating the beautiful corsages and to Susan Dun for baking over forty dozen cookies. On December 1st we started shopping with the patients. In two days we helped ninety veterans to shop for their families. We wrapped four-hundred and eighty six packages, mailed one hundred and eight packages, and allowed thirty one patients to exchange packages with their families at the Hospitals Christmas party.

This event could not be held without the donations of Posts and Units throughout the Fourth District and the State. We had \$5826 donated to pay expenses, and over \$2000 worth of gift items donated by various

individuals and Units including the Raymond and Bellingham Units. Over \$4860 worth of gifts were selected by the patients and \$901.83 was spent on postage. In the three days spent setting up and shopping over four hundred and fifty hours were donated by the volunteers.

After the Gift Shop ended, leftover items totaling approximately \$700 were donated to the Fort Lewis Santa's Castle, the Orting Soldiers Home Gift Shop, and to local Children's charities. This event shows what can be done when the American Legion Family works together.

Orting Christmas Gift Shop, Sandie VanScoyoc

First off, we want to give a much-appreciated thank you to all the volunteers. For the wonderful gifts and monetary donations that we received, and the hours that you dedicated to setting up the Gift Shop, shopping and gift-wrapping. This wonderful program would not exist without the tremendous co-operation of our Legionnaires, who load and un-load the truck, as well as brown wrap for mailing all the gifts, and then deliver them to the Post Office.

In May, we held a Cinco de Mayo party to raise funds for both Gift Shops in the 4th District. Thanks to a great turn out and a dollar action, we made \$300.00 apiece. We decided to hold another fundraiser in July, which we called Christmas in July. The turnout wasn't as good but thanks to Eva Miller who presented each Chairman with a check for \$500.00 from the Incarcerated Veterans. We did make \$69.00 on our turkey dinner.

Early December 7th, 12 volunteers showed up to un-load the truck and set up our Gift Shop. At 2:00pm, we had opening ceremonies. Karen Grundler the Auxiliary District Chaplain lead us in prayer, and our MC Corky Cunningham, did a wonderful job with the introductions of Lourde E (Alfie) Alvarado Ramos the WDVA deputy director and acting superintendent of WSHC, Kathy Kerr the Department President, Jane Montaney the Department 1st Vice President, and Bob Schwartz the Department Commander. Karen Grundler and Rose Hodgeboom did a fantastic job of setting up the tea and refreshments.

Tuesday December 8th was the first day of shopping. With the help of 10 Wounded Warriors from Ft. Lewis, nursing care patients, were assisted with their shopping, served refreshments, and enjoyed a visit with the soldiers. We then re-stocked some gifts. The barracks resident arrived eager to shop. The Departments' Secretary Nicole Ross joined us to help Gift Wrap presents. Once again, a little after 1:00pm, The Mostly Misses bowling team arrived, and started wrapping gifts. These ladies are most generous with their time and talents.

Wednesday the last of the residents did their shopping. Two students received community service hours for helping us on this last day of shopping. We then dismantled the shop, packed up merchandise, took the packages to the Post Office, and loaded the truck for storage. As tired as we all were, it was a little sad that it was over. There are so many people to thank for this rewarding experience, we don't know where to start so we will simply say thank you.

133 Residents shopped, 450 gifts, 226 parcels mailed, and cost of mailing \$1,292.23. Volunteer hours from Unit and Posts 340.75, Bowling team 57 hours, Community Service hours 14 hours, Total hours 411.75.

Vancouver Christmas Gift Shop, Thelma Hathaway

Vancouver Gift Shop was early this year. We had to have it in the middle of November. November 16th, 17th and 18th.

This is the first year in a long time we have had the Department Commander here. Commander Robert Schwartz and wife Karen and also Department President Kathy Kerr were here. They were also to tour parts of the Medical center. We also had 5th District President Anita Stadey and Vice President Priscilla Ford with us each day. Thanks to all of you for your help.

We had 17 Unit members and 3 Post members and 4 interested non members working in our Gift Shop. They put in 214 hours. Thanks to all of you.

We helped 45 patients pick out gifts for 177 family members and they sent 323 gifts. The farthest gift went to the Philippines. Financial report will be at Convention. We have some returns to send back out.

American Lake VA Hospital, Frankie Dube

Thank You president Kathy Kerr for the opportunity to serve as the representative American Lake.

Bingo games were held in two separate buildings with an average of 12 patients.

Eight regular volunteer totaling 789 hours.

Gladys Affholter, Corky Cunningham, Rose Hodge boom, Lee McCarter-Harbin, Sandie Van Scoyoc, Melodie Foster, Peggy McHugo, Frankie Dube.

Volunteer work as helpers at bingo games, Gift Shop, clothing closet, Nursing Home Care unit program recreational program, Creative Arts Festival and wherever they are needed.

We couldn't do it without you!

'Thank You' to the following Units for their cash donations totaling \$1,750.00: Rhodes Parkland Unit #2, Bellingham #7, Renton# 19, Chewelah #54, Puyallup #67, Eastsound #93, Kirkland# 99, Wapato #133, Westport #140, Redmond # 161, Camano Island #207, Sumas #212, The VA Medical Center could not operate without your support!

Seattle VA Hospital, Isabel Scheid

Since 2009-2010 began we have had our activities for the patients; Bingo, Memorial Day Celebrations, 4th of July, Veterans Day and exciting Christmas parties and stocking delivery accompanied by Santa (Jimmie Jones) from Auburn Post 78.

Dolly Westphal from Frank Hancock Unit 92 had her stars on the Christmas tree in Bldg 24 and all the patients received one of her stars on Veterans Day. She is already making stars for the 4th of July. Thank you, Dolly.

Special thanks to our Legion Families that made Christmas so special for our patients in Bldg 24.

In May, we opened up a new service – coffee and refreshments for Mental Health and ATC, Bldg 24. We alternated between them.

As Mental Health was not busy enough so we changed and exclusively serve Bldg 24 three days a week. We have found a need and are filling it.

They had four Christmas parties to serve all the patients in treatment. Santa was a welcome part. He gave them Christmas cards made by Lockwood School in Northshore. Every student made a Christmas card. They also made the paper chains and paper stars. Barbara Sether, Bothell Unit 127 decorated Bldg 24 and the tree. Juanita Berry, from Unit 99, Kirkland – Bellevue, donated the Christmas tree.

We have a new regular Volunteer, Janet Vaaca from Burien Unit 134. Welcome, Janet. Janet was Gift Shop Chairman this year and sent thank you notes to all the volunteers, regular or occasional, who helped.

We need more volunteers; all Legion Family members are welcome. Come down to Bldg 1, Room 422 and talk to the volunteer staff. We need you.

Thank you, Units for the help you give us financially and comfort items. You all will be acknowledged in the yearend report.

Thank you Volunteer Staff for your support. You are making my Rainbow of Love and Service for our Veterans and their families a reality.

Vancouver VA Hospital, Irene Shropshire

There are four (4) volunteers that report on Thursday mornings, of which two (2) are new volunteers, increasing us to eleven (11) regular volunteers. The hours posted to date for May through December total 1,179 hours. Thelma and Debra Hathaway are regular volunteers and work at the Information Desk. Betty O'Connor works in the Pharmacy, however, last summer discontinued contributing hours to ALA, reducing our volunteers to (10).

The ladies from Longview Unit #155 come down the first Thursday of each month to decorate bulletin boards, hold a coffee hour, and take comfort items to the wards, and in December they delivered backscratchers to the patients throughout the hospital.

We continue to supply birthday greetings to veterans having birthday each week. Ditty bags are used for this project and we are indeed grateful to Smith-Reynolds Unit #14 for taking up the slack and filling our current needs, as well as keeping up our supply of neck pillows.

The Hospice Unit on "B" Ward has been open since 2004. And when "passage quilts" were started with the intent that the quilt would go out with the deceased veteran and then be returned to his bed, with an electric candle burning for 24 hours. Then it was passed onto the family. The recommended size is 5' wide x 7' long and made with red, white and blue material. We are grateful to the faithful volunteers that continue to make the Passage Quilts.

At the present time we continue to send \$400.00 a month to the Department of Oregon for food at the Liver/Kidney Transplant Unit. Any Units desiring to assist with this program may submit checks to the Department Office marked "Liver Lodge – VAMC". THIS PROJECT IS ONGOING. The response has been heartwarming this year and hopefully many more Units, Posts, etc. will try to contribute \$25.00 towards this all important project.

Individuals and Units are encouraged to complete Donation Forms, and submit with donations to the Hospital Representative for accurate reporting. REMEMBER OUR HOSPITALIZED VETS.

As your ALA Hospital Representative and the Deputies, we are required to attend VAVS meetings locally every month, and jointly with the Portland VAVS Committee four times a year. We contribute to Bake Sales, Ice Cream Sales, etc. to raise funds needed at VAMC such as bus passes for the Transitional Lodging Unit, Coffee for the 24/7 Program, laundry soap at the Transitional Lodging Unit.