

Department of
Mississippi

Magnolia



AMERICAN LEGION
AUXILIARY

Serving veterans, their families and their communities

Monthly
Newsletter

Sept. 2011



GREETINGS FROM THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



TOUCAN MAKE A
DIFFERENCE

It gives me great pride to serve as 2011-2012 Department President of the American Legion Auxiliary for the great state of Mississippi. As I travel around the state, I feel that I'm warmly welcomed. This same kind of reception is exactly how new members should be

treated. We are all equal in this organization and should be treated as such.

State convention in Natchez was fantastic! I watched and listened as many awards were handed out, and I realized what dedicated, caring work went into accomplishing these feats. I reflected on the lives that were impacted by all of the labor of love that went into earning these awards. The lives that were touched were veterans, servicemen and women, children, youth, our seniors and those that are ill and hospitalized. With the help and efforts of our membership we can accomplish much during this coming year too; what it will take is all of us working

together with the same goals.

Toucan make a difference, if you see work to be done or ideas to be shared, get together with your unit president. Share your ideas then find someone whom will share your enthusiasm.

You Toucan work together as others see your exuberance, it will be contagious and they too will want to join you. This is how we are going to grow.

Angela put on a great "Membership Rally" in Jackson. For those of you who missed it, you missed some great information, motivation, food, and fellowship. (Go to Page 3)

CALENDAR OF
EVENTS

DEPT. PRESIDENT MARY
RIED'S HOMECOMING
SEPT. 24, GULFPORT

NORTHERN AREA CONF.,
OCT. 29, CORINTH

SOUTHERN AREA CONF.,
NOV. 19, MENDENHALL

CENTRAL AREA CONF.,
DEC. 3, LAKE TIAK-
O'KHATA



1ST VICE PRESIDENT



Now that the National Convention is over and new officers installed, we can get down to work. I thank all of you for electing me 1st Vice President. I am also Programs Chairman, so you all will be hearing from me a lot this year. We should all be working on our programs

and projects NOW. Don't wait on the Plans of Action! When we were at National Convention, so many departments received awards, and there is not one good reason why Mississippi cannot do the same. Let's all get to work so Mississippi can be recognized at the next National Convention. Keep good records of what you do so you can send a mid-year

report to the committee chairmen. I would like to hear that each chairman received a report from every unit. No matter what size your unit is you do something during the year that you can report. So, come on and report what you do!

For God and Country,

Sarah Edwards

2011-2012
DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

MARY RIED, PRESIDENT
SARAH EDWARDS, 1ST V. P.
ROSE BLANCHARD, 2ND V. P.
CAROLYN TARDY, HISTORIAN
PATRICIA TREST, CHAPLAIN
MARY LYLES, NEC
ANGELA KILCREASE, ALT. NEC
NANCY SANDERS, SECRETARY/
TREASURER

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AMERICAN LEGION
AUXILIARY
MISSISSIPPI

From National Convention

The Convention Delegates voted at \$4 National dues increase, effective the 2013 membership year.

Also, dues notices from National will be mailed in early September, beginning in 2012, after National Convention, rather than in August.

Kris Nelson of Minnesota was elected and installed as National President.

Mississippi Awards:

AEF Award to Unit contributing largest donation went to Hovious-Grayson Unit 112 in Jackson.

Southern Division National Security Award for outstanding department program, Angela Kilcrease, Chairman

Woman of the Year Luncheon honored June Laws of Unit 139, Bay St. Louis, and MSGT Angela Baughman, Unit 1997, Heidelberg, as one of five Military Servicewomen.

2ND VICE PRESIDENT-VA&R CHAIRMAN



We are beginning our year with a busy schedule for our veterans, and I hope you will all take some time to participate, both financially and by volunteering at upcoming events. These men and women are why we still have our freedom and we need to honor them and their service every chance we get.

Our Biloxi VA representative, Jo Tisbury, has asked me to pass this request on to you. There will be a Stand-Down for homeless veterans, Friday, Oct. 7, and she is asking for 300 new sweatshirts or money that she can use to purchase the shirts. Last year, about 288 veterans were served and of these, 15 were women. Each person gets to choose clothing, and as

usual, the better things go first. By having new shirts, we will be sure that every veteran has a new shirt. Jo says she will need more of the large and extra large sizes, but will also need some small, medium and XX-large. For more information contact Jo Tisbury at 228-497-3172.

Cruisin' the Coast will be Oct. 4 at the Biloxi VA, beginning at 10 a.m. Volunteers are needed to assist our veterans and to serve food and ice cream.

A friendly reminder: Now is the time to send in your donations for the Christmas Gift Shop, which will be in early December.

I'm not sure of what's happening at other facilities at this time, but I do know that birthday parties and bingo are being

held. Any and all contributions to help with these activities is appreciated, so dig out the checkbook and start writing—please.

I have returned my Plans of Action to the Department and in them you will find some good information on what we can do and how to go about it. There are some great ideas, so I hope you will take some time to read them and pass it on to other unit members.

Please remember those lost on 9/11 and their families.

September 17 is POW/MIA Recognition Day.

September 18, 1947 the U.S. Air Force was established.

For God and Country,

Rose Blanchard

FOR THE RECORD - DEPT. HISTORIAN



History is the record of what one age finds a worthy of note in another. *Jacob*

HISTORY: Pass it on

(The Auxiliary's first convention convened on November 1, 1921, with delegates from nearly every state and territory answering roll call. Departments had been charted in 42 states and the territory of Hawaii. There were 3,653 Units, with an enrollment of 131,000 members. During the year following the Legion's second National Convention, the Auxiliary grew from 1,342 Units to 3,653 Units.)

I missed the Membership Rally in Jackson on August 20. I hear that the group was energized by the attendance and the activities. I know all hope the momentum will continue throughout the year and get Mississippi's membership restored to its 100 percent status and exceed its potential.

The National Convention is now behind us. It is time to buckle down and get those scrapbook items on your lists of priorities. The scrapbook committee needs as many items as they can get in order to prepare a capsule of the year's activities. President Mary will enjoy reviewing the events of her year as president.

History is so important to all of

us. It is difficult to know where to go if we don't know where we came from and where we have been. Make future Auxiliary members aware of the events by starting and maintaining a perpetual history of your Unit. It is not difficult, I promise. Just make a note of what is happening, keep the notes in a folder in chronological order. Before you realize it, you will have a written history of your Unit. See how easy that sounds...it is just as easy as it sounds!

Let me know if I can be of any assistance.

For God and Country,

Carolyn Tardy, Historian

NEWS FROM PROGRAM CHAIRMEN AND MORE...

PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

As your Programs Chairman this year, I am asking for all your help. We just returned from National Convention in Minneapolis and many states received awards for their programs. There is no reason that Mississippi should be left out next year. I know that every unit in this department does something during the year. Many of the units wait until the Plans of Action come out to begin. **DON'T DO THAT!** Start right now. If you need to use last year's Plan of Action as a guide, then do so.

Using President Mary Ried's theme, "Toucan Make A Difference," I am asking that the unit members team up in pairs and work together on the programs. The District Presidents and Vice Presidents also need to work together to encourage the units in their districts to work on the programs and keep records of what they do so a mid-year report can be sent to the committee chairmen. If each unit member will keep a record of what she has done

during the month, and at the monthly meeting give it to the committee chairman, then it will make it easier to do the mid year report.

I look forward to seeing as many as possible at the Fall Area Conferences. Please try to send at least one member from you unit to the conference in your district.

Sarah Edwards, Programs Coordinator



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONT'D

Memberships came in at over 20%, and we have lots of new members. Ladies, this is very positive!!

The decorations and Powerpoint presentations were very well done. I would like to see every unit utilize the Powerpoint program from Department. This is a great way to introduce programs to your unit that might need a boost. Let me know if I can help.

We just back from National Convention. Now we are going to hit the road a-running. Be ready to run with us and have a great time this year. Be thinking of changes that you would like to see happen. Talk to me I'll be here to listen!

For God and Country,

*Mary Smith-Ried
Department President*

Pictured in the center are Membership Chairman Angela Kilcrease and Dept. Secretary Nancy Sanders hamming it up at the Aug. 20 Membership Rally!

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER - DEPT. CHAPLAIN



It's hard to believe that summer is almost gone and soon we will be in the "fall furry" rush. It is also time to remember our veterans here and those now serving in foreign lands. Honor them with thoughts and prayers. As your unit begins to collect things for the Christmas boxes to send to our warriors, look for prayers and spiritual thoughts of encouragement and send them along also. Search your hearts and thoughts for prayers for our President's prayer book. I ask you to continue to pray for our members who have lost loved ones. Veteran's Day will be upon us before you realize, so make plans to celebrate our freedom, and never forget the lives lost in keeping our nation free and able to serve our Lord and Savior.

As I'm not a computer person, yet—please feel free to contact me if you need my assistance: 1004 Edgewater Drive, Philadelphia, MS 39350; Home Phone: 601.656.9897.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Fall Conferences!

For God and Country,

*Patricia Trest
Department Chaplain*

Thought for the month

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.

**Isaiah 40: 29-31
Focus on 31**

NEWS FROM PROGRAM CHAIRMEN AND MORE...

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES



Hello Juniors and Junior Leaders,

It is September, and a Great Time for Membership to get the Junior Units going. I have been approached by several ladies wanting to know how to start a Junior Unit. First, you need some girls who qualify as members. At least two girls will start a Junior Unit. They can range in age from zero to 17. I like to group girls together in the meeting: Babies to K; K to 3rd grade; 4th to 8th grades; 9th grade to graduation. Also, you will need a couple of ladies to help with the girls. Second, invite the girls to the meeting using Facebook or email, or even the telephone. Plan one activity per age group. For example: If you are hosting a holiday party for service members children, the younger girls could make cards, the middle school girls could help wrap presents, and the high school Juniors could make desserts. Remember, the girls have short attention spans. Some of the smallest girls will be too young for any activity. Give lots of breaks, and have some sort of physical activities for the girls. Bring refreshments, the girls expect something to eat. The key is to have fun, so they will want to come back next month!

It is nice to incorporate the Juniors into your Senior programs. If you are visiting Veterans in Nursing Homes, or in the Hospitals, having the Juniors along will make a veteran's day. An easy project is making cards, yellow ribbons, and coasters from the Juniors. Just asking veterans what they might need from the Juniors could be your answer for a project.

One thing girls like is the Patch Program. If you are familiar with Girl Scouts, the patches are similar. But the Auxiliary is focusing on our programs: Americanism, Community Service, Education, Field Service, Leadership, Membership, National Security, Scholarships, Poppies, VA&R--all programs we as Senior promote. This is an easy and exciting program to introduce Juniors to what the Auxiliary is all about. I encourage all Junior Leaders to seek out the Patch Program, and let your Juniors find out how much fun the Auxiliary really is!

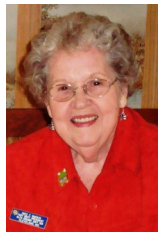
For God and Country,

Velma Harrington, Chairman

LEADERSHIP

This year, our National leaders are asking us to help "spread the word" and get members on the local level informed,

and interested, in helping new members learn what our organization is all about. Those who have been officers, or are now serving as officers, should mentor new members as they join and get them involved.



Our monthly Department newsletter is the best tool we have to get information out to our membership. The trick there is for the Unit President (or whoever receives it for the Unit) to share it with the members. Please watch for the monthly article on Leadership.

We hope to have some workshops during the year. I have two capable and dedicated members serving on this committee with me: Diane Cantrell and Emma Simpson. Both are ready and willing to help anyone interested in a workshop for their unit or district. Also, Dept. Secretary Nancy Sanders and I have discussed a program whereby we would combine Leadership with much needed record-keeping information throughout the state.

Let's remember President Mary Ried's theme: Toucan Can Make a Difference!

As always, For God and Country,

Inez McCain, Chairman

CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Sorry I missed writing you after State Convention, which was held in Natchez. The meetings were well attended, and we heard lots of interesting reports, with information we could share with our unit members.

I know you have not received your Plans of Action yet, but I have seen a copy of it. The programs are about the same as last year. They have added a section of "How To" sheets, giving step-by-step directions to help you in meeting each of the programs objectives. Everyone who receives a Plan of Action should share it with you members and work together.

Please be thinking of things you will be doing this coming year, and remember the programs have not changed much. Get your last year's Plans out and review them, it will help a lot. Please let me know if I can be of help to you.

For God and Country,

Rosemary Merriman, Chairman

NEWS FROM PROGRAM CHAIRMEN AND MORE...

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ladies, this is a very important notice. You will be receiving your Unit's bill for your unit's **MANDATORY** assessments. This is not an **optional** request for participation, the key word is **mandatory**. If these assessments are not paid, your unit is in violation of the C&B and can have your charter suspended. Your mandatory assessments cover the bonding of your treasurer, if not paid your money is not protected by the treasurer's bond.

If you need help paying this amount, try having a fundraiser especially for this purpose. These assessments provide Christmas Cheer for our hospitalized soldiers and veterans and scholarships for our children. Your deadline is November 1st so let's each do our share and pay our assessments on time.

Low Wilkerson, Finance Chairman

POPPY



Action steps:

- a. Poppy time: units start working on your Poppy Programs and distributions.
- b. I would like to see all units participate in the Poppy programs to generate funds for the needs of our Veterans.
- c. Please send reports on time regarding the great job you do for Veterans with your Poppy programs.

Kris Nelson, 2011-2012 National President's theme that that we will be using throughout the year is "Honor Their Service," always remembering that we are Auxiliary members because of a veteran in our family. Everything we do is to honor the service of our veterans, American's heroes'

Plan of Action: Poppy Committee

Purpose: To honor veterans for their service and sacrifice by promoting and education all people of the Poppy's history and the financial benefit realized by our nation's veterans as a result of its distribution.

Shirley Lamb-Turner, Chairman

MEMBERSHIP



Not much space left for me in this packed newsletter, so I'll try to get to the point regarding our membership efforts: **1st Department Membership Milestone is 55% by Oct. 6, 2011**

What does that mean to each unit? You need to be at least 55% of your unit goal by Oct. 6, AND all membership renewals and new member applications are due to the Department Office by Oct. 4 in order to be processed to National.

Folks, we can't delay in renewing our members and getting those renewals and new apps to Nancy in Jackson. The Department is counting and each and every one of you...membership is EVERYONE's business.

Many thanks goes out to Hovious-Grayson Unit 112 and Unit President Lorene Martin for hosting our annual Membership Rally and Workshop on Aug. 20. I hope it was an informative day for the attendees—only wish more units were represented! Such a shame to put on these workshops if the ones that need it the most is not there! Anyway, thank you 112 for your hospitality and support of this important workshop.

You'll surely want to attend the Fall Conferences. It won't be the same as they have always been—promise. I'll have lots of exciting things to share with you, along with our Dept. officers and chairmen. It's going to be worth you while to be there!

For God and Country,

Angela Kilcrease, Chairman

NEWS FROM PROGRAM CHAIRMEN AND MORE...

PUBLIC RELATIONS



The history of your Unit, whether in written or picture form, gives all outsiders a look into what you are doing as well as what is important and special about your Unit and its members. A good Public Relations liaison with your community is essential to bring all of that to life for others who wonder, "Just what does the American Legion Auxiliary do?" With a few essential keys in your PR toolkit, you can open the door to imaginations and initiate excitement by enticing new members to join your ALA family or be willing to donate to your many projects. You do not know what people are willing to do unless you ask or show them.

The objective of effectively communicating information and projecting a positive image to the general public is to gather accurate information while preparing a news release with who, what, when, where, how and other special information. Do not forget to include contact information. Provide deadline info if applicable. Distribute PR information to newspapers, TV and radio stations, post to websites, display advertising posters, share information with others. We know that word of mouth is the best advertisement!

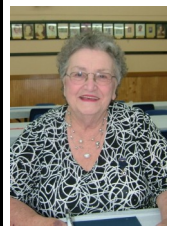
Market your Unit. Let your community leaders know what's on your agenda. Chances are some are Veterans themselves who are willing to take on your projects and support your efforts. Contact businesses and professional organizations like the Chamber of Commerce or Lions Club. Let others know that you are a proud member of the American Legion Auxiliary and this is what our Unit is doing for the Veterans this month. Put a notice in community calendars and attend as many functions as you can. Provide door prize for events you attend. Include some promotional products with the ALA logo or give a gift certificate. Keep on hand brochures or any other material that help to promote the Auxiliary agenda. Build your Public Relations network on a foundation of friends. "Friendraising" as it is called, encourages you to meet new people with whom you have common goals and interests. In time, you will build new relationships with neighbors, friends and friends of friends and watch your circle of acquaintances grow.

There are suggested resources at the end of the Public Relations Plans of Action. They are full of ideas and helpful hints to help you create an effective Public Relations program for your Unit. For example, www.alaforveterans.org is filled with documents in Microsoft Word (doc), Microsoft PowerPoint (ppt) or Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (pdf) format. All you need is a free copy of Adobe Acrobat to be able to load, view and use their contents (they are not copy write protected). Press Releases are in template form and you can just fill in the blanks with your Unit and occasion specifics. A real time saver! Just look under the Member Resources tab at the top and select Resources. Arranged by committees, several documents are available under each section. Have fun!

For God and Country,

Mary Jo Abraham, Chairman

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



As Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, I would report the changes and proposed changes to the C & B of the National Organization. There were several proposed changes which were presented and defeated, however, the one of most interest to all of us was the dues increase. The increase as proposed would have raised dues by \$5 for senior members and had a built in increase of \$.50 in 3 years. This motion was defeated.

Several new amendments and proposals were presented on the dues increase and defeated. Finally the voting body arrived at a compromise, and the annual dues will be raised by \$4 per senior member beginning with the 2012-2013 year.

This means that every unit will have to adjust their C&B to reflect this increase. This should be done before the state convention. Beginning in July 2012, the Unit will send \$15 to the Department, instead of \$11 that we send now.

If you need assistance with the changes that you have to make to your unit C & B please feel free to call on any member of your Dept. C & B committee.

Low Wilkerson, Chairman



DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI

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Phone: 601.353.3681
E-mail: ALAMSHQ@aol.com

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SERVING VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES,
AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY SERVICE



Two of the most important Auxiliary-recognized National days of service for 2011-2012 fall in the month of September:

- 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance / Patriot Day - 10th Anniversary on September 11, 2011
- Gold Star Mother's Day on September 25

Please plan a community service activity at your Post Home for Patriot Day, and remember in your prayers all Gold Star Mothers who lost the life of their child in the service of our country while protecting our freedoms.

The Community Service Committee is excited to report that we have met the deadline of preparing the Community Service Plan of Action. It will be distributed with the other Department Committee POA's to the Units in the fall with suggestions on how to work our Auxiliary programs. In the meantime, pursue vigorously community service activities that aid veterans, active-duty servicemembers and their families at every opportunity.

May God keep on blessing America,

Diane Cantrell, Chairman

FROM THE DEPT. SECRETARY



Greetings from the Department!

We had a very nice National Convention, and our dear Past President Mary Lyles was very regal and cute as a button as she served as our convention chairman. We were very proud of her. Kathy Dungan and Angela Kilcrease certainly did us proud as they gave their reports from the podium. However, the Department is ecstatic over the presentation given by Angela Baughman as she accepted her National award for outstanding servicewoman representing the USAF.

The headquarters has been buried shoulder deep in membership renewals and new members – yeah! If we keep it up at this pace, we will have another grand year. Your Program Chairman, Sarah Edwards, will be working with me this month to finalize the Plans of Action. We are still missing some of the Plans from the Chairman. Ladies, you are holding up progress!

As Department Secretary, I will be holding Secretary/Treasurer workshops at the Fall Conferences. Your unit Secretary/Treasurer will be learning how to file the unit's tax report, getting a glimpse of the ALAMIS

membership program and will receive updates from the Department. Units, it's a VERY GOOD TIME to insist that your Secretary/Treasurer attend these conferences. It WILL be worth their time and registration.

The October newsletter will include the Mandatory Assessments for 2011-2012. About 25 of the units haven't paid their 2010-2011 Mandatory Assessments. We will be notifying each unit that is in arrears. Remember, if your unit is not paid to date by State Convention, you will not be eligible to vote.

Please remember that our veterans in the nursing homes and VA hospitals here in Mississippi look to the Auxiliary for their Christmas. If you plan to send donations to the Gift Shop at Biloxi VA, please do so now. They need time to set a budget and do their shopping for the veterans.

See you at the conferences!

Nancy Sanders

DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY COOKBOOK

Ok ladies, the response to our Cook Book has been good, but I know you can do better. There are a lot of good cooks out there, and we've only heard from a few of them. I've been to your Posts and Units, and I know how you cook, all those really good meals with desserts. We want to have recipes from all over the state. Remember, we need 600 recipes for a really good book. You don't have to type you can just write it down and mail it to one of us. Send list of ingredients, directions, and any other instructions as needed. You have until October 15, don't wait do it now.

Below you will find two set of rules for our two contests. The first is the art contest to design the cover, and the second is to name our cook book. We want everyone to be a part of this book.

COOK BOOK COVER CONTEST RULES

Mississippi Theme

Art work must be 5 inches X 3 ½ inches (5 "vertically X 3 1/2" horizontally) remember that anything larger will be reduced for judging.

Must be original drawing or art work

No black and white pencil drawings, color laser, dot matrix or ink jet.

Work must be in color on a white background.

You must sign a waiver giving us permission to use the work.

All entries must be postmarked no later than November 1, 2011.

Mail all entries to:

LOU WILKERSON
201 BAY OAKS DR.
BAY ST. LOUIS, MS 39520

NAME THE COOKBOOK CONTEST

There is really only one rule. The name must be original and appropriate. Having said that let me give you a few facts. The art on the cover will have a Mississippi Theme, the recipes are from Auxiliary members from across the state, and the dedication will be to the ladies who went before us and laid our foundation. All entries must be emailed or postmarked by October 15, 2011.

Mail all entries to

LOU WILKERSON
201 BAY OAKS DR.
BAY ST. LOUIS, MS 39520

E-mail

Lwilkerson1935.com OR ro62se@hotmail.com



**Joe Graham Unit 119
Gulfport, Mississippi
Cordially invites you to a
Homecoming
for the 2011-2012
Department of Mississippi President**

Mary L. Smith-Ried

**Location: DAV, 2600 23rd Avenue
Gulfport, Mississippi**

Phone: (DAV) 228-871-5463

When: September 24, 2011

Time: 6:00 p.m.

**Music in lounge after Homecoming
BYOB (Set-ups available in the lounge)**



**Wear your festive tropical attire and
join us for great fellowship!**

LEADERSHIP MINI-WORKSHOP

TIPS FOR LEADING A SMALL UNIT

- Develop a plan to continually develop new leadership within your unit. As members are selected to chair committees, mentor them, particularly new members. Offer help when needed. Be prepared to provide support when asked or assign another mentor for support.
- Provide training session. Consider that you may have seasoned unit members or district and department officers who are capable and available for help with training. Also, other community leaders may be willing to provide leadership training.
- Communicate with member. Find those who may wish to help contact members via phone/email or personal contact for such activities as meetings and program participation. Utilize local media. Foster good relations with local newspapers, TV and radio. Issue news releases. Publish the meeting schedule at the beginning of the year in your unit newsletter and write “TBA” (to be announced) for those programs still tentative.
- Invite members familiar with social networking (like Facebook) to set up and monitor an account for the unit.
- Consider implementing quality programs to help invigorate meetings. Survey the interests of the membership when considering topics. This could be a great way to reinforce information about the Auxiliary programs.
- Be positive! Unit leaders have an obligation to minimize criticism and maximize positive feedback.

ON THE SOAPBOX

From time to time, I hear our members say, “I don’t go to meetings, so why should I pay my dues this year?”

I look them in the eye and say, “because your membership renewals is a gift to the American Legion Auxiliary each year that helps us serve our veterans and support our troops and their families.”

Every members’ dues renewal is a **gift**, or perhaps a donation, to our organization and programs. Do we really ever share with our members on what we do with our dues income? Do we show them how it works for our veterans and military?

By simply renewing dues, it makes each member a valuable member.

It’s up to us to make sure each and every member understands what we do, who we are, and why their good money is important to us. Don’t let your members be “the ones that got away.”

Angela Kilcrease, Membership Chairman

